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Waiting for the store to close

so I can walk by and gaze

at the unreachable — lick

the plate glass, the French say,

window-shopping: at night though

only the taste of glass

because I do not want to reach

out from the circle of my thought

and reach the limit of someone else's thinking,

that thing, that thing in the window.

14 May 2013

=====

Store is world is store

alaya is no *merx* no Marx

no marketplace — the

world is a closed department store

a G.U.M. a SAMARITAINE

over the river, after the war.

The store is always closed

the glass is always cold.

14 May 2013

=====

**I can't figure this picture out
it shows a smiling couple.**

**It is not written anywhere
that Jesus laughed.**

**Yet these
people, from their clothes,
are Christians.**

What are they thinking?

What is thinking anyhow?

Who is the dark Lord who held the camera?

14 May 2013

=====

**Now the green blanket
is on the earth and earth can sleep
after its long blueprinting winter
this thing we dream,
this inside-out dream we share.**

15 May 2013

=====

**The places I went in the dark
barefoot in the snow not cold
and a nice man brought old books of mine
for me to read from
as if who knows when we really are.**

**Sometimes the present is the past.
We have this confusion,
these retro-futures we inhabit,
we live in slippage,
barefoot in time's mild deep caressing snow.**

**And the dream place is always far away,
I never dream where I am
wherever I am. As if I could tell
the bed the street the forest floor
pitching like an angry deck in storm.**

The images are too forceful,

meaningless, particular.

Old as history edge of table parts of shame.

But the light inside these rooms

is warm light still.

I feel someone's breath

asking me if even all this

standing around is a sort of dance

to which a hand laid

lightly on the shoulder might be the only answer.

15 May 2013

=====

**To be done with it as if beyond it
the letter sealed, who writes letters
anymore, dropped in the letterbox,
do they still exist, are they gone
like the sky full of orbiting junk,
French nineteenth century operettas
refitted as hip-hop cantatas,
a melody is a toxin in time's blood.
Stand by the letterbox, wonder what she'll think
when she sees your name on the envelope
small and her name large, if she's still alive
or did you by chance address it to yourself.
In a day or two at most that at least will be clear.**

15 May 2013

=====

**What did you tell me
while I waited nowhere?
Pick up any book and read
any book at all.**

**The first passage to catch
your eyes, that's the task,
message, instruction, call it
what you will, it's our
material for you.**

**The work begins when
you don't know what to do.
And all the rest is music.**

2.

Any book at all,

**they're all written in language,
language is silva,
the material forest where you live,
the wood is your business
to grow, deeper and wider,
till fruit and kindly shade
cover all the earth,
leaving rock and water
to make do with light.**

3.

**For there is a mind that is not language
you cannot know. Or can't know yet
until one day your harvesting and planting
lead you to the edge of the woods.**

**There is a smooth-barked tree
at the edge of the clearing, Virgil**

**saw it once in Italy, close
to the headwaters of the Tiber,

a beech tree elegant and grey.
You will rest your back against it
and stare out into the unspoken land
and then at last you'll see.**

16 May 2013

=====

Having a right to empty space.

The greatest luxury I know

would be to have an empty room.

And go in there once in a while

and stand in emptiness. Maybe

one window. Maybe nothing

much outside. Sky.

16 May 2013

=====

There are many kinds of teaching in this world.

And one of them is silence.

**But there are many kinds of silence,
many dialects of saying nothing.**

**And keeping still is only one of these,
the one where you listen till they hear too.**

16 May 2013

=====

**Open the door let the dark out
and see how many acres it will fill
with your Euro-American mind-spill**

**or drag me closer to the climb —
the mountain meant me
while I slept — you'll never
reach my summit yet
you are nowhere else but there.**

16 May 2013

[first poem with Charlotte's Sheaffer]

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**But could they come writing
the way the wind on Calvary
brought down the scent of blood,
vinegar, smell of a crowd,
smell of final silence.**

**So they could write their way here
the way the wind leaves evidence
always behind of where it's been,
most readable after it's gone.**

**You cannot really understand a poem
until its poet is dead,
dead in the distance, not even
his shadow left on the page.**

16 May 2013

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Why did we lose him?

Whom? The emotions

grow old along with the bones,

a mood is fragile,

even sadness passes

into dullness.

We lost

him because we forgot

to pay attention.

Whom?

The one we lost

was popular and smart,

the young loved him

and their elders studied his remarks.

We forget so much,

the skin is still young

on most of the body, only

the parts we look at

— faces, chests, hands —

show what are called

the ravages of time.

By whom?

They are not ravages,

they are relaxings, the skin

losing interest in the air,

in other skin.

The one

we lost paid attention

to us, now he's gone

and we don't know how to

pay attention to ourselves.

The window looks at you.

Whom? The light comes in

and trifles with your hair.

2.

Did we ever know who he was to begin with?

Whom? The one we lost some say was never here.

**We never had him clearly in our field of vision,
never got the feel of his handshake, smell of his breath.**

Yet it's clear he's gone, we're missing something. Whom?

17 May 2013

SOME DOHNANYI CHAMBER MUSIC

Small faint lines across a national frontier.

Political milk

spilled on the map.

He read the news that day in Hebrew,

people are coming with guitars.

How annoying when people try to please.

Court jesters have short lives, I painted one

walking through the wall to make a point,

we learn magic only when we have to —

out of the air a cello decides

blossoms on the crabapple, lilacs

just past their prime, a cloud,

praise God a cloud at last,

some sympathy left in the sky

bare thighs, the feel of waiting

mothers carrying their young safe from the plague zone

stemcells strain against normal decay

a violin always has something to hide

17 May 2013

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**To be halfway through another life
a star inside the bone
the body tells the story the face tries to hide.**

But the body tells fables of its own.

**But morning has its mouth full
and a red pickup outside
seems like a letter broken out of an alphabet,**

**I stagger among texts I try not to read
as if everyone's sorrow is the same**

**is it, Hannah, is there a difference
or is death just one more democrat
erasing the curlicues of our identity
and leaving only a hollow place, dry and empty**

but tears somehow seep put pf there

and the eyes blur from what they cannot see?

Red shadows, pale skin, someone

not far away playing Mozart of all things.

18 May 2013

=====

Write the way the sky does

one word at a time

then there's another. Say it

and let them look, or look away.

18 May 2013