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Caught? By cloud shape
An answer. But by color
A book — Japanese, a dictionary,

Do things to a door

and be my doorway to *the other instance*
— light meter, numerology —

and then at fall of light
accept the simplest thing I am
I hardly know
what I bring to you,

to do things to your door
until you tell me who I am.

19 December 2000

ALBA

In the middle of waiting
Something almost wonders

Is it a page waiting for her candle
Is it a word 'on the tip

Of her tongue' she wanted to say.
Of course, of course, Provence

Is far, and wind here in ordinary,
So little color to the wind these days,

Hein? As they used to spell it
Seventy years ago imitating Frenchmen

The sound of a shrug. An agreement.
An asking for confirmation

Of your deepest suspicions.
She loves you, but not enough.

20 December 2000

In pernicious drag the Sandman
Saunters past the foot of my bed

Casting, casting. David, David,
I whisper, I hear myself whimper,

Your scissors, your harp.
But the other poem, the Andalusian

Christmas card from Hell,
Does not want to talk to me.

I have loved too many, even you.
I am terrified of the mail

That comes inside my sleep,
Dreamy comrades of park and moon.

20 December 2000

QUAERET

1.

How can I participate in the undwelling?
By answering the ground.

How can I taste a water that has never crystallized from the marriage of
hydrogen and oxygen?
By swallowing the dream.

How can I break the spell laid on my left arm in my sleep last night by
ambiguous faerie?
By standing naked in the closet, by whispering an enemy's name.

How can I discover the workshop hidden below the cellar floor?
By giving the house a new name.

How can I actually step into the room on my actual legs and touch the
doorjamb with my hands?
By praying to the rats in the wainscot, the cricket in the attic feeding on your
dead uncle's Masonic apron.

2.

Isn't anything ready for me?
Rise up, it is the world coming up the cellar stairs to meet you, slip the hook
out of the eye, open the door.

3.

Who do you think I exist?
Because I hear you asking me.

Why do we try to be so smart?
Because even a dumb answer is better than silence.

Who made silence?
Silence made me.

Why did silence make you?
To answer it in every way.

20 December 2000

how many lies per hour legal fees
fires the fierce amendment
not in our town

means change the money
into a free variable like a noun
you can shove through any vee-shaped slot

and be a sentence Santa
semiotic sniveling with mucilage
where once a decent human snot

orchestrated the figure of the face
we are unmanned by documents
lo the market hidden in the hill

these are my rubaiyat buddies
a line left out of every foursome
to give you space to rap your own

I think I'm worth \$1000 an hour
pronounced any way you like
in Arabic the language of the earth.

20 December 2000

The tonsured lawn
Below I feast
Upward on the light-infested
Geography of meat

Because you have turned
Me into natural fact
An appalling clarity
Links every act to mind

Mine and yours convexed
Like the sea lifted by the moon
Tide, intergenerated
To a rare luminous hybridity

Something pink or mauve or tea
Or sparrows fly out of it
Or remember me
Now you have come

To the old house at the core
Of experience,
Slate roof, no wasps. And I
Too sound like winter.

20 December 2000

[for Persephone suite]

& break the rule

Hades has his last suppose:

So hope to be the famous lawn you sprawl on

could I pry your softness compressed against my earth
apart from underneath
to slip the grass blades of my tongue up inside
the various avenues of you

licking and tasting and instructing
us both in this simultaneous gospel of sheer feeling
until the jouissance comes that names us both
and in the grip of it we both are calling?

|

21 December 2000

for Charlotte, a morning

And it is here again, the overshadowing swift bird
You call it hawk I call it an eagle, gasp-winged, vast
In shadow as it cruises through the bare trees in search

Of something hidden in the air, alchemists of old
Knew what lived there, microtonal animals of fire
Their prisms revealed as pure flares of color

I see them in the crystal you bought the other day
Rutilated quartz and full of veils and mists and glamors
Peaked like Mount Kailash and I see it best

Rainbowing in the ordinary of your hand.

22 December 2000

THE AMBASSADOR TO OBLIVIA

The ambassador to Oblivia is on his way.
Word just came in, after ninety-one years
Of digital juxtaposition and upsidedown,
Denmark's answer to anything is gone.

I cant help it, I have been laughing at him
All my life, even before I knew this was
My life, this stretch of time with music in it
I understood the inside of but not

How to make it fall from the piano
In the endless all-night drunk of Fliszt or
Stare at the ivory until the giggles come
Dissolving all that Polish angst,

That unbearable beauty. Laugh at it
To make it true. Make fun of me
Until I am as actual as the ridiculous moon.
Mispronounce me and I will live forever.

23 December 2000
in Memory of Victor Borge, 1909-2000

Children carry turbulence
with them wherever they go —

how sad that travel — travail:
childbirth lasts eighteen years at least
and then another day begins —
dar a la luz another life:

a man or a woman capable
of the strange feat of sitting
quiet in a focused corner where
all the elephants and parrots

cannot shout him from that peace
the god we learn to give ourselves to be.

23 December 2000
*for Charlotte,
and from her table-talk
@Pongo. Tivoli.*

GRINCHLY, & BY THEORY

So there is in the beginning a sort of valley
Predators by dint of air consume there
The diligent productions of arts et métiers

And wingless swoop from purchase to purchase
On the tireless pilgrimage of money to the Thing
That sacred terror in the middle of the wood
Middle of any stone or piece of wood or meat

Magnetic thingliness, the world on fire.
I see them today at Wal-Mart genial troglodytes
Well meaning pterodactyls pouncing low
To drag a gift of love from aisle to checkout

And bring it home all sweet with lizard blushes
And feed it to its mate — here fill in by choice the name
Of any loved one and any number of commodities
And give x that or those and let me sleep

The long druid selfish doze of wizards unemployed.

24 December 2000

caught by the door
a dollar
stuck in the jamb
I lift the lintel
to heal the sky
so long bruised
by a house roof

we are particles
of desire
lodged in time's throat

24 December 2000

