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EASTER

Now the tomb is open.
What we buried of us
totters towards the ordinary
day, restless to be talking.
We don't trust anything
that doesn't talk.

There is a smell
surprisingly like spices,
that vague term, smells and tastes
of elsewhere, medicine
for meat, to dissuade
the flesh of those we've killed
from harming us
when we take them also in,
cinnamon, clove,
clove, clove, clove,
one for each palm, each sole

and no water, the dead
do not drink water, lose
their taste for it,
what we buried
stands in the doorway
talking to us, from now on
words will be our water,

something has come back,
the strange sound of a rock
crunching grass and gravel as it topples
and lets the light out,
sound of the light breaking out.

20 April 2003

Adam and Eve Witness the Resurrection of Christ

Your breasts are bare again,
my loins also,
suddenly why
when this one thing
comes back to light
is everything visible?

20 April 2003

CLASSICALLY BEING CLOSE TO YOU

Put your hands on my skin
I am stained with imperfection
uncertainty

Color me,
there is a need
deeper than burdock roots
a need that comes calling
when all the many one
who are you, my Two, my twin,
my only one

call out a word,
mall or maid, and bees
stumble around new flowers,

spring is so clumsy,
beauty is always the precarious

a delicate white-veined
image in a red stone
like the giant Orion
or the horse of a hunter,

looking slow at the little
stone I see a fossil leaf,

make me understand
how you have such power
to heal me and complete

or take even this little stone away.

20 April 2003

NORA

Am I weakened or strengthened
by this one memory
an empty white beach and high surf
a girl in loose clothes hurries
over the dazzling sand after a little boy
who wants to know waves.

It is before the war. The sky and sea
are impossibly blue. The girl's
long brown hair shines in the wind,
really he wants to know her,
how can he know her, his whole life,
I turn and see her close, close,
she is bigger than the sky.

20 April 2003

MORNING OF BEAUTIFUL

sky strange concert of crows
in the rising, notes I never heard

concerto: a striving with or against

blue sky over, alabaster east
with a molten sun
like veins in it.

The crows were telling. But this time they seemed to be speaking a language different from Crow. I understand a little Crow but this was different. I am warned. I feel warned. My heart fills with soft anxiety, but clarity. Give up everything but the actual. Benefit all.

Huge amber prayer beads seem to be slipping through my fingers. I walk in circles on the delirious lawn, it is Russia, it is the animal called Time itself, I feel it at my heels. Blue-eyed grass, daffodils, doves running around, is all of this prayer?

This is the world when I let it. When I stop with my woe, my war, my waiting, my waltz and listen, listen like a shrewd attorney desperate for loopholes, who knows that the law always has room for us, and the air opens right before my face.

21 April 2003

Suppose I really were awake already
and this traffic all my cars

would this place be this place still
or would I be a stranger?

21 April 2003

Reading a new book
remember
love beneath old trees.

21 April 2003

MORTALITY

How near? A narrow
pathway through
this graveyard of you.

21 April 2003

MORALITY

When it's a chain
break it

when it's water
drink it

when it's fire
take off your clothes

when it's gone
remember

that way the wedding
is complete.

21 April 2003

EVIDENCE

Stertor

of a sleeping man.

The wrong shoes

on the window ledge

the wrong women

wrong house,

wrong midnight.

Did I imagine

any of this will last?

Translated

from the Portuguese

by the sleeping man

wide awake

listening to the sea

a hundred miles away

he knows it to the yard

as if he had a sea gull in his heart.

21 April 2003

REMEDIES

Hear your disorder
Dr Goldfinch
at the window
has come to cure.

Endure. Endure
by answering, that's all
he says but my
god he's beautiful.

21 April 2003

FERRY

Consider the ferry.

It has form, function,
destination. It has qualities
relevant to each.

It floats securely
over usually
tranquil bodies of water
bringing people
on habitual
(commuting, not cruising)
journeys. It is the only
or at least the usual
way of getting there,

island. Further shore.
It uses its whole
body to connect
two places not it.

It tolerates
passengers and freight;
you don't take a ferry
to the sea. You don't
sleep on it overnight

usually though you drowse
in the stuffy cabin

on wet days, or snooze
in sunlight, foredeck
in high summer.

Enough about you.
The ferryman
walks up and down the deck
swinging an old lantern,
why? To tell you.
Who? The admiral
of between.

21 April 2003

PARABLE

A certain man was going
up one day from a place
to some place else
and there along the way he found
what everybody else was
looking for. He stood a while
and studied it, wondering
if he should make an effort
to make it his own, and
how that could be done
if after all he thought it worth
the doing of it, and he did,
so did, and brought it home
but his home was different
from before, it had no door.

22 April 2003

Love leads us
to overlapped
eternities

we
have been
in this bed before

before there was
a telephone
and after it again

we were we
will be talking

22 April 2003

MAESTRO DI COLOR CHI SANNO

who understand that *gravitas* and *levitas* are the bones and muscles (respectively) of one great organism. When Durante calls Aristotle the lord of those who think, I think he means them, the people who are not-linear in their mind's movement, because the rational and the intelligential need to run together. curvet around each other on their way to truth. And of such liberties poems are the exemplary statements. By levity we lift ourselves off the ground; by gravity we live on earth. Discover those energies, gestures, gorgeous hesitations in the poem too. We need the other. Or, all we need is the other.

22 April 2003

TROUBADORS

Disguise yourself, desperado,
we're coming into town. Now
the sun bonnet and the crinolines
come out, toss away the cigar.
You are my brother, the smart one,
and I have to take care of you,
my dark side, my bloated plutocrat
of crime, my slim Valentino,
my sheik, my almost girl.
Treat them all nice as pie
gooseberry though it be, tart
and tingly, all these houses
keep their secrets too, slave
quarters out back, leper in the attic,
now sway a little as you walk,
be sweet but don't go biblical,
we're almost there, the sheriff
is abusing his fice dog and your
eyes kindle, I'll never really know
if it's compassion or De Sade
that makes you take such interest,
chill, honey, chill — the law
is like that, punishments galore
and no reward, now simper pretty
at the teller, this is the bank already
though it doesn't look like one,
take out your gun and show it,
giggle a little and take the money,

all the money, all the mama money
the runs the world, it's all
yours now, ours now, don't bother
shooting the poor man, smile,
back out the way we came in
hurting nobody, owning everything,
conquistadors of this feeble town,
how long the road is to religion
the dust of poetry choking us, music
chasing us on horseback, the world
is horses and we're on foot,
weary miserable exiles, dirty, scheming,
we know every cranny in the hills,
they'll never find us but we'll never
have a place to call our own, keep
talking, we've still got all the money.

22 April 2003

not sure what to call it
some kind of fulgence or glow
like an uncle of the light

or your face
too close to mine for me to mistake you
for anything like a relative

closer than that
mine without being me
as if light staggered coming down the sky

if that's where light comes from
and fell around me
leaving me in the dark

worshipping the closest other thing that is not me

25 April 2003