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So many things to measure
so many because
flower in our dreams
and we wake suddenly knowing
the way magnolias flower overnight

23 April 2004

understanding

is our chief flower

and bears or ushers in

the seed from which

actions knows

itself and other

23 April 2004

Refusing to read Hegel

The mind
is a sin against the mind.

23 IV 04

THE STUDY

A lovely morning for a man
to be on earth
the grass comes first
then you mow it
all the time studying rain

*

studium meant enthusiasm
industry diligence and zeal

can you taste that at the back of your mouth
when you read a book or remember?

the taste of eager
is the future in the mouth of now.

23 April 2004

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Rain on the roof
hears like a message
I am my house
outstretched for your wet fingers

23 April 2004

=====

woodpecker and finch side
by side on
feeder religion

23 IV 04

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My fez
don't fit

23 IV 04

<late> =====

So a dream quest has no business ending.
The road to Kadath in the Cold Waste
starts and starts again.

A city is never the place you think it is.

We get there only to find it is another place.

Not even Paris is what or where it is.

At many corners, you look up a side street and see, suddenly available,
woods and meager farmlands. Wolves trot unconcerned at right angle to
anywhere you might be going.

They turn and look at you.

A road is a renewal.

Who said that?

Oak trees, fields of sorghum. A letter from a friend, addressed to you, and
talking about you as 'you' all through, but saying towards the end in a hasty
parenthesis that you are not the you meant by 'you.'

Who are you then?

Who were you before you read her letter?

Who are you now?

23 April 2004

THREESOMES OF THIS ISLAND

Hardly notice what you do
a city among strangers
you street

and there a go
is gone and you
domain

because a ladder
up to slate
ingenuous rain

elide the sky
something deciding
or a white dog

looked all alone
among the ruins
at us

a mile of bench
between our hands
oiltanker

teaching north
fingertips
you west

saw a band
playing in a candle
floating lotus

new tope
alerting rivery
uplifted

what does a thing
look like
from the other side

now and then
play at bones
all your trumps

killed in action
a desert of spilled milk
evaporating money

a week between the hands
light up inside
feathers

allergens pacific
domestic ruffled
lifeless sleep pillowing

terra cotta sneeze
near as paper
memories mean

old fascist
with beak nose
pretending metaphysics counts

2.
to be faithful to an angle
twin Spanish towers pale
fat priest reading his breviary in snow

to be longer at this well
like a shadow a shadow
always knows the right time

right space for space belongs
to those who understand
the strained proportion between

any object and the source of light
a thing that can be measured
consoles us at bedtime

source of recuperative joy like Swedenborg
lapis stepped with coral beads to count
his mother's staircase to heaven

so many jokes east of the Oder
so few smiles around the Rhine
what island heart is hidden up the Sleeve

so many horses wasted on the quest
poor animals that have no grail but us
patron saints of treachery and lust

blue pronouns on their way to you
what it said and what it thinks it means
the terrible differences that spaces explain.

24 April 2004

<late> =====

An active man of party years
glass insulators in each hand
as could be cumbersome
and speak ill of swimming pools

“not just the bacteria, not
just the bleach to kill them,
the water itself is poisonous
because sunlight steepes it
with strange humors till
faith itself is slain”

the disease we catch from light

“because then we swim inside it
totally besmirched, like a cutthroat
broker in a diving bell, or your
daughter playing the bassoon.”

24 April 2004

ETHER

1.

Ether true way

a gasp or at a basket

aim elk liver

so invent a game called life

on earth embedded

in the other

my plans for you

tight in my skulled fist

see my eyes

and come at you with element

and after that

come at you with wire

the electricity imagines you there

in front of me

wanting me to understand

2

look ahead

to shame the fire

all the trajectories curve around the dome

this stone is sacred

and will repel

any thought

she sat on the skull of a fallen vatic,

his words still purling by her knees

no one can set foot into this stream

because of the color

the wise see in my dapple

almost mildew, office farmer,

bird on fire, all the known

non-governmental agencies of destruction

leap into ether

we are chemical, aspire

3.

drudgery of afterwords

when no one read the homework

I'm telling you *we* are the Bible,
tell that to the newly shaven,
sharkskin suits who come to my door
carrying what they think is You, love,
in their Sunday hands,

we are the scripture, tell them, we and no other,
fretful Argentines and dark Inuit
let them speak their own translations
of the sense we make
joyous outward interspace

where we leave the weather
almost forever and are over
head and under belt and belle or beau
whimful ever after

no such shoe as fate,
tell them for me I'm still asleep
the kids are kissing on the roofs,
because the sky has lost the sun and moon
we had to do something and we did.

25 April 2004

A MACHINE THAT RUNS ON SPIRIT ALONE

After the intricate assembly
the secret screwheads tongued in place
and one by one the particles instructed
(you lettered them last night, a long lost night
to get them straight, at three a.m.
you crouched to unscrew the old glass door
and later thought it must have been a dream,
no screw, no door, no glass,
just a sound of shatter and a blue wind),
then two by two the sleeves connect
and conceal at once the sapro-terminals
the Zo current runs between, all it needs
is artful balance. This means you.
You pick an old vinyl from the stack
Ali Akbar Khan or Mingus, lick it clean,
set it spinning (old word for turn
around and around till something comes)
on the even older platter,
god knows where in your dreams
you store such things, and then music.
Now the machine, your little mashinka,
is ready for your hope, sweat, breath
and all your rathers. Wish!
And the whole thing begins to shiver.

25 April 2004

WE NOACHITES

We are children of Noah,
we are, we know the secret word!
No matter how wretched
and full of self-pity we may
by inattention allow ourselves
to seem, we really are
this sacred race, we really do
know the actual word,

the word he spoke when drunk
to all his daughters, our mothers,
the word they memorized
and whispered to us in turn
when we lay writhing in the dismal
caverns of their bodies
when we were on the verge of being born,
the last thing we heard there
in that resounding darkness,

the word we always know
and never know we know,
when everything seems to be lost
speak it, speak the secret,
it was never lost, only in you,
so deep and beautifully lodged in you,

and everyone who comes towards you
with love in the heart is coming
for that word, everyone needs it,
everyone needs to be reminded,
speak it, never lost, only mislaid
among bird song and golden ore
and madrigals and cannon fire,
you knew it, we know it,
even as we sleep through our lives
it carries us to a place beyond doubt.

25 April 2004

<late> =====

(Exordium of a failed magnate
to his cat or who he thinks she is
who sits before him perched at times
on his lap inducing amity and heat—)

O friend of so many deep interiors
whose sun-absorbing surfaces
take all in and leave a little warmth on me
like new leaves on April lindens,

I have broken my bench and stripped my lake
to drown it in the ocean, my ice is hurt
and although we intrepid voyagers churn
new maps and people to live across them,

the word *is* the thing. The sign
is the signified. They finally must
tell you that when you sell
all you have and give it to the poor

that's what you become. You are a circle
healed. It all flows back to you.
And when I say you you know I mean me.
But she knew what she knew and he wasn't.

25 April 2004