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The essence of it
is a kind of revival
which for a leaf like me
would mean the tree again

the spurt of sap
up into the slow light
the hardening glance
to be reborn

is to be them all
before me
and then be me
deliberately this time

not as a stranger
coming to town
carrying my fences with me
in case I learn to speak.

7 January 2002

it might be there
it might be hidden in it

it might make a sound
like a fox in the bush
not exactly calling

it might be you've never heard it
and I've just dreamed it all these years

it might be the reason for me
and you have reasons of your own

7 January 2002

TERRORISM IS BUILT INTO THE SYSTEM

Think of how to birds born since last winter
a year's first snow must seem an overwhelming
incomprehensible catastrophe. I'm sure they
at least never quite believe the spring again.

7 January 2002

OF GIANTS

To find the pen
suddenly in hand
and no word to say
to tell the strife of feeling

in the giant's heart
he takes back
from the beech grove
takes back from the gull
the stone the cloned
personalities
templated on the projection
of his fear of rejection,
his so-called affections,

he tells the truth
he has lost himself
in the desert
his feelings
those stupid angels
who scream at him
from inside
a harp he is
that others play
and only he can hear

the privilege of pain.
And he wants
to be done with it
and feel from each
moment out
into a clean world
virgin to his glance

comma after comma
he writes it down

yet every word too
seems to take
more of him away.

2.

The giant is a creature whose heart is too big for its body but too small for the world. He hides it inside other beings, who all unknowing help him carry it. Then it happens that the giant is stuck to them until his heart comes back. What a war it is, and how hard to win that heart to come back home. The separation from the heart and the chase for the bearer of the heart and the agony when the heart must be reclaimed, and the torture of actually reclaiming it — these boring and preposterous anguished amusements are what the giant means by his ‘feelings.’ Meantime the real pain of the world is all around him, neglected or not even noticed. This is why, in folklore, giants are always reckoned stupid. Sometimes (is it in the *Vafþrúðnismál*?) the giants know the right words. But not the tune. There is too much noisy pain in them, feeling this and feeling that, wanting, fearing, wondering, all the clatter of desire. They don’t know the tune, the tone, that holds the words, worlds, together. So they perish.

7 January 2002

and the snow persisted
falling into itself
and the plows make beast noises as they turn
annihilating the democracy of the fall

heaping and scouring clear
a hierarchy of roads.

7 January 2002

And full well I know that at this white hour
something I can't conceive is traveling towards me

singing like a cello it comes
standing like a woman hands on hips
looking back over her shoulder at me

she comes my way backwards
as if my future is her past

you who were always lost are always arriving.

7 January 2002

What happens to Romeo is the tragic version of what happens to Demetrius and Lysander. *He believes the evidence of his senses.* That's the end of him. He thinks she's dead because he fails to see her living. I say this and I know this, and still I want to believe only you.

7.I.02

TO THE SAD ANGEL OF MY AND EVERY HISTORY

Stand, stylites, stand on a column
and be gold

be at the neck of a star
be a city's middle

windpipe of a word
forever on the way to being spoken.

7 January 2002

Telling all who come
that she is the one
and I believe it
for an hour or a day
sometimes even one whole morning after

Which shows how much time is worth,
that sad tract of unbelieving

what thought my whole life meant.

7 January 2002

the curve of the hour
passes
time is fractal'd with attention

if you go into the curve
and become its pure extension
time is continuous and infinite

but go outside the curve
into the eternal — which is the
opposite other of infinite —

and there is freshness, *soma*, free.

Beyond the curve is time unbound.

2.

The closer you look, the more things are happening. Time is the plane of happening, and our attention to it forms a curve, fractal, a never-ending always bending line. This line never yields a discontinuity.

Just as a Koch curve extends a line to infinity while all its proliferations are still bounded within a circle that could be drawn around the original triangle from which the curve was generated, so the infinite 'productions of time,' on the scale of event, are bounded still by a circle beyond which there is no curve, no time.

This is pure being, without becoming. Pure awareness without object.

I think it is the way out — but not a way you travel, since it is always where it is, there, timeless. It is not reached, it is realized. Take the goal as the path and be where you are.

8 January 2002

a voice in the middle

woke me
with one word
only
 and I understood

“Do not involve me
in the ruin
of your feelings

I love you entirely
on the other
side of what happens”

9 January 2002

so many things to ask about

a peel of lilac coming off the sky
over the mountains

they talk about rain but I see
the core of a flower
or a cave, a rock overhang really,

and under it a man sits
knowing a dozen years
until he is the same as what he knows

and there is nothing further than his hands.

9 January 2002

Flags on their way to work
Sad to think those pretty little rags
Mean the only answer to death is to kill.

9.I.02

Caught a word here and there
smell of hot dust from the heater first time turned on
winter values like a new color you never knew

I hear a creaking sound, it is the table under my writing hands
speaking as they move, the part of wood
people when I was little called the leaf,

the leaf with no tree, the singing leaf
that tells the grain of the little I know straight as it can.

9 January 2002

I was a gay scientist worried about stars
No one can count me
And I will leave all my chromosomes
To the holographic museum on every main street
Like a lover who wipes himself off with his mother's wedding dress
The world folds back on itself fold upon fold
With a snickering sound I try to persuade myself is just a dream
Are these snarling bored animals all around what I mean by myself?

9 January 2002

It depends on where my hand is in my heart
how the children her to break out of school
and run like silk flowers down the gutters
to the park where left-handed games are waiting

they play them a tree here a tree there
and you can never tell because I was made
of sun meat once and stood on the deck
of every burning sidewalk wanting the women

the light had just stopped happening on the
movie screen inside the cool dark and Eden
was over forever patrolled by bored angels
with machine guns and no grief could ever

get through their sunglasses I was alone
with my feelings stuck till the script was over
and the boredom of human talk is followed
by the boredom of silence again the children run

anything is better than school can't you remember?

10 January 2002

THE THAW

Melt snow falls off the trees
the pattern of bare branches
everywhere different
intricate and free —
I sense but can't explain
that every one of these
continuous interscriptions
of branch and twig and light and snow
is the track or trace
of someone's mind,
not all the same one,
visible evidence
of what thinking is
we all are doing
struggling towards clarity
parity beauty
and the branches write it
into the sky instructed
by the bright mindspace
of this one and that one
you and me and he and she
I mean the actual
neighbor minds
here shadowed outward
in the form of trees
lines of calligraphy
in a lost language
we find every day again
breathless surprise
the scribbled reality
from which we come.

*

I know too much about this inscribing mind
the branches write the story all too clear
and it is the same story to which they contribute
episode and commentary mingled
(a branch becomes its own shadow
when the snow slips off) sudden thaw
and all our stratagems are known.
Pompey perishes, mystery of battle, why,
why, and the silent anguish of those
who have to watch the best and prettiest
die in noisy agony. All the same story
so many minds inscribe. I think I see
the language of the world out there
molecule by molecule outspoken hard
not to interpret but just put to rest hidden
someday in the green rags of springtime.

10 January 2002

Say so, Mr Star,
you don't. no god
you say? Then who
made the doubt

that lives in me
at the core
of every pleasure?

Isn't god doubt
and sudden glory
also flaming

in the middle of pain
the unexpected
outcome
the unknown other

in the heart of the same?
Just because you
can flame all you desire,
immoderate chemical,

that doesn't make me,
inadequate from the beginning
and always departing,
able to be sure

the pain I bear
is meaningless or merely
ethical like a nice
try or a good idea.

No ethics but reality
no chemistry but poetry
no mythology but fear —
isn't this enough truth

to live in a world
that may not ever be broken
I mean that maybe
never worked at all

until I do?

10 January 2002

Measured by moons some pearls
are always wanting
 like my skin
confronted with so many other skins
what can that mute attraction be?

Your father tried to explain his life
as if you have none of your own—
this he called Science, like high school,
like beavers drinking milk shakes,
like the Ninth of Thermidor. Sorry,
that's history. Like Hitler on St Helena's.
Like ambassadors immune from traffic lights,
they call them *feu* in France, fire.

Of course he keeps forgetting what you are
lost in his more and more imaginary who
of you, the Relationship, the "tenderness
on demand" you called it. Or I did.

But who was listening? Me vs world —
what side are you on, beloved?
Either party has its points, snowfall
between midnight and dawn, wine
in the sheets, a touch too playful
to be tenderness itself this means,

like a man who claims to love you
belong to the Louise Brooks Fan Club
something is not right. The music stopped.

Long ago. Of course you pick the world.
You like a fight but more than that
you like to win. You like to please.
Then punish for the pleasure given.

Spendthrift
Snow
Resiliences

A deck
Apart from its ship.

The moon
Abaft its light.

Everything
Stands behind you
Tonight.

11 January 2002

My hands are so far away
my feet are never, are nowhere
this is going to sleep or somewhere
going and then gone and all I know
is my hands are somewhere else from me

11 January 2002

then it was never and a now
was wasted by the ruined stream

how could all that water break

shards of it that cut the human feet
that tried to write their essay in those woods

nowhere saying this is where you stay

it seems to me at your side
it seems to me not separate

you are the only thing that ever happened to me

11 January 2002