

8-2003

## augG2003

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## DISASTERS

1.

Stored my *chi* in the wrong vessel  
heated my copper cauldron over the wrong fire  
    what will become of me  
trained my copper coil to drip its condensate  
into the wrong chalice and to the wrong  
mouths I brought that brandy

slowly reverently  
serving from the heart what mind had made  
as if there were some difference  
when all it is, is people dogging in the park

as if the feel of things is what runs the world  
I am angry at the whole city  
the way Lucifer was angry at God.

26 August 2003

2.

Where are the ones who will listen to me  
partners and sisters and cousins in leather jerkins  
just in from the country, who has a car  
anyhow, what do you really think when you pass  
old men on bicycles or the woman a little  
too old to show her navel stares at us in the parking lot,  
who is looking, who's driving, whose hand  
do you think this paper fell from  
on which my destiny seems to be written,  
is that just a feeling too, they call it a receipt  
though far as we know nothing has ever been given.

26 August 2003

3.

Who signs my mail?

I am the logical suspect

but I'm the one who doubts.

All the rest when they see my name

blame me. What does a name know?

When I was five

I rode a bus

to Kings Highway

I read a book

about stars

I've been trying

to tell you

what happened since

but you keep thinking I'm telling you

something that concerns us both.

It's not. It's only for you. I'm no one yet.

26 August 2003

## **A BOOK OF BEGINNING**

Listen to them listening to me

not a sparrow says

a leaf, a leaf is all about waiting

turning everything that happens

into a silent transmission

yards away beneath the earth

roots hear the light

We membrane each other.

27 August 2003

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You travel through the world till you find your masters and your slaves

Till then you ride the sun,  
like anyone.

27 VIII 03

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Hearing helps

In sun  
the dim hum  
of last night's  
katydids  
the day's  
fresh buzz

It takes  
a million  
voices  
to make such silence

---

Dream on

Nobody wants to hear you dream

Only tell  
what still  
is happening

Quick stream  
rock in sun,

**kingfisher.**

I would take my name from that bird

only now  
this morning

sixty four years after  
when I have used  
up all my hexagrams  
and begin again

Sequence of years

Bird fall — the blue bolt

not lightning.



I asked my mind  
what my name is

and it said that bird  
that falls from heaven.

27 VIII 03

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Little by little  
saying things

to one another  
seems the way

Someday  
something said

stays  
Then saying

is a kind of dwelling  
a kind of knowing

always but then  
Not interruption

Silence  
is a word's shape

listening  
Pouches of silence

breathe  
Little by little

one another.

27 August 2003

## OMINA

When an omen is observed  
a good Roman could say  
*I accept the omen* or  
could reject it, saying  
nothing or not much.

I think they understood  
how to put things  
out of their hearts  
and not worry.

They turned anxiety  
into stone highways

even I have walked on.

Palliation, not cure.

To flee from omens  
you need good roads.

27 August 2003

[RUNES]

I too *runar*  
know *whisper*

spill the signs' spiel  
breadboard the better

as if a cut  
could do this to a wood,  
pronounce it,

Ogham  
my old material.

1.

First rune a father  
looking for his mother.  
That is western culture.

Comes out of Two  
a mother looking for her son.

Three a daughter looks on.

A daughter has to be both  
mother and son  
(as three is two and one)

a daughter is her father

finding her mother finding her son.

Only a daughter ever listens.

Four is a son and then it's done.

This is the story the pronouns speak,  
He, She, he, she, I have come  
all the way from Earth to tell you  
and tell you only this.

Earth is water, Florida, a road by the sea

light lost in sun  
you find again.

We are water.

28 August 2003

## VARIATIONS ON A LINE OF GOETHE'S

Who are you all you  
stand before me in the Emergence  
you are tattered with light  
my eyes can't hold

Seeing is so fractional

Love exists to increase sensory awareness  
in us of us

Who put the cross on the door  
and no Christ on it?  
Where must Christ be  
if he's not on it?

Is he somewhere  
we can never imagine,  
is he close, closer  
than we can bear?

and who is waiting  
behind the old door?  
and while you're waiting  
ask Who brought the wreath

of red roses  
to keep company with the cross,  
winding the thorny stems  
painfully around the blackened wood?

Who brought the roses?  
Who darkened the cross?  
Did Time do it?  
No, Time has no hands.

Who married the roses to the cross,  
the *many-flower* to the *intersection*,

all the answers add up  
to one more question  
and even if the door opened  
(inward? outward?)  
if the door opened  
and you saw,  
would you trust yourself,  
virgin, newborn beholder  
of what for all you know  
has been living in that place forever

and how can you see a place,  
virgin, how can you trust yourself to see?

Seeing is a fragment.  
Even if you see everything  
what you see is fragmentary.  
And so you ask again: "Who are you

all you stand  
before me”

hoping their answer  
if they answer  
will let you understand  
the abyss of the visual  
into which you stare  
like a frightened deer  
whose only way is away,

hold it all together  
cross-blossoming frequencies  
arrogant unfoldings of the light,  
flowers that prick your fingers  
deep infections, colors that hurt,  
a voice in a neighbor’s house  
at dawn showing the way,  
a woman you have never seen  
stands there in the new light  
rehearsing for the day,

but she’s not the one you’re asking  
and not the answer  
just a parallel questioner  
waiting for the secret tide

now I have to go out and buy the roses  
so I can be the one I think about

now I have to go and find the door  
so I can wreath them there



and make something open,  
and I will live with the question  
like a wolf with meat.

29 August 2003

## DREAMSHOT

I dreamed of a snapshot of younger Barbara  
snuggled close on my daybed with a girl friend  
I almost recognize. How young they are,  
with sly smiles,. B laughing, flirting  
with the camera, with the viewer, with the one  
beside her. Did I take the picture?

It's my daybed, the picture's in my own hand,  
and it's my years have passed since this woman  
was the girl I recognize. I want it to be me  
she's smiling at, but why? Her smile endures,  
I had it yesterday, I've never seen this picture  
ever, how can such things be? How can a house

exist in dream I can come back to waking?  
Who is reading through my eyes, seeing her smile  
as things were then, before I knew her?  
That's what a photo is, to be there before a thing,  
to be before the beginning, and to see.

30 August 2003

## CONSPIRATORS

*Breathe with me*

I am the secret society you read about  
in a fat red book you found in dream.  
All books are red. All dreams spill out as words,  
daylight remembering something deeper.

Long house mornings. Tell the people  
what you dreamed, that's the only news  
that matters. Not the government, not the poets,  
just what the darkness spilled

and you heard just enough of  
to babble when you woke. Listen to me, you say,  
I had this dream. What is a dream?

A dream is a divine misspelling,  
an accident that happened to time.

I am the secret society and I let you in  
because it is lonely in my secret,  
and I have built this wall and carved  
an ornate door in it just to let you in.  
Otherwise in that empty open field  
the meadow that goes on forever  
we would have missed each other surely.  
But the gaunt wall drew you, and the locked  
door let you in

2.

But if he is the door

I am the seal.

If he is the vine

I am the bracero

who harvests the clusters,

if he is the wine

I must be the chalice,

if he is the resurrection and the life

I must be the kiss of death and the sleep

where everything begins again.

If he is the good shepherd

I must be the wolf

who drives the lovely stragglers

into the heresy of thinking for themselves,

I must be the mouth

and if he is the Alpha and the Omega

I must say everything that comes between

I must be language and a dream.

3.

Every time I say I love you  
it's just a test  
but no one knows  
who's being tested

my fingers tremble  
and my breath  
rushes through unfamiliar  
pastures in my chest

looking for you  
or running away  
I love you I need  
to hear you say

but is it the timbre  
of your voice  
or what the words are  
that so gently

answer or demur  
or is it just exactly  
that you hear  
and keep your own counsel?

I love you for your silence.

30 August 2003

## THE SYSTEM

The spinal understanding  
we had to come to to kiss  
is a sequenced arousal,  
a wound notable for *fire*,  
the old word for neurology,  
behavior, that *dry water*  
the Waterman carries in her jug.  
She has long legs and a most  
ambiguous groin, electric.  
A clock shows the way:  
bending always to the right  
go down. One of these days  
with that water gushing  
down her back we're going  
to invent the alphabet,  
that garage to keep our thinking  
safe while we sleep our way,  
snoozing through princely afters.

31 August 2003

## THE ANALYST

Thinking there are reasons for what I do  
I look inside it. Weird little tea chest  
with a heartbeat fluttering under dry leaves.

Close that. Try this, a clay bottle from  
Panama, a sweaty smell when I shake it,  
thick gurgling, no cork, whatever it is

must be evaporating. How long will it last?  
Some decisions make themselves, I wait for it  
and try an old woolen sock with something in it

harder than it but softer than a bone.  
It is a wad of paper money in a foreign language,  
a yellow king with horn-rim glasses, no word I know.

Just numbers. Like the clock or calendar.

31 August 2003

## **A&B**

A thousand miles apart  
they masturbate to sleep  
thinking of each other.

As if distance is  
what thinking's for.

Philosophy.



## CASINO

Don't let silence win the bet.

Pick *red, odd*, and pile

your white chips on that.

It is not gambling when you know you'll lose.

And act of faith instead

that difference should one day win,

and color, no matter what.

Wheelless the world spins,

the croupier swinging from the moon,

and you the final physicist

holding your sweet breath.

31 August 2003