

7-2004

## JulB2004

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## NUMBERS

Numbers are hardest  
because they mean least  
but can touch anything  
with their abstract glamour  
7 Cups 7 Wives 7 Gods

We always know how many  
but never what it is  
the thing we're counting  
a leaf a brick some  
compromise between eternal form and human hands

and hands are forms too  
and of eternity  
the closest wingtips, fingers.

Here is a number for you:  
hawk in an empty sky.

6 July 2004

=====  
Her things in the rain  
put something on  
to open the door

and when the door is open  
which one comes in?

Dilaudid does the work of opium,  
hides pain  
and anxiety, that savage flower  
on which pain reposes,  
hides pain, hides anxiety under pain,  
hides the real nature of the situation  
so it turns actual.

You do what you want to do.

All you need is dress for the occasion,  
the going down, the miracle,  
the living door.

6 July 2004

<late:> =====

An upstanding  
and an uprising  
are the same color  
on different animals

different cloths

I remember something already  
music a wide bay  
touch me that way again

we are in the car  
wet with vivacious rain  
we will be traveling this way forever.

6 July 2004

## **HERSELF**

Askance at her antics  
(a blue faience frog  
held tightly in her right hand  
she promises everyone)  
the severe monotheists relent  
only over maple syrup breakfasts  
just enough calories to  
edge old men into amiable spaces  
reminiscent of love.

They forgive her, they try to remember,  
they try to believe her again.

And I live here, I live with her  
every day and never doubt her lies,  
they have made me happy all my life,  
she never gets any older, I never smarter,  
she keeps me going, my hand  
still trembles when she touches me.

7 July 2004

=====

A plume from a gull, say,  
or intermediate seabird  
with long pointy beak.  
That must be 'indeterminate,'  
the other makes no sense,  
a policy for controlling immigration,  
refuse the albatross at the shore,  
and that other bird, with blue feet,  
whose name is not polite to say.  
It is morning when gentlefolk  
cause houseplants to be watered  
and the Sisters of Saint Gestas  
walk their neighbor's dogs for free  
but sometimes they don't come back,  
young postulants vanish over the hill.  
Maybe it really is 'intermediate,'  
a stage on life's long path, a teazle  
growing beside the house, the woman  
who had been young goes back to hell  
driving through Canada. How cruel  
words can be all by themselves  
when there's no one to say them, no one  
to overhear their scandalous persuasions.  
Do it. Do everything you ever meant.

7 July 2004

## EVE'S SONG

It is dark where I am  
waiting for you

a dark made out of rain  
children, wings, desire

reaching for you in the back seat  
in the rain

in the woods you've never entered  
although you think you never left

the dripping branches  
are always ahead of you

the same rain soaks us both  
but I have been here before

I know the way—  
that is my only value for you

the way you can follow  
every instance of my body to the end.

8 July 2004

=====

Waiting for more some more.

Waiting for fractions

to be absorbed into their numerators

and be whole again,

like a white clapboard house with azaleas in front of it

or a clever dog making a dumb child laugh.

8 July 2004



## SUMMER COLD

my voice thick, my voice  
is someone else's, somebody  
whose heart is lower than mine

who am I do, do the words  
get sick too, catarrh  
of ordinary talk, buzz and snuffle,

my body is misspelled this morning  
nothing works right, my pockets  
sewed themselves up in the night.

8 July 2004

=====

**Another, have another word.**

The wind lets these things fall –  
it rained in and night and you remembered.  
Now there is nothing to pull close,  
plaited straw of your marketing basket,  
wet locks of your hair –  
clear bright colorless water makes pale hair dark,  
who makes that happen?  
whatever the Lord is, he's no chemist,  
no physician, no social planner.  
Nothing moves except the machinery  
but it's mostly pointed in the wrong direction.  
And all we're left with is our will –  
that dynamite of whimsy, wish and appetite  
that breaks the placid rocks around us,  
a cosmos cluelessly neat. Forgive me,  
it's a little Melville in my throat this morning,  
some heavy sneezing, fog off Marblehead.

8 July 2004

=====

**The book gets smaller**

the wind carries around

reads to us from

so many nights till

all the stories are gone

except this one.

9 July 2004

=====

Portuguese pop songs stay in the mind  
sexy and sinuous and long  
like so many things I can almost understand.  
And the spoken ads between songs  
are invitations to implausible blisses.  
Anything that sounds so mouthy must be true,  
a language faithful to the lips that speak it.

9 July 2004

(remembering New Be'ford radio)

=====  
Honk honk they  
used to say  
lifting the glass

I thought their elbows  
were pale geese  
and their fingers beaks

held a pale  
unpleasant liquid  
intensely insipid

that made their little  
Irish  
eyes light up.

9 July 2004

=====

all the scenarios  
locked in her glance  
and me without a key

9 VII 04

=====

## **Nothing remembers me a stone**

because person is a chance  
for every opposite and equal reflection  
a tree stands  
also down  
in Walkill shallows I made my move

it was clear I was on the wrong planet  
from the way the sun felt, the way the road hurt,  
from the way the older Italian boy  
had a cock like a hose down to his knees  
I knew.

And the vapid taste of lukewarm things  
and the black sweat on my neck.

I'm trying to tell you how and what I knew,  
food tasted weird but I had to eat a lot of it  
just to keep going and it made me fat.  
I never liked it. I never longed for anything  
but water and women. Where was I born  
to be like that? Where should I be now,  
inspector?

Why is the ocean the only answer,  
the slim woman running by the waves  
breaking white from a green sea,  
why are there colors?

So much light but no sun,  
that's all I know about the place  
I must be coming from,

after that  
it's all effort and sweat and feeling sorry for myself  
and roads uphill and dogs bark and the train never comes.  
Out of sight men play detestable music  
that echoes through the tile-walled corridors.  
And all the time I think I'm going home.

9 July 2004



## SAMOTHRACE

All things coming

sayless, a wait.

Woman voice radio

talk in car pass

every effing thing asks

who you are.

Island of riddles.

Every island also is.

An island is because

there's no getting

away from the particular

question an island is.

This much I know.

I have to answer the body.

Every body.

Walk naked through the forest till I know.

10 July 2004

=====

That's why I need you  
so I tell you  
how much you need me.  
The air around us  
understands such lies  
such truths and balances  
all things using the twin  
sisters Echo and Silence  
and then its all done.

10 July 2004

## THE ARGUMENT FROM DESIGN

Harmony of the sky –  
someone at the switch  
the Bishop says  
but I don't hear the organ  
I just hear you

like the old Times Square IRT  
alive with change trains possibilities  
snacks and news stands and hot colors  
as if there were nothing in the world  
but traveling and information,

your wet skin in the dark –  
isn't that what you said?

10 July 2004

<late:> =====

If I ever need you you'll be there  
at the end of a doorknob  
in the dark of a closet  
you'll be counting the grains of dust  
they taste like incense  
you'll be recording on your little Walkman  
the echo of all the silences  
between us.

For even *nothing* has a shadow  
and it will be waiting for me at the gate  
to bring me to my room  
and turn down the coverlet and kiss me to sleep.

10 July 2004