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### Recommended Citation

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## FINDING YOUR LINE IN MY HANDS

*for my Charlotte, on her birthday*

Whose hair?  
Whose happiness

balanced on such an imaginary  
line between identities

an island between Spain and the sun

would we be this one?

I took the pen  
it had your hair  
entangled with its cap  
caught from your letter  
or from your sweater

the transmission

I saw you sleeping

an envelope of grace  
a hair

because the sun knew something too  
a thank you letter to the world

to you

for all

bread and no butter  
bread and oil

bread and no wine  
and all the roses  
are mauve

which is the name of another flower

a letter to thank you for being you

for giving me everything  
again and again

and being between me  
and what terribly isn't

thank you from  
what is the bottom of the heart and who lives there

forgive everyone before I go

how can you answer a hair

a habit of caring  
of stroking  
a thing before you put it away

so many things  
come into our life

but still we find ourselves  
among them

unlost in the material

only one morning in a hundred are you up before me  
so I have the sense of you to the right of me  
kind beside me, my kind, my answer  
to a lifelong question

and you are that island too

what have I begun  
where is the sun  
on the empty hill over empty trees

can I get there on this road  
trying so hard to reach you

the folds  
the words in the woods  
the furrows

the animal functions  
return to God

you wake also I think  
to the sense of me  
not far

what we always are.

22 November 2001

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Enthusiasm standing in the rain  
Beholds Complacency arriving in a white car

America will be born yesterday tomorrow  
And only the wind has any sense of history

General Grant is buried in Fort Knox.

22 November 2001

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After the instructive museum the river the apple juice the wren  
was it a wren divoting about on the neighbor's lawn

and where is he  
anyhow it's months since he's been seen  
what have they done with him  
the wife the child

since June and here it is November

when is it where you are

and who is my neighbor?

Cain's voice Kane's voice my voice  
the hoot hoot of a man's voice  
trying to be nice about it

about what?  
who is my frigging neighbor anyhow

is it you

all night

who?

You don't know what I'm talking about  
Cause you got no blues I got the blues  
They're all about you about you

Me blue you no cue

Touch it, it's yours  
you made me into this thing

this amiable animal gnawing your haunch.

Yes I know I have no right to

but the walls are stucco and the sun is bright  
we're all alone in paradise not a snake in

yes I know I am yes I know you are  
we both belong to this exclusive club called you

you hear me talking  
sometimes in your head too

don't you?

23 November 2001  
Boston

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Walking through the mirror  
one day suddenly  
remembered where I was

I crossed myself  
a fine old habit  
of the light  
                    a man  
still waiting  
for me to come out  
so he could go in  
and see himself too

these verbs haunt me  
language also  
is made of glass.

23 November 2001  
Boston

IT

It's not supposed  
to be  
so easy to die.

23 XI 01 Boston

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of course the women  
knew it was an apple

they can tell a knife from a museum

and the big blue bowl  
big enough for your sister to sit in

waiting six thousand years for enough light to fill it

23 November 2001  
Boston

---

never content  
with being  
a man wants.

23 XI 01 Boston

## VIRILE MUSIC

How could a clarinet  
fly up to the roof  
how could a chimneystack  
have learned so much speak

smoke, Greek  
and all the rest of ça,

this whimsy  
once had wings

was made of bronze  
came rolling  
on small wheels  
to abrade  
your cherished vacancy

crabapple tree  
the god of touch  
will stay there  
lingering for you

you will never be free  
of his voluntaries his concerto grossos his blue mandolin

his hands are on your garden  
a kind of art or work or food

his hands are in your grasses as I speak.

24 November 2001  
Boston

## TRADITION

She learned to drive in Mount Benedict cemetery  
across the road from old Brook Farm

every age understands its destiny, everything,  
even Abraham and Sarah laughing to be now.

24 November 2001  
Boston

## THE SHADE

As if from outside the shadow  
a child ran in  
and was swallowed  
suddenly by that shapely dark  
we troll along the ground

waiting to catch her. Catch everyone.  
A living body is captured by desire.

24 November 2001

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So many things I want to say to you  
but I want to say them with your mouth

opening oracle 'sophisticated caves'  
the world hides in  
waiting for you to say them open

sesame millet beeswax cocoa smeared on your terrorist lips

words that I hear  
coming up from the Spanish afternoon  
permanently sun-stroked in the pit of my corpse

my zombie information making us both dance

because when my arms go around you it is a bird I am  
a strange sea thing heavy and weary with coming from who knows where  
folding my drenched wings around my own shadow

only it's alive in there it's you  
in you it is a heart  
beating the time waves with pulse of its own  
and you're better than that better than this and

hurrying towards one another up the pathway wings extended  
what does it mean

what does it mean to wait so long for your name in my mouth

can I give you yours, can I give you you

can I give you tours around your neighborhood  
show you the view from my steeple

can I be the church in your town?

25 November 2001

## NOVEMBER

Mild enough the deck  
man talks about the weather  
knowing the weight of things  
to lift or fall  
a view across the prairie  
a thousand bare trees one crow  
opening any answer to the memory of light

the call of light  
in this space light is buried  
who was our mother  
I am home  
to let the answer speak  
or space that thing  
in a world of things  
mild but the guess is going

a wreath of dried flowers yoked around the moon  
Stansislavski method be childish while you can  
come home through Austerlitz  
I feel these days  
strongly the disapproval of the lady  
dead irises they leave long leaves  
dead leaves clog the leaf rake  
leans against the leaf-attended wall

why am I explaining all this to you  
you know it all  
could this be silence  
really and these  
remarks a tuneful interrupt

a call

to let you know you know  
meaty silence of an autumn morning  
as if we had finally done with dying  
the long rewrite begins  
ordinary curvature of space  
reflected in your common fluency  
letters of your alifbet a scoop of palm  
through cool water sifted lift it to my mouth  
I drink your hands

and if the sun spoke  
what this silence does is keep  
personal agenda otherwise  
so one by one the bird learns its mother's note  
and we are what we heard men be  
before

as I caress your alephbeth as well  
blue-eyed jessamine fragrant responsive stock  
you are the body of what I think

I've lost your address again  
even the number dances

and when it does a different woman answers  
I have never seen and has no claim on me

to speak a fortress of some living god  
pale mythographers tardy to disclose

break the syntax leave the words  
break the words and leave the sounds  
let the sounds fall silent and what then  
break the silence with something new  
something that never said anything before  
least of all me least of all you

now carve those six lines into one Chinese glyph

how language might make sense  
we never knew

the trouble with poetry is everything rimes  
an endline sound-same just rubs it in

rubs her fingers in the sound of it  
applies to my funerary brow  
I feel like a statue of myself in bronze  
or two beads of water dew sparkling in a spider's web

do you know me  
is my face the shadow that shows you dream  
my broken body the landscape of your fall farm

the little gods and comrades we neglect  
because we can't see them dreaming in the hill  
at least at last a glass of milk for them

and be my pagan

mia mira mina mirador

the sound of someone almost making sense

25 November 2001