

3-2001

**marD2001**

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Put this on the table.  
An abundance of something  
nobody needs. A correction  
of a deflection  
that brought you down  
sullen to breakfast

furrows in the food  
exhausted waking. Rim.  
Skim the clock  
for your judgment.  
Morning. Everything misspelled.

20 March 2001

## IT IS SPRING

*And I have done with being*

It happened  
while I was sleeping  
there was a woman  
boxer bare breasted  
wanting to fight  
wanting me to hurt her

I could not bring  
myself to strike her  
and she would not hit me  
we stood in sunlight  
till it was different

freight trains  
ran beside me  
too close for comfort

heading the same direction  
old red cars  
maybe they killed me  
after all maybe  
it was time to stop being

and wake up  
in Post-Existence  
this thing they mean by now.

20 March 2001

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because of the thing the accurate  
taking care of the assembly of interaction  
that senate of young intentions  
splay-buttocked over smooth marble  
claiming a certain beauty

*bellum* is the Latin word for war.

Haunt me. You haunt me.  
Put this in Latin too, beloved friend.  
Watch movies in Los Angeles in mythic rain

among the incantations of desire.  
Love is the Latin for addiction.  
Cerebrospinal. Cranial innervation  
Shot to pieces. My ideas hurt,

they hurt me. Scandalous capital  
chanting its dumb song of more.

He-whore, the poet said, a hinny  
and a jenny, a broke banker and a banned broker,  
we are just a shimmy in the boite,  
a crack in the plate glass window

signifying internecine strife.  
Unrest me. Imbreast me.  
Civil shrike stabbing its breakfast on the nail

we live off other people dying.  
It hurts to think this thinking.

20 March 2001

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it is good to win something  
even if it's a game

it's good to walk around outside  
even if it's only on the ground

it's good to look up into the sky  
even if you have to share it with me

some weather coming — good  
to get wet even if it's only rain.

21 March 2001

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the space or the desire

blocked, from cuneic impostures  
old runes old epyllion the little  
epic of the lost story I bet your life on

to read the Hero Log  
across the brittle dark

in Baltic fogs or split the log  
find him there as usual  
the face in the fire  
is always him

the moon in the water  
gleam of her hip

we can lose anything  
except the story  
everything else we can make or find again  
but the story once lost stays lost forever

sometimes lost in the telling too.

21 March 2001

## SOUVENIR OF TORONTO

Basket basket fine live crabs  
a spill of tonal language crosses les trottoirs  
switch light blue blur  
Bloor

and then the semaphore  
live crabs live sea urchins  
stracchino cheese the mild  
sea gar, the devilfish the skate

begin me slow  
I am here to be a painting  
I climbed up out of the ground  
Using only colors as my rungs

Until you see me  
I am only here  
And then I really am  
A treasure of a deep sea locker sprung  
Open from the weight of the implicit gold

Precious pressure.  
Break the door  
The party's music is too loud  
Who needs all these people when I have you,

They pour cream into my bell.  
Or is it the other way

I stand on the roof of nobody's house  
And beat a stick against the sky

Nothing happens but everybody hears it

Everybody hears it all the time.

22 March 2001

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Saying the names of them  
Quietly to myself  
A species of magic  
Like holding a small  
Rock for a long time in your hand.

22 March 2001



## **RUSTICA**

and then new things come  
a farmer to his shuck  
and a shorn sun

stare too long  
embarrassed cloud  
everything gone

and the land too will know me  
having no choice but understanding.

22 March 2001

## THE FISHERWOMAN

The fisherwoman went out alone that day  
Wasn't even dawn yet the coast was pale

But that was surf the sky was dark  
The boy who goes out with her was not there

Sick or romancing someone or gone home  
He was not there at the little jetty

He did not raise the sail or shove the land back with his heel  
So she went out alone this morning

It mattered very little to this young fisherwoman  
Whether she was alone or together

We're always alone in the important hour  
The one that's coming and she raised the sail

After she rowed out into the lagoon  
And down she went along the quiet sea

To come to her hour. Things wait for us.  
Even there on the empty horizon where the dark

Meets another just like itself  
Something a boat is meant to find.

She did not look around her as she sailed  
Did not look up. She kept her eyes

Fixed on a mirror laid flat in front of her  
On a little table where her wine cup stood

A mirror that showed the stars  
She steered by the stars stored in the glass

And where she went the stars were going too  
But always left when she went right

And each of the brave heroes of the night  
Stood inside out above her

Hunters and harriers no more  
Because a woman when she sails alone

Is the only upright presence in the world  
The rest is just a sky full of bright mistakes

That lead her to the truth  
The empty place inside the ocean

From which the fish are spoken she pretends to want  
Find catch and bring home squirming silver

And leaves on the dockside later for her neighbors  
When she comes back home and time

Has turned into something as paltry as the day.  
She takes her mirror home and hangs it up

And black it is and always will be,  
A glass that only knows how to show the night.

23 March 2001  
[from a dream last night]

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But can we dream apart the brick  
facing of the skirting wall that hems us in?  
A house should be a habit of the light  
a way to forgive the wind. You can work  
anywhere your marvelous hands  
work in to language the images spelled out  
wide winged like chain link or a brown dog.  
Things examine dictionaries while we sleep.

23 March 2001

## FEAR OF PRONOUNS

You pronounce me  
and it hurts

there are some  
who cannot even speak.

23 March 2001

and from the news today:

“And the Earth and all its contents, including every person on the planet, are dark matter too, he said. Dark matter is anything that is not luminous enough to be seen from across the galaxy.”

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## STANZAS OF VITRIOL

Merovingians when the Arabs come  
Bred the light to spill from lotuses  
Damask reticules with old zinc pennies  
Cure sympathy leather policy  
Ordure tanning vats to speak the skin.

Nobody home. Music close, too loud  
For whom. The women. The object's  
Little, a convulsion spread the hills  
Apart we find our way inside the earth.  
But is it this earth. Is it this way in.

24 March 2001

---

They are waiting by the pasture with their knives  
And no one knows

Or the moon is waiting for them  
Over the black horse's back

On the street no place to sit  
Lean against the fire hydrant lean against the wall

Hang your shirt on a shadow  
And walk half naked through the sunshine

There is no sun there is only a street  
A street among people looking at you not looking at you

There is no light in the world except a street.

25 March 2001

---

caution me no caught a canyon captured a call  
cantharid trying to get trying to ketch caught cough  
caul trying to ket jkogg coff out oud ogf of  
kykle cyu cu cyle cycle tryuing to ghet  
everything is spelling don't believe me end of the day  
trying to come through and get out of the cycle of one sound  
is no5 easy one is caught in bnumbers also Mne Seraphim we will nebver  
understand because the hand led

the hand lef Blake to commit an error not yet possible  
he typed M instead of B because they are near one another on the keyboard  
hje had no keyboard fuck you neither to you you're kust just reading this  
stupid

book

don't you understand Blake was already typing his hands were making the  
gestures with the burin that later women or men with their brass typewriters  
right typers would make with their Underwoods their Royals the shiny thing  
in Lamb House James Rye Henry talked to

some man moved his hanmds\\\

end of the day a terror the man kept saying it over and over  
what would the African mean by over and cober the cen of the day?  
End of the day.

Juliana UI WANTED to know to bed nmyth who? Does she ever  
understand she does and doesn't care that's the loss of the bear the scuttling

Opf the blues hi[p/

All the mysteries of the ages are angels' typos.

Miniseries mysteries



Every mistake a taken miss  
A glorious angelGirl  
Spread all her soft wings wide  
Over the poemsphere

Unrehearsed joyory, glad  
Down glebe or a tense barn  
Spilled in our laps  
Principessa with no principles

Why wove you!

In the Mosuo language there are no words for father, illegitimacy, single mother, widow, jealousy, virgin, or monogamy. The explanation is simple: these concepts do not exist. The dominant role of women in Mosuo society is a unique remnant of a life that was once common in this part of China. As ancient wars took away the men, women assumed control.

The dogs were different then  
They looked differently at what we did  
More interested they were  
As if we hadn't worn them out  
With what we wanted from them

Want want want they bark to imitate

[25 March 2001]

## ANNUNCIATION

Christ's conception Carlo Crivelli  
in a dark corner of a dark  
room light finds her

likes her licks her  
a few words onto her lips and

and everything. This child  
is born to illustrate dying

to save us from death it is said  
save us from being born again.

It is the feast day of it, data, if we  
can see our shadow we will never  
have to be born again

if we see our shadow and know it  
for what it is and isn't

say hello and let it go

from a dark corner to a pale wall  
to a cracked window to a seamless light

the kind of late winter brightness they call the angel.

25 March 2001

## GUILTY CONSCIENCE

1.

wake up growling  
be Brooklyn  
squirrel hubcap pie  
a dark dork and a dim  
preacher we are Irish  
we are Aberdeen  
our Lady of burnt down.

2.

I am love,  
Give me all your vowels

I hear you breathing  
neat as a little goat  
soft under the consentings of the light

3.

because of these distresses the working poor  
spend their weeks reaving the spavined shore  
digging for dimes I mean clams the small change of the sea  
be careful with me I am as frail as hydrogen  
trumpeter, I am the wall that cannot fall  
Lake Van and patriarchy where do you loin these voids?

4.

altimeter of gas tanks flying on pure glue  
the art scene shivers with revision ravishment

because you woke and when you woke  
sat naked a little easy on the edge of the bed  
and did a ritual your teacher said  
my mind won't stop licking at your skin

the name of this is ever after  
Philadelphia  
angel Tetons  
Dutch girl primary shield a pale red morning

Snow after breakfast.

26 March 2001

---

acrostic chalices collect his blood by night  
soak stamps off paper to use again

there is jealousy in heaven that part of it  
the little gods live in  
                  angry and measuring  
measuring always the thigh fat and the bone  
slicing sunlight into portions paying taxes

the stamps are blue and now belong to you  
you use them to give your words away  
the image: *woman borrows stamp from one  
boyfriend to send letter to another*

it is from the Sumerian Dream Book that I dream  
and quote the text as waking as if it meant my life  
begins just because the sun does something

unmeasured overmeasured and very blue  
and the Paris pavement's wet with stars

27 March 2001

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**From the *Encyclopedia of Philosophy***

Wittgenstein's airplane  
Crashes near Bolzano.  
The little jet reactors  
At the tip of each propeller fin  
Went fast enough  
But the mountains reach up  
And bring him down.  
He lives in a cave  
Captured by Italian soldiers  
In white insulated clothes.  
Ungaretti sits beside him  
Neither one knowing the other.  
Wittgenstein listens  
To the sound of dawn on the blue  
Slopes dusk on the red slopes  
Listens to Ungaretti saying  
Less and less on slips of paper.  
Finally immensity  
Illuminates them both.  
When someone is turned  
Completely into light  
He forgets everything he doesn't  
Need to know. They go  
Their separate ways.  
But language is always listening  
And the world, mere echo  
Of what we say, was changed.

27 March 2001

---

The exploding briefcase under Hitler's table  
brings nobody back to life, maybe shortens  
the war, what is it I want to say about this,

the exploding briefcase under Hitler's table  
wakes me up but doesn't tell me anything  
or nothing works, explosions come and go

implode back into history, a bunch of feathers  
lunatic ornithologists try to name in sequence,  
as if we knew that a could cause b then where

would we be near the end of the alphabet, allied  
planes bombing everything in sight, Russians  
crawling out of folklore to rape real cities,

the briefcase that exploded under Hitler's table  
was filled with Rilke's poems, Heine's poems,  
Kant's minor treatises, a play by Büchner,

a letter from Thomas Mann to Pfitzner,  
Wittgenstein's blueprints for that house in Vienna,  
with postcards of Hyde Park from Roosevelt,

nobody knows, who are any of these people now,  
dust and bones, the briefcase under my own table  
blew up yesterday or will blow up tomorrow,

everything we believed is false, everything we wanted  
killed us, everything we thought was ours  
was just the shadow of some birds overhead

who left their feathers on our table, got baked  
into our bread, still flutter in our heads, sometimes  
pretty like the dappled walls of old Venice houses

from the glimmer of the long defiled canals.

[28 March 2001]

---

Let's see what my hands have to say  
There is a distance we can rouse  
To stand between us — that way we can add  
Shouting to the repertory, shout intimacies  
Across fascist piazzas in harsh sunlight  
There, where the citron still consents to ripen.

28 March 2001



---

The time that I is now

1.

Find everywhere the frequency of small things  
a magic pathway crossroads

carve into the soft white tree  
the number of his wound

on Levi's tombstone his Auschwitz tattoo.

Christ's wounds drip blueblack from the sudden rose,

no, just a handkerchief balled up, wet, a flower  
from the pocket

2.

Drive a staff of willow in the mud  
and believe whatever it tells you

Wave your arms in the air  
so your fingertip strum the stars  
and leash one to another

and they will throw a woven shadow on the road  
which will trap anybody's feet

any stranger any love

the one you want  
stumbling, slipping on star juice,

you thief, you sentimentalist.

29 March 2001

---

arbalest no astrolabe no armillary sphere  
is what the man meant on the radio  
the transistor built into your head with too many vowels  
you could fly to Zurich you could take drugs  
but it wouldn't stop the words that know how to find you

some words know how to find you

you are a man like other men  
you like some people and dislike others  
there is nothing unusual about you at all  
presumably everybody hears voices in their heads  
why do you worry about it why do you write them down

translated from the Arabic from the other side of the sand  
where trees begin again coughing from the buses exhaust  
and the stars are invisible at midnight so many crimson signs

you are stuck here with your money like a man.

29 March 2001

---

I had a father you  
Had one too a mother  
Somewhere in the picture  
She had a vanity  
With a triptych mirror  
I sat between the leaves of it  
And disappeared  
Into the multiplicity of me  
Not one of them real  
Bone of her fingernail brush  
Sleek of her orangewood sticks  
Cotton of her cotton  
And no face for me  
Among all the faces  
Nothing that could open its mouth  
A mirror with wings  
Carried me away from myself.

29 March 2001

---

who am I this wilder  
water beads on bare twigs  
aligned to slide or fall  
everything is orderly  
except me

                    who claim like you  
to live inside the climate  
and be a citizen of gravity

in trouble since the day I spoke

for language is the law  
language to which the infant will  
proposes constantly exceptions

be latin with me  
and flex the abs deep in abstract  
because I want the body of your thinking

and still don't know who I am  
this rainy day  
the light inside the water falling  
the irritating philosophic quest inside the light

any you is wilderness enough.

30 March 2001

---

The size of the city compels a certain circumspection  
in the face of the usual generalizations about amenity and crime  
resisting the Dantescan pleasures of condemning  
all the big cities that contrive to live without me.  
Or even you. Umbrellas are in vogue again  
as if the weather needed our approval, and it does.  
Down there in the circles of hell we find Newark in rain,  
Portland in sunshine, Indianapolis any time at all.  
Just to mention fatal interviews, houses the muses  
prefer to shun. But cities in general are worth their  
railroads and rivers, immigrants and discotheques,  
most cities are made out of bread and salt.

30 March 2001

---

exaggerate the ziggurat  
that tall cigar that  
spelunks the Babel sky

Nimrod or Numword  
built no terraced travesty  
like Dioces

we burrow in pure light we grovel like gods

he built a single beanstalk  
cabbagestalk pipestem stick  
it up the sky

he built a word and spoke it

he built a sound and let it fall  
down around us to this day

30 March 2001

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## THEOLOGY

A way to measure the former face of things  
before there was a world to look at  
before the sitcom reruns we call History  
just a microphone dangling from the clouds.

30 March 2001

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and if it vanished, and it could vanish,  
leaving nothing, or else a congeries of remembered things  
strewn across the web of space  
trembling with no longer meaningful messages

and the magnet does not love us any more.

31 March 2001



---

there are spokes to every wheel  
whether you see them or not

they are made of wire or wood or words  
and they make things spin and hold  
their rims firmly to the patient ground

friction, just friction makes things move

so when she lies down beside her mother  
and talks what seems like the tender disaster of desire  
into the dark bedroom then turns over  
and buries her face in her mother

holding, holding, for a moment  
nothing spins, the dark holds, morning  
infiltrates the bleak city and the women sleep.

31 March 2001