

8-2013

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Why is it raining  
only behind the house?

Is the street too simple  
for its complex math,

too flat, monochrome,  
of no interest to the *Folk*

*of Waters Over*  
who perform such wonders

with grass and trees  
and here and there *une*

*fleur* just to be sure.

9 August 2013

= = = = =

I spend a life waiting for the borders to open—  
I'm still in Paris, summer '54,  
the German frontier closed, cholera in the Rhineland,  
I never left, I never came home  
I'm in a café on the Place Maubert  
and the only language I understand is rain.

9 August 2013

= = = = =

Only be small  
and lift the lid  
not even knowing  
it's good to eat

or where they went  
all the people you knew,  
in this silence you  
are almost real.

9 August 2013

*for Nathlie, the Violet Painting*

It's one of those pictures  
that change everything.

It differs me  
From what I was  
Before I saw

And then I understand  
It's not me that's changed  
Alone but that images  
Dare to look  
Out at us again  
As once before  
A Virgin or a Cardinal could,  
Accepting the truth  
Of being utterly seen.

9 August 2013

= = = = =

Waiting for more  
then a door

the rain  
is my only brain

today the pleasure  
of thinking along with it,

the shaggy wet trees.

I have to understand this thing or die.

9 August 2013

= = = = =

“these are the forgeries of jealousy”  
she said and then the world implicit  
spoke finally out loud *Name*  
*your child Titania and be her girl*  
*forever after* for now I see  
the writing on the table, the oak  
that Shakespeare gouged one sober night  
between looking out the window  
seeing her pass and looking back.  
O saint Ambiguity be my flash!

9 August 2013

= = = = =

In time the word  
drifts away from the page—  
but only in time  
that servant of ours with  
ideas of his own.  
Or one idea— he  
passes and we try to stay.

He envies our stability  
and urges us along,  
coaxing every hour—

bad teeth, a word lost from the page.  
The unforgettable leaves an absence in the heart.

10 August 2013



Narwhal tusk  
or horn  
    or love  
in a dream  
in the middle of the head,

a shimmering, half-  
imaginary animal,  
make-up round her eyes  
messy when she cries—  
some of our friends seem  
not long for this world—  
we live in a time of goings.  
Death, and other dreams.

10 August 2013

= = = = =

A darker scheme  
like a pigeon on the roof.  
There are no pigeons here  
although we're all related,  
Jews and Italians, bluejay  
bothering silence, we got here  
in a dream, the long haul  
over the ocean prairie  
they said was the sea.  
I am a long time ago.  
I had a roof with pigeons on it.  
What would Charles have said?  
Carry your street with you when you go.

10 August 2013

## SIDHE

An Irish or lolder  
blessing the way  
she comes and slips  
her tongue in your  
mouth, the the tip  
of it for you  
to sip the new  
wisdom from  
her always world.  
This one taste  
opens your ears  
forever after.

10 August 2013

## MOUSE

The moves we make  
disdaining the animal's  
soft reprisals,  
that tenderness it  
jabs heart to see—  
Be simple, it is a small  
person with fur, it looks  
up at you as you look at the tree  
in your backyard,  
will it fall?

Everything is at risk.

Be easy, creature,

for a while.

I am your mother.

11 August 2013

= = = = =

Wait for the tree to know me  
ha! the Japanese  
have been waiting for centuries  
and see? cryptomeria wood,  
carven image of Kwannon,  
body of compassion.

11 August 2013

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The Perseids are coming  
don't count them.

Write down quick  
whatever you were saying  
or thinking when you see  
each one. They know  
(these meteors, manticores,  
fabulous beasts of light,  
of like substance with all you think)  
all the flashes in your mind.  
They know you and only you  
can ever tell.

11 August 2013

## OPHELIA

Ophelia in the Russian condenser  
trapped there, born there?  
not clear. Is there a difference?  
I found her there, there is a purring  
or whining at times in the device  
that is her lost self. Then I am water  
and bid her drown in me —  
that death in me will not hurt her,  
she'd survive pink and various  
with flowers in her eyes and her hands  
full of coming and going.

But how to get her  
out of the machine.  
I don't speak Russian  
but I try to condense, condense,  
thicken the air around the condenser  
till it implodes. Is that what will happen?  
Where will my blood go to rest  
if I thicken it that much?  
Let us call the Russian condenser  
my heart (why?) and let's say Ophelia  
is trapped in me. (I don't even know her,  
we've never even met,

she's just one more deluded girl  
in a lifetime of obsessions).  
But let's say it and see what happens.  
The condenser roars  
like a fridge on a hot day  
trying to keep up.  
Ophelia, I cry, Ophélie I try  
in French, Opal, Nephel,  
Nehi, baby baby  
honey honey here I'm.  
How do I even know that she's in there  
or anybody,  
it said so when I slept  
and sleep commands all the wakers.  
Good soldier, do what I'm told.  
Write it. Blood in the dust,  
trickle of sweat on dusty skin,  
see. See.  
Try to see everything  
like a man born blind.

2.

The Russian condenser condenses everything.  
That's its art.  
Or that is art.  
Why Russian? Russians take so long  
to do anything. Tolstoy Dostoyevsky Mussorgsky



Taneyev Solzhenitsyn. But then Osip came,  
slim-lipped almond stem, quick  
as a child's locomotive  
rushing round the Christmas tree,  
elegant as a new dish,  
truthful, sweet, so  
Russians can condense, is he  
the one, Ophelia lost in Mandelstam?  
What girl is lost in a poem  
today, or is it a poet  
or history or some bad book  
because too thick.

*I lost you in Mandelstam*

I cry but no reply  
except the machine hum or drone  
or whine or groan or chatter.  
And now not even that — because  
it is the dream machine and I'm awake.  
Now anybody lost has to get lost in me.

12 August 2013

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The court is out  
and will never come back.  
We'll never know.  
We're all guilty  
until proven innocent.  
The building is dark.  
No one answers when we call.

12 August 2013