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VER PRIMUM

**They can't resist the green
it happens to us too
the changes outward
from what does not change.**

**This is a different thing
from what I said before
when I was another man
in another city saying
with a strange mouth.**

2.

**But now the interlocutor too
has changed his overcoat
and settled on the porch to look at me
as I hesitate on the lowest step,
looks at me with the practiced
loathing of a man who has a house,
a porch (a piazza we used to
call it) for one who has no house.
Who stands on a wooden step
trying to keep his paltry message straight.**

3.

**Which is this.
God sent me**

**to repeat your words
in my strange mouth
and make them nobody's
again, free admission,
no tickets needed.**

**This circus
will always be in town,
always starring you
and me and a bunch
of elephants, here,
the white horse
wants its lady,
here, the tiger
slumps in its cage.**

4.

**You're calling the natural world a circus?
What else is it, all colors and noises
and presto-changeo and over before you know it?
Show respect at least for those who died
to make it understandable.
I do, that's why I talk so much
and why I will die too.**

17 April 2013

=====

Let the animal out.

I meant a quiet thing

a truck going by with no radio

a hand fingering warm wax

or gouging with a fingernail

the easy surface of wax fruit —

you know those apples people's aunts used to have.

And then the door smashes open,

wind rushes in but what leaps out?

17 April 2013

BRAHMS

**What letters spell
your adagio of a name?
Of smoke and glass
my name is made
heart too easy,
ducks on the river.**

2.

**But when some sings
the radical []
glints like new-laid ink
and every tune becomes a lullaby.**

3.

**Let me if you can,
let me touch
another side of your
wheel at last begin.**

17 April 2013, Bito

=====

**A flag flying underwater
and above it all a cloud
of an unusual shape
head of a rabbit
head of a ram —
we listen in a trance
we find ourselves
nowhere home.**

17 April 2013, Bito

MILAREPA

**Naked or only a rag: *a poet has nothing,
nothing of his own to say.***

(A naked man with open mouth)

**his right hand poised behind his ear, gently pressing,
cupping the ear — *a poet is listening,
all about listening.***

**Lived in isolation, far from markets,
listened, but not to public discourse,
*listened to what you can only hear in solitude***

laughed at monks and colleges

a poet is alone and glad to be

sits on rocks in the mountains

lives among the rocks, his skin is toughened

a poet is marked by where he lives

a poet is immensely sensitive with a thick skin.

**Sang a hundred thousand songs, all drawn
from *his inner experiencing***

of living in the world

with you,

all of you, passing, coming and going,

bringing things or taking them away,

a poet loves them all as they come and go.

18 April 2013

=====

**No deer last night
no deer today
their heaps of corn untouched
on the other side of the house
that strange moment
when all the roads are empty.
The sky is quiet.
Nothing passes.**

18 April 2013

=====

Disemboweled by words —

the knives of consonants,

the saws of vowels —

I lie on the shore

exhausted with myself

already I have told too much.

Eelgrass, bright yellow lichen on sea rocks,

too many names.

I remember a girl, Rebecca,

a word that means noose or hook or snare.

Beauty is what catches us.

18 April 2013

=====

Waiting for the camera

the mirror

the evidence the proof.

It is a long wait

being a man.

Last one on earth.

18 April 2013

=====

I was born without a body

I am one of those souls discharged into the human world around us by stillbirth or abortion.

**Birthless, bodyless now we talk our way
in and out of people's consciousnesses.**

Some of us — I am one — somehow amass some flesh and bone and so on around us, and wear it like a body, carefully clothing it to make it look normal, or however people expect a body to look.

We do our best but you can always tell —

the closer we are to nakedness, the more the difference shows.

Me, for example, my proportions are wrong, shape barely adequate, I always look odd, clothes never fit, or fit but don't hang right.

But the big thing is we can't really feel with this ersatz-body, this prosthetic self.

No movement seems right. All of them painful, feel like some kind of sin against the self. Carrying, walking, climbing, running, lifting things — they all feel wrong, or crazy, or just don't feel at all.

Eating is just arbitrary. It's what bodies are supposed to do. Like birds, like beasts.

I see people swimming or jogging or dancing, and I can't figure it out, their pleasure. Oh I can map the movements onto my psyche readily enough, but I can't map the pleasure. Why would they do such violent, unnecessary things?

Why do they delight in the unnecessary?

My first friend in grammar school was a strange pale boy named Eddie. My parents disapproved of him, he was said to have fits. I liked him, he lived on a street lined with elm trees, named for a different kind of tree.

Later, in another grammar school miles away, my next friend was a pudgy pale boy named James. He was very devout, and we did Catholic things together, once on a little subway pilgrimage to a shrine in the next borough north. My parents disapproved of him, he seemed a sissy and too pious.

Both of my friends, the one in third grade and the pious one in seventh grade, both were surnamed Crowley.

I think they were stray souls too, clever enough, like me, to put a seeming body together, no better than I at making that body plausible or skillful.

**Strange pale people,
too lean, too fat, too awkward, too pretty — always drew me, as if they are my
own people.**

18 April 2013

=====

Feelings enter the world as colors
demons enter the world as people

each achieves thereby
beauty utility stability

19 April 2013

=====

**Dream is a tailor
who suits our lives
all day long we live
our skin muffled by those
images we dreamt.**

**A man who has dreamed
is never naked.**

**we linger in translation.
A boy on the edge of a brook
watches a bird dive —
nothing ever after will be
so blue or
too hard for him**

**Sad the singer
behind the song
all music grieves**

there is nowhere else to go.

19 April 2013

=====

**But I waited at the window
wanted at the door
the rug was full of ocean waves
and all the bells of Brooklyn
rang out beneath this present
moment, dragged
the sound of ago
all gone all here again.**

19 April 2013

=====

**Landwards an open field
and the sea the sea. I was caught between
two vacancies, and me
full of clamor and dubious
information, a knife
with no handle, me,
a cup with no bottom.
I am full of what you left me,
pine tree, broken branch,
rubber ball in sparse grass.**

19 April 2013

=====

**“Captain of time”
the wet road
away from the ovens
ever
 this day
the milk is white
again
 someone
stopped dying.**

20 April 2013

=====

Poetry is easy.

It is an imitation

of what does not exist

circuit diagram of a new self

you suddenly briefly have to be

and suddenly you are legs and light and

nothing but dance

and nothing dances but you.

20 April 2013

=====

**The poem is a corridor
long hallway full of light
leading in and out at once.**

20 April 2013

=====

**All the places we are so far.
Collect again the sparks of fire's being
and know them as yourself
come home to you at last again
past all the sentinels of time
trying over and over to be now
if only you will let it be.
And only you can be.**

20 April 2013

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**A radical departure
in some not so old houses
by way of a window**

high up the basement wall

**a little garden light falls in
amazing the dank interior.**

**My cellar wants a window!
Open the underside of light!**

**But what is on the other side?
Could it be me at last?**

20 April 2013