BREAKING YOGA

Asperity. Breaking yoga you find yoga inside.

Break ‘inside’ and you find yoga, not hiding, not revealing, there, inside inside and inside outside,
yoga. You want to break yoga so you don’t have to do anything anymore.

Go ahead, just try not to do. Only yoga can help you do nothing.

4 December 2004
INVOKING

I call you by a different name
but you still come.
I think with the arrogance of a god
that my voice has the power
to summon you,
you come
to my beautiful voice
whenever I call you.

But really you come
because you hear a baby crying.
You come because some baby’s crying
and it has to be yours.

4 December 2004
(alchemy as euphony as dementia)

I always want to be able
to say the first thing that comes into my head.
Even if when I am even older and greyer
they might think I’m losing it,
the little mind I ever had,
I’ll still let my tongue think for me,
let the golden word find its
own way out of the gutter of my mouth.

4 December 2004
SADHANA

This word I brought home from India twenty years ago, my sadhana, the thing I do that does me,

that veils me with truth and changes my identity— I fail by success and live by dying.

4 December 2004
This little Chinese fountain pen
that barely writes, never really wrote,
still can scratch some words out,
the perfect instrument for me
to annotate my pilgrimage,
to remember the markets of Darjeeling
and try to tell this afternoon what happened.
And who thinks he’s writing it down.

4 December 2004
from HERMES

So if image and percept arise
from color, images crystallize
out of color, as from the fascinated
eye studying flames or waves or a
livid bruise on someone’s skin
faces or forms appear,
    so from
image we rise to primal bruise,
from bruise to color, from color perhaps
we can rise to the first known,
the noetic, the intelligible
void of any phantasms

μη σχήμα, μη χρωμα, ζητων θεασασθαι, αλλ εκεινο
μαλλον το τουτων ποητικον

not trying to see shape or color, but rather that by which those
things are made

THE ARROW

*after a fragment by Honein ibn Ishaq in Scott’s Hermetica, Volume III.*

The arrow that will slay you
has already left Death’s bow

how long before it finds its mark?
What dance will you do to make it miss?

Or where will I hide? Or is this ignorance
a shield the wise men know?

And every question a distraction
to slow its flight?

4 December 2004
It turns out that it is man [ανθρώπος] who revealed to ‘downward-tending nature’ the beautiful form of the god.

και ἐδείξε τη καταφωρεί φυσεί την καλήν του Θεου μορφήν.

Poemandes 14, Scott I, 120

But not enough in flowing down
this Person was in-loved-with by nature
the more-and-more-ing
of instances of mind

The image is whatever has been imagined.

We are caught on the wheel.

4 December 2004
HILARY’S CAROUSEL

She watched and didn’t ride,
a child born to pour light into words
she stood and watched
the big hard animals turn and turn,

the glass-eyed dolls she worshipped
that stood arrayed around the middle
they stood still too, just like her,
she watched them too, and knew

her difference from everyone at all.

4 December 2004
STATES

Dreamless sleep (= I’m busy in a different cosm) yields sometimes to dream (busy in other coins of this one) or into [phantasms of] anxiety where I am stuck right here, caught among all the do and not do must and must not, hurry hurry, but lie there powerless to do ought but perpend. No respondo. I witness my life plight as if from afar yet my innards churn as if I were really here, and now. As if I were in the midst not on the marge.

Then there is Waking – made up from all of the above, plus you.

5 December 2004
Look at the yellow roses still
I am allowed none of this to say
because the vernacular is forbidden again
by the Poetican, the language ‘of flesh
and blood’ machined to fine
tolerances of unmeaning, I love that too
but I have something to say to you,
something about the roses, yellow, morning,
all the stupid beauty that endures
past theory and atrocity, the things
that say I am a dream and you are dreaming me.

5 December 2004
Leave alone. Let the conquistador wash up on his islands, the arts administrator revive the retro-trash she needs to make the now-negating statements all museums seem to live for. Today ago.

Now never sells. Cannot be bought, and by the time they package it it’s dust, Pompeii, your aunt’s church calendar with Saint Andrew dying on a crisscross crucifix over her gateleg table bearing one nameless baby’s long ago bronze shoe.

5 December 2004
How frail I am or why,
a little too much salt and down I go
or need a bite of something
before we hit the pillow,
muddle of the day. Now tell me:
who am I telling this to?

5 December 2004
Margins ερωτος margins blue hydrangeas sunlight answers all questions with assurance saying Touch me while I last. Looking deep into the woods, all the bare branches weave eventually a curtain of pale obscurity that looks like smoke or haze. Deep in there. Everything goes there, gone in the forever trees.

5 December 2004
Dawn’s fingers clenched
[clutching
the rim]
ready to fall.

5 a.m.
6 December 2004
Where does the dream fit
inside the little box of waking?

Was it something your mother gave you
from beyond the grave, as they say,
though why would anything be there
in particular, past the iron angels
and the blunt crosses made of stone
to look like logs? What if you’re not
a magus or a Rosicrucian, however
will you understand these pictures
you wake up with between your ears?

Daytime religions provide no explanations.
Just commandments, anxieties and wrath
—enough for most of the people most
of the time, but what of the night?
And who is that watchman? Let’s say
dreams are no more than the movies—
yet you show them to yourself, you made them
maybe, downloaded them from bedlam
but who knows. And while you watch
you are no one but the watcher.

You are the night. But now the morning
sprawls around you, houses, trucks,
the ordinary miracles of space unpacked
and you can’t quite get it yet, can’t get
to the street with your head so full of
pictures. The world was ransacked
while you slept and all the necessary things
are missing out here now but still in you.
You walk around as if you were in a museum, scratching yourself, your hands cold, waiting for the coffee to brew, feeding the birds, not understanding one single thing you see. What else can you do till things catch up with you?

6 December 2004
Now it is, and before it was, Hermes said another thing. Listen to me and I will explain (he said) the attitude suitable for a young man to maintain when listening. Hear wisdom. He looks like this. (Holds eyes half opened, sits upright on his hard chair, knees touching.) And then he lets his mind dwell on anything that comes along. Dwell. Dwell. 

*Dwell in what passes* – that is the way, catch the eyes just as they take hold and fold all their seeing back onto themselves and then go further sightless into knowing until, withdrawn from the object, they suddenly see. The spectral presences of day.

Don’t see what is there. See what you can, what is in you to be seen.

6 December 2004
But I wonder:
there is always under.
I train my intellect to go down
low, to the lowest altar
and there I find it, the sacrament,
the lost one, the never spoken word

we are born hearing. There,
where the mind disappears
between the mountains.
I have thought my way there
so many times. Under Sinai.
The sun at midnight.

6 December 2004
End of NB 271