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## SOMETHING WAITING

a cross

at a roadside – who?

Morning is a question

the rest of the day

expands it, does not answer it

Question follows question

enough for a good

conversation

eighty, ninety years

This is the measure called

relax, it all keeps going

close your eyes

and rest in the canoe

No name river big woods

on land couples

meet and break up

cowbirds come and eat seed

Take it easy

the cross

is at the crossroads

but there is no road  
you are not walking

Nothing says there is an answer  
when you get excited  
it just changes the conversation  
watch your blood pressure  
young beavers play along the bank.

17 April 2004

## **BERLIOZ**

Agitprop of orchestra.

For all the sorrow

nothing sounds like denial.

Everything is more.

It dreams

and dreams us

into itself. Who is us?

The dream folds over

upon itself.

This is nothing

that was called music.

All its greatness comes from being wrong.

Wrong about itself and right about us.

It breaks its own rules

to come forwards

always to us. To touch us.

[“...from being wrong.” Wrong like the Funeral and Triumphal Symphony, wrong like the Eroica and the Fifth, wrong like Mahler, wrong like Salome. “Wrong about itself and right about us” – this is the opposite of academic music, Haydn.]

17 April 2004

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But it isn't much sleeping  
this yellow, or this,  
bird?

Not sure,  
reflection in window of oak table,  
touch me.

I have been knocking on the wrong door.

17 April 2004

## THE SEEN AND THE UNSEEN

Trying to be queer as daylight  
men offer each other handshakes  
as if they were rich and were giving  
each other cigars. Thus is Asia

brought close. Avenues are wide,  
streets narrow. No other distinction  
seems required. Then we light  
our imaginary cigars by the *flame*

*of difference* – other people walking by  
who are not men, or not these men.  
Women are candles. Dogs are horses  
dragging invisible carriages forever

in which their real masters smugly sit  
surveying the reassuringly endless city.  
The street chased me here, I thought  
I was safe in the woods but they found me,

chink of bronze coin at the soup-boiler's stall.

17 April 2004

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I would ask the sullen theater to rehearse  
broken branches from my lawn –  
find out what play they've fallen from  
and whose hands they are  
that grapple in my dirt.

These sleepy actors half out of costume  
slay me with their pertinent asides–  
are they in the same dream I have?

*I'm tired of hearing so much money*  
*I want to spend the war right here*  
it said and I got scared  
thinking of how metal bleeds.

17 April 2004

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Sulky ladies. Chipmunks.

The simple pleasures one by one  
and never quite all the way to two,

eccles cakes and soft white cheese  
and hands busy where they ought not go.

17 April 2004



## BEESWAX

*for Levi*

Unfiltered beeswax  
dark here and there  
with remembered life.  
Time's autoclave  
sterilizing *alles*.

Today I went below the earth  
and found the earth.  
I bring it home on my shoes  
and here, the *wooden tablets*  
of the poor, to write  
on these, to leave a trace  
of passage,

                  when I was young  
they still said *shoon* sometimes  
but they smiled when they said it  
as if they had a different kind of feet.

17 April 2004

## CASQUE

A gold  
one. Around a cranium  
no description available.

This was the crime,  
to be mine.

On the Quai des Enfers  
imaginary policemen  
interview rooms full of paper.  
Stern eye of a judge  
reading a helpless document.

Everything that ever  
happened to you  
came out of a book.

Did they tell you that  
before you learned to read,  
when the birds outside  
your window still had no names  
and all the blue flowers were  
just flowers that happened  
to be blue?

Then it  
started happening,  
the book took over  
and what a book it was.  
Even now when I hold you  
in my arms I can  
hear the pages turning.

18 April 2004

**1681: SONATA in F, H.I.F.von Biber**

The sound  
who holds my hand  
the brittle  
bones of me

knee replacements  
violins  
how far the beach is  
but a gull cry shows the way

can I find my way to the dark  
and when I closed my eyes  
all the stars were blue  
and filled the sky

patterns unfamiliar  
organ and violin  
the red towers of the Liebfraukirche  
always remind me of

something I don't know what  
my bones maybe  
my fingers in the air  
testing the wind

or ordering two beers  
to be brought to me outdoors  
by a tree squeaking in the wind  
I fear the branch will fall

before I have drunk my glass and gone.

18 April 2004

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Have I listened enough  
or is the day still waiting to begin?  
Long lines of cars are headed this way  
from the doomed city,  
everything wants to be a flower  
but what name shall I give?  
I was born there  
between the willow and the submarine.  
Zeppelins, fezzes, blue hydrangeas—  
these things I love and who would take  
them from me and who will bring them back?  
Some things grown only near the sea.  
It is Sunday morning in Queen Anne's Square,  
the hotel guests over their kippers contemplate  
nurses having a smoke in the austere park.  
I think that God is nothing but a window.

18 April 2004

## **MYOPIA**

Daffodils  
very yellow  
and when they  
fly away  
they're finches.

18 April 2004

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A rage of doubt unlocked the quiet light.

The button clings to the shirt

the shirt clings to the back

and what does the man cling to?

A world is connection—

Obey the law say the great gods

the old ones, who saw what you do

but could not tell what goes on

inside of you. The new ones know,

o these new young gods, they speak

inside you as if they knew the place

or worse, as if the place were theirs.

Or is it better? The Jesus, the Horus,

the Buddha especially, all this knowing

and loving till there's no place you can hide.

Like trying to keep birds from noticing the sky.

18 April 2004



## POSTCARD

This is my body I'm writing to you from.  
You know what it feels like,  
and some of the places it has been.  
I wish I could show you a picture  
of me now, I mean inside me,  
the cliffs and seacoast, high surf,  
the gulls screaming out at you, a calm  
lighthouse halfway to the horizon  
flickering with information. A land bird  
overhead and very hear, a hawk maybe,  
suddenly dives down. Suddenly here.

18 April 2004

<late> =====

The mark of it on the wall  
as if a bird has burnt there  
but how could that be?

Oceans left me dry,  
muffled with interpretation—  
Melusina's scales!

She wore water as her clothes  
every stream on earth  
part of her wardrobe.

I stand stiff-kneed by the Sawkill  
pouring out all this  
misinformation —

bring it to her, water,  
she is waiting for me  
always, she wants me

to keep talking, to be wrong.

18 April 2004

=====  
All the disturbances align.  
A rock. Something to drink.  
Take off your wet clothes  
this is the desert we will dry you.

*Épreuve*, ordeal. Trial  
by fury, angry innocence—  
the heart is like an unripe pear  
sheltered in pure sunlight—  
bring me the water you wring from your clothes,  
by its taste I'll tell my future.

Grow it, grow it, under daylight  
as if under ground, the priests are coming,  
you have to know the moment  
between its turning ripe and when they pluck it  
cut down the tree, scatter salt on you and me,  
they are angry at the earth, they too  
are innocent, they count the syllables  
in a secret language they rob from your breath.  
It is all sand now, figures in the sand.  
We are deciphered.

19 April 2004

## **THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS TAKEN BY VIOLENCE**

Ask your priest about this  
but I think what it means  
is that the natural goes nowhere

nature is the program  
that gives life and aborts it  
you'll never get there by natural means

by nature we just go to sleep.  
So there is some other animal we can ride,  
Sodom stallion or Cathar mule or the Old Man's ox,

yes, the ox with no attitude,  
the pale endurer,  
wipe that smile off your mind and follow me.

19 April 2004

## **OUT OF EDEN**

The first door  
was the sin

Every door  
is a transgression

19 April 2004

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You could have tried being  
but what would you be leaving,  
losing? Any choice is terrible,  
like a voice you don't recognize  
calling your name. Or do you?  
Is it the one of all voices  
you don't want to hear?  
And you can't name her  
even now, years after  
whatever happened  
happened. The grain  
of things, you think, grain  
of wood, of leather,  
pores of an animal  
still clear in your shoes,  
you walk in its life still.

19 April 2004