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COLORS

The catch or glee
the quick thing stung
as by a yellow bee
wandering among

you think they're flowers
but I know better,
down from the towers
of cloud fell a letter

I read it, I am reading it still.
They are not flowers
they are pirate colors
who seize the forms of things
and make their show their breasts
their mouths their privities
to amaze this sleepy world,

colors are the pirates who
come sailing in from Somewhere Else,
you'll never guess,
and what the earth would be
without them,
all anxious sightless,

all columns and columns and columns
of numbers on grey pages without end

the letter said.

See to it that you are
where colors come
and let them capture you
and make you serve

the dappled glory crazy story of the Other
who sent them to ravish you
on their slender ships of light.

16 May 2004

=====

singing
is stinging

listening
is lust

16 V 04

<late> =====

1.

late because somewhere

a mercy on the man
who fills his mind with mind

2.

sailboat on the Vineyard Sound
more and more till I can't count
my heart says the word regatta and
I try to understand

3.

and over all the clam shells of the Hammels
the conquistadors of East New York
falter towards Rockaway to feel
and pleased in Playland on cold lager
leave in the sand human footsteps
conniving at happiness

4.

as if a street's the only place to dance
and then I move and you
make the body of the President to sing.

16 May 2004

<late> =====

Cast of miracles
and then some flowers,
Childermas
and hot for winter–

**there was much more going on
than sin and punishment**

there was silk I never mentioned
for I was Homeros first and then
all the rest of you in turn
anxious in Eden

you were my simple people
and I was your book

and there was the naming of things.
Nothing more
but that's still not finished,

a man for instance with blue wings
and his tongue tip in the abyss,
what shall we call him?

16 May 2004

BLACKWATER

Could in and after
all be so close to me
through the valley
east of the Taunton River
that something's hidden

of our First Intention,
I can't prove it, I feel it
is bad enough, near the Rhode Island
line then keeps nothing
crossing the low hills and off
east I feel it, Chief Anawan's misery
and the breaks of changing,

loyalty to the place itself
and if that breaks
what other fealty holds?

where we left the gods we brought
and killed with gods we found,

what is it I feel here, yes,
I take me as measure,
what makes me feel this strangeness
is what is measured,

what is it here north of New Bedford south of Taunton
that stretch of Eden
wedged against earth
where heaven is no paradise
but an angle of sharp meaning
a *norma* let into the trees there
to guide us yet,

but to what altar.
No altar, bird chatter,
Dante gibbering in the scrub pines.

I'm telling you where not what it is
but that's something, I'm telling you go find it,
we need an accurate
fix on it, we need to parse this feeling.

17 May 2004

DELPHINIUMS

Delphiniums and small china red roses on the table
amazing in the blue glass vase. They look at me and say
Everything! Everything! And one large yellow rose.

17 May 2004

<late> =====

But all of that keeps waiting and why not?

A field of Canada geese mumbling corn

from water stubble. Where I die

is where I must be born. After rain,

princesses in thorn trees, they

finally forgive the obvious.

They love to feel the energies they rouse.

So the Sabines reckon. Or those idioms

in my mouth that try to want you –

spirit inside matter, matter inside water,

the strange water they call electricity,

a kind of amber thing, your cat understand you

but not as well as I do, touch by touch.

There are so many opposites in this world

of ours, mystery of the dancing police.

17 May 2004

=====

Of all that keep waiting a stone

is spokesperson enough, a board
with nails in it, a crow in a dead tree –
nothing is missing.

You call it war

I call it the second movement of
a lost Fauré sonata, dreamy
and demanding as any girl
on the Eve of St Miriam when
in dreams one witnesses all the sad
things that are to come and what
lover brings them.

I call it fruit

of the medlar tree, you call it
a message from the Pope,
you take it from your wallet
still smells of new calfskin
unfold it, read it to me.

I don't know that language.

The air smells like a marble quarry
this morning.

You disagree: No

it looks like the last day
of the Battle of Gettysburg,

dying men remembering their wives
but getting the names wrong. Sunshine.
Foxes waiting in the bushes
for all this curious fuss to stop
and they can get on with the world.

18 May 2004

=====

after Christie Seaver

**Sometimes the sky envelopes my tears
and I wonder how long I will last under its presence**

but wonder if comfortable for me, I like to walk around
with my snout in the air, the tears

dry on my face in the light of sun or moon or stars or cloud
whatever the Lucency is coming from that hour

after I tear open the sky envelopes to see what's on God's mind now
after all these years of Bible Bible Bible just this kiss

yes that's what it is, a the kiss of all this,
presence folded inside absences inside presence

like the sunburn itching on my face at midnight
something always present, I look around, I'm looking hard

for someone to talk to now and display my tears
because emotions are only motions on their way to you, yes you

the one whose presence in my mind lasts longer than sunburn
winter, spring again, maybe all my life you last in me

when you are lost out there in the sky world, hence tears in the first place.

18 May 2004

[Note: Christie's first lines actually ended with the word 'pressure' but I misread it on the blackboard as 'presence.']

<late> =====

a horn

from some beast's head

hollow

to blow through

a day

and not much to show for it

celebrate a vacancy

made to resound,

build up in the curved and curving

channel a complex tone

something you'd hear once

and remember a long time

but then forget and yet

a very long time to come

suddenly recall

like the smell of some fried eggplant you ate once

when Penn Station was still standing

and a girl was walking across the street from it

somehow eternally in red clothes.

18 May 2004

=====

This blessing in disguise business bothers me
like a tune the guy is teasing with and can't
get right, dispersing whatever old time sagesse
or doctrine a melody might still be able to wield
over gibbering vibes, time to have children
and then you're seventy five and no idea
seems particularly good, maybe Tiffany & Co.
has the answer, picture a window I mean
a classy vitrine full of rocks are you with me?

I thought I was but then my interlocutor
shifted the conversation by a deft elbow westward
to include a dapper blonde who had drifted
I thought my way over from the chopped liver,
sure, I like diamonds, so he went on,

the matter

with matter is the not quite material
hand that has it, holds it, enrolls it
in a queasy army of acquisitions

more noumenal than now, neither (he rhymed it
with *knee fur*) here nor where? When? Is it a woman
'of a certain age' or 'uncertain age' she wanted to know,

back is forth so often that I can't stand still.

Many martinis later hearing Mandeville's marvels,

moppets shooting marbles, melp me, I man't mop.

Puck! That's better. *She gets impatient with my face,*

that's the name of the song, I don't hear anything do you?

19 May 2004

=====

The marvel is that on a cool
spring morning some people are
enough in touch with their body
to pull cotton sweaters on

while others stay in their tee-shirts
and the wind blows. Calendar
louder than skin or breath or wind.
The wonder is that anybody notices anything.

19 May 2004

=====

There is also a smile

somewhere in the world

I bow my head to it

I let it sink inside me

so that the man or meat of me

smiles too, a change

happens everywhere when

something happens here

I slip inside the smile

everything green.

19 May 2004

RICH MAN, BLIND MAN

Everything I see
belongs to me.

19 V 04

=====

Are we later or are we other,
laughter lives at the next table

over the mesa a curl of cloud
like the sky taking pictures of the earth

long time no desert
it is so long since I was dry

a red dusts sifts into the telephone.

19 May 2004, Hyde Park

<late> =====

Who gave you this coin?

It fell from the sky.

What was it doing up there?

It was hiding the sun

the way your thumb

at arm's length blots out the moon

or the way a feather

falls so quietly to earth

after owls and crows have fought

so shriekingly up there.

What do you mean?

That everything is different

that this silken necktie on a hook

means nothing in itself but

tying it on means everything –

a sign of the cross, a semaphore,

a signal to the conductor

we are ready at last to leave this

station halfway to the sky?

19 May 2004