

5-2013

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## **THE ANIMAL**

*(2-Ix)*

**Day of your animal  
day of your dark**

**you knew th wharves  
before you knew the waves**

**the ocean was your animal**

**the separations began then  
when all the cars were black  
they all moved inland  
and everyone was strange**

**the smell of country**

**seemed a world made  
from old paper and barbed wire and trees**

**fences**

**suppose the whole thing was about waiting.**

2.

Who needs to be a child.

Her big eyes and long hair  
reminded him of something

deer in a clearing then what  
overcoming fear by consciousness  
winter smell of cardamom

3.

Coming home from the margin  
meaning.

There were dogs an accident  
side of the road a car on fire  
only the frame intact  
inside just flame  
and people watching.

Nothing is easy.

All the while something else  
he was sure he should be doing  
not just being here.

Or maybe just being here.

**But that was hard, is hard,  
all the legions of the Persians  
drawn up around the holy  
places in his head.**

**The temple stormed.  
And the Romans were no better/**

**No children ever let in  
and the priests groaned like the animals they slew.**

**The sacrifice.  
Livestock. Sad word  
for the about to die.**

**4.  
And being home's another book.  
Some people knew how to stop  
reading halfway through  
Not he. To every book  
its end. He stumbles  
into vacancy.**

**But that too was home.  
Big cardboard carton**

**with a target crayoned on it.  
An arrow flying over the field.**

**Anything can be the goal.  
Any word the bow.**

**24 May 2013**

=====

**Waiting for the near to veer  
tide-turn from the green  
towards the dark permissions.**

**Sluggard rises, ascends  
each local Everest of hours  
till he can close his eyes  
again on sacred emptiness  
inside to cherish there  
and stare the whole day  
everlastingly mid-flight  
and create his own singular night.**

**24 May 2013**

## **A WAKING QUIET AS SLEEP**

**And what will say?**

**Spiraea exuberant white**

**by the side door**

**this year and this year**

**the great locust trees along**

**the river road have blossomed**

**more than I have ever seen**

**in fifty years. Whose fault**

**was my long ignorance.**

**25 May 2013**

=====

**Waiting is a kind of kneeling  
before an altar**

**quiet altar made of time**

**alone (see Exodus,  
an hour is the *unhewn stone*)**

**gazing at the clouds  
or cloudless sky and listening,**

**never asking always listening.  
This is my religion.**

**25 May 2013**



=====

**Plastic flowers  
remind me of pianos,  
the noble effort  
of those strange machines  
to sound like us,  
to sing in our voices  
the things we mean.  
My eyes undeceived  
are well pleased  
this cold morning by  
these sky-blue hydrangeas  
that will never fade.  
Or not till all our colors do.**

**25 May 2013**

**(Listening to a transcription for two pianos of Liszt's *Mazeppa*)**

## **FEUX D'ARTIFICE**

**After the white explosion**

**a single light turns**

**into a flock of silver birds**

**who settle slowly beyond the trees**

**down onto the river**

**to teach the water the name of fire.**

**26 May 2013**

====

**Four months of talking  
hardly listening  
come to an end.  
And conversely.  
The school closes  
the throat is dry  
the leaves ate green.  
Hard to make this  
clear in Russian  
but that's where we are  
at last, a land with no  
definite article  
just clouds in the sky.**

**26 May 2013**

=====

**Beginning at the end again**

**I understand you best**

**by looking out at the rain**

**out there where the changes live**

**the lilac people who rule the world**

**flowers and dancers.**

**(26 May 2013)**

=====

**What does the bee  
know? She  
rules the lines of light  
that string the world together**

**You get home faster  
when you're everywhere**

**An old book says that all  
things on earth were born on earth  
except these three: asbestos,  
wheat. the honeybee.**

**But I think I too  
am from a distant place  
so strange everything seems  
strange magical things**

**irises, clouds in a blue sky,  
humming bees.**

**26 May 2013**

## **OLD FIRE**

**Flame on the candle**

**votive lamp**

**going for hours**

**tongue of flame**

**speaking the body's**

**language out there**

**in praise of mind**

**red glass**

**sacred heart Buddha voice**

**the candle has been burning since morning**

**the flame is young the fire old**

**it has been burning**

**since the beginning of the world**

**old fire old fire**

**marrow bone**

**horse's mane**

**remembering the shape of the wind.**

**26 May 2013**

## **SUNG IN THE ORIGINAL LANGUAGE**

**1.**

**Hold the note till we hear him—  
because she jogged past the setting sun  
declaring a silhouette  
that lingered in the forest,  
became a tree**

**and Apollo wept.**

**No myth ever really leaves the mouth.**

**2.**

**You gave me this instrument  
I found the stone myself**

**The face I carve therein  
can only be his own.**

**3.**

**Open the window.  
We're hearing excerpts  
from the long opera of the world,  
all the tedious dialogue left out,  
only the bird songs left in,  
only trees answering the wind.**

**26 May 2013**

## THE ROAD

I want to watch you  
walking up the road.  
It is moonlight  
it is country,  
I trail behind you  
a hundred feet or so,  
you're walking slowly  
it is country, it is moonlight,  
I know it's you,  
you're carrying something  
a flask or bundle  
under your left arm  
propped on your hip.  
I think it is milk  
(country milk, moon milk)  
I keep my distance  
you're safe, I can feel  
the air that passes round you  
come to meet me,  
I feel the safety of you  
walking slowly, snug  
on the empty road,  
meadows around you,  
no forests, moonlight,



**is it milk you carry  
or is it something else,  
something I don't know  
how to remember?**

**26 May 2013**

=====

**The hand of the woodpecker  
woman climbing easy out of earth  
you can tell a jogger by the way he drives his car  
when the blossoms have fallen from the apple tree  
there is a long silence called summer  
there are five of us waiting to take hold  
so many me to see  
she saw me at my weakest when I had a past  
a strong person has no history  
the vaporetto took us to the Arsenale  
if rich people had the sense to buy no art  
art would be healed in a generation  
it should be illegal to sell a work of art you haven't made  
yourself, it is signing someone else's name  
black magic rises from five fingers or one bird.**

**27 May 2013**