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**Trees walking,
men sitting down.
Ocean nearby.
Women chatting
on their devices
with other places.
The tolerant sun
moves shadows around.
Terraces. Tables.
Nobody watches.
Me least of all.**

16 October 2014

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**I am no scholar of myself
but I think I wrote this very poem
years ago when I was old
but never knew it, now the time
has come to tell you. But what?**

16 October 2014

HELIOTROPE

Enough daylight
spoils the kingdom.
Iron-treadled the works
run themselves beneath
their dancing feet.
The machinery of love
begins far away from the body.
Languor coaxes it and the smile
is a kind of circuit closed —
no one has touched me yet.

2.
Because we believe
mostly in dream.
There is a rational side of me
I seldom show and never to you —
what good are my explanations
when the real thing stares in your eyes?

3.
You sit in the sun
as much as you can.
By the big window the sun
analyzes our situation —

**voices making sense.
It doesn't need us,
not really, but there we are
figures on the balcony
over a dark sea.**

**4.
But be slower it says
and set like me
a little sooner every day
until the river freezes
then turn again, instead,
manic, talking big,
and say out loud the thing
I left you thinking.**

17 October 2014

TO THE ARTISTS

Never say I never answered—
this letter to you is to you
and means to tell you
all it can't know how to
but you do, so show it for me,
the sensuous intelligence
of mind shaped like a star
of David, interlocked
symmetries, angles
pointing everywhere
at once, all things made
deeply part of itself.
And from that core
the radical thing
called beauty spills.

17 October 2014

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**Anticipate the obvious
then I will be closer to you
a hand on the scale
weighing itself to give you
full measure of what it feels
finding you. Wharf
with no boat, black harbor
with no moon. History
was always like this,
someone alone on the shore.**

17 October 2014

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**Suppose you could write with green
or talk to light
what would you say?**

**Why did you take my Lydia away?
Who was born this day
in some year nobody knows,
and why can I still see her eyes?**

**2.
Death questions these are,
sovereign nature's
left-hand man
and still he lets me jabber
and never an answer,
just new grass sprouting up
on the shoulder of the road
new-paved, new-planted
as we go into November.**

**3.
These are supposed to be
consolations and actually are
taken the right way, just**

before noon, when you look
up from the work and see them,
wet leaves, new grass,
cars pass, the sense
almost specious of
continuity, if only
you have breath enough
to sing to the end of the song.

4.
You call this a song?
This lyric hoo-ha,
I'd trade it all
for the olive in your martini,
that has taste, that
has been somewhere,
learned something, something
that it remembers.
You can call this a song
but the girl is gone.

18 October 2014

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**Rain darks the trees
agreeably. If I were
a minister I would
make bold with some
observations, claim
baptism of autumn
to purify the nature
of nature, make
us kind again
as the word allows.
But I am me
and live by color alone.**

18 October 2014

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Let me try again
to understand the rose.
There are no roses
in October, no roses
any time at all, only
roses in Rilke, he
said all we have to say
about roses. Roses
are words in songs,
paintings, baptismal
registers, book titles,
operas. No chance
to understand a rose,
not even Pentecost
could bring down tongues
enough or fire to understand
all the endless connections
of the rose, that alchemist
among the flowers—
mostly I suppose
roses are the professors
of a secret doctrine,
something about the root
primacy of women,
something about choosing
the right time,

**something about color,
transformation, generosity,
kindness, allurements,
something about thorns.
That a rose needs no man.**

19 October 2014

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**The dying patient reaches out,
clutches the candystriper's thigh.
This interchange of blessings
sustains the whole world.**

19 October 2014

= = = = =

**Distinguishing birds from leaves
on a windy autumn day
when the branches of the spiraea
scratch against the window screen
startling me, the senses
interpenetrate, the skin needs glasses
to feel aright, the winds
confuse me too, sing-song weather,
my vocabulary, my Sunday shoes.**

19 October 2014

COUNSEL

**(I want to slap you
and send you home)**

(you have no home yet)

**(what shall I do)
(what shall we do?)**

**(I see you trapped among people
people who don't know who you are at all
and you let them. you have to imagine
each one of them into someone you can
learn from or love but they really not those people)**

(good exercise but enough already)

(come home)

**(not with those people with whom there will be the
weeping and what the gospel calls the gnashing of teeth.
Rabbi Jesus says so, and he of all men must know)**

**(I want to slap you
for my own good)**

**(so I can sleep o'nights
not feeling I neglected to warn you)**

(for your own good)

(you're in the wrong place the wrong story, even the weather is wrong)

(wrong place)

(come home)

**(always travel east
against the sun
to find Wisdom, *hokhmah*, the story,
the story the world tells itself
to keep going)**

(what is wisdom? wisdom is going home)

(east is where you began. Where you begin)

(I want you to come home)

**(come home and marry
the old man on the porch
give him a last chance)**

(take a chance and be home)

(marry the cow in the meadow down River Road)

**(marry the white horse you see in that gap in the trees
you see the river through)**

(come home and marry the gap)

**(marry the river at last
simultaneously being there and going away)**

(marry the river always here and always gone)

(come home and be gone.)

19 October 2014

EXORBITANT PERHAPSES

1.

Stand at the gate goes
towards the moon
you know the one
the girl on the steering wheel pumping the horn
the green-leafy citizen of somebody's trees
color me yours!
everything strange nothing interesting
because I was and then the flame
heatess from *himinan* (heaven)
you tell me, you're the chosen
and if the horse comes home
without a rider *that will be me too*
a serenade for morning
a mere mistake

2.

amphoras stored artfully
on planks in caves
still hold pale Samian wine
maybe, the oil too is present,
thick now, resinous,
sticky as time itself that
will not let us go.
You want miracles?

**Watch the trees walk,
the naked woman pass
unbothered through crowded
pick any street you choose
in any town. And you will be she
and them and full of shame
and secret glory, and the sugar
maples will walk you safely home.**

**3,
For instance. That's what
the faeries told me, those
quiet musics that uphold the mind
and let us get our bearings
in new places. Stand still
and wait for them to speak**

**4.
Animal enneagram
two beasts with one will.
Call it tantra, or Shiva
busy at his loom made
entirely of ice. Men
are women first and then
something bad happens
in the weave. Be strong,
go to sea like Ishmael
and forget all this. This**

is just human physiology.

19 October 2014.

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