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1

**The day the mountain opened
the day the woman stepped out**

**but there was no the woman
there was only a woman
and she had her name**

**or names and they are written
somewhere, not far,
look around and find them**

**choose the right one
and you can call her too.**

1 March 2013

=====

**A day when it's not doing anything
but resting quiet, breathing around me.**

**A bird way up there
going slow, big-winged,
feather-fingered, vulture.**

**We are kin, we are doing nothing,
circling, observation
as vocation, the air
not so cold today.**

1 March 2013

=====

**Need to make darker
marks on the day.**

**Read from afar, a car
parked in a tree.**

Blue is creeping into the sky.

This campus needs a pagan chaplain.

1 March 2013

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**So fw left to tell
an Irish mile
into the underbrush and back
— or never back, we lost
our footprints, must go on
until the sea stops
us in our tracks.
As they say. And the sea
is always saying. Listen
if you don't believe me,
the running hand the wind
writes on the sand, the snow,
sastrugi, the balance
of blank vs. inscribed,
we hear the quiet inscriptions
waiting to be read.
*It is not enough to understand us
you must be the one or ones
for whom we were written.*
the sacred glyphs. A word in your hand.**

1 March 2013

=====

**The spilled ink the syndrome
of needy women prancing at the door,
the rain falls upside-down, the two
white horses in our neighbor's field
are very old. They have been here
since the beginning (horses, women,
the not-so-secret link between)
how can two white horses be so old?
Sump pump humping in the cellar,
snow melt seeps down the shale
on which this house stands. The rock,
the leaves of rock, the percolation.
Spring stirs, I can sense it but not feel it,
like a needy woman about to call me
on the neurotic telephone. Oh lord and lady
mind made of sky, forgive our instruments!
Sleek devices we carry to unnerve us,
keep us connected with our ailments, I too
have needs, and I hate them. Needs
keep me from knowing what I really want.**

2 March 2013

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Maybe there'll be
not so many words.
Mugwort, elegant pane,
mother-of-lily.

Once I was window
now I am wall,
there are consolations
in most declensions of ontology,

waiting for the gate
to open, praying to beings
beyond our ken,
closing the gate.

The culture of the island
encourages distance
quietly. Stare at the sea
and remember whatever you like.

The best things in life
are me. Solve
for any me, this animal
is your secret name.

2 March 2013

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**And said nothing though I listened
some buzzing in my ears opening and closing
as if the jungle had a door swinging
shut and open in a fitful wind
I listened till it was all my body
spread out as the world, the stars too
were chinks of light in my cracked skull,
there was nothing but me. The deer
run through me and the highways howl.
Cars come and go, growl by in my head.
The inside pretends to be outside, there
where an impostor sun lingers on the end of snow.**

3 March 2013

=====

**And she said she's planting hellebore in Boston
and in Pittsfield it's already up but no sign here.
Snow last night but not much left.
Sometimes they seem to get tired of running
they pad along quiet as tigers then prance again,
the joggers, the runners, so hard to understand.
Practicing for a great escape? Hurting
the body into dazed submission? Their goofy
smiles when they come panting home.
Should such exhibits in public be allowed?
"What fools these mortals be" he said and flew away.**

3 March 2013

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**It is in a way a tower
this room above the rapids.
I climb up to it and am
alone in it above the moving.**

**Everybody needs to have one,
a place apart above,
and till now I've had to use
what most of everybody has:**

**a space inside personal aloft,
a quiet angle of the mind
that watches all the thinking pass.**

But now I have a thing outside

**twenty steps to my locked door
and the sound of running water
in there, I go in and close my self
in openness above the stream.**

Is this where I've really been all these years?

3 March 2013

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**The tone
of love and loss and meaning,
and loss of meaning
— the way poverty is,
all the things we can't have
become the same thing,
all the losses are one loss.**

Schubert, *singspiel*.

And the loss of meaning is the loss of all.

2.

**When music fits the wrong words
or the hope of meaning
makes a song the words can't bear —
all the bad operas with such fair music.**

3.

**But what do I know about music?
Some song another sings
is worth nine of me.**

3 March 2013

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**My spinal cord
this stalk of corn
whose crowded ears my thoughts
break the calm day.**

**Be a woman, sunshine,
be a revelator gospel-meek
and gospel-fierce,
 be
a pontifex of metaphors
and breathe the doubters
safe across numbering rivers
into those meadows
books analyze into love affairs
but really, bless them, are fields of
grass in this same sun.
Be partial to my wishes,
old geology, hold up my house
and let a garnet loose from time to time
to coax the falling light to stay
one more minute color of the heart.**

4 March 2013

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**Somehow it always
seems to be praying.
The feeling comes now —
maybe the words will come after.**

4 March 2013

=====

**The long leaves of liberty
brown as oak leaves in winter
shimmer in the wind —
something is coming to set us free —
could it be me?
Ask yourself that before you go to sleep.**

4 March 2013

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Help me, come along with me,
walk me through it,
 this thought I thought
and thought was mine.
 Please, this once
come with me, I never ask you,
this time I do,
 the quest is fearful
and preposterous, to find the word
that no one knows,
a contradiction in the way things are,
 an epic,
a brave stupidity,
me mousikes, as Cavafy says,
with musics running up your spine
down mine,
 come with, commit,
the time is tomorrow, the place is nowhere.

1.

Count the letters. What's a letter?

A shadow of the shape of a sound

cast on the page. Stone. Clay,
wood tablet annealed in wax
boxwood, sly knotty pine,
the ashen bat.

2.

Or written on the air as faces
the flesh as alphabet.

As if the Fayoum,

or Bolzano

where Ötzi's leather arms
folded inward somewhere up
there in the cold
where life remembers—

come there with me,
noses pressed against the glass
that shelters what's left of him

the man we know

from our too urgent atmosphere ,

poor man, died in battle
hunt or accident
to linger with us,
an ancient mark of meaning,

**I kiss the glass, press
my ear against it
to hear
the word in his dead mouth,
the word he died
halfway through pronouncing.
No, I'm not being macabre,
I need to hear that word,
there is hope
in what he almost said,
the resurrection.**

4 March 2013

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**The honest fisherman
weeping casts
the trout back in the brook
to tell our tale
to the river and the sea.**

4 March 2013

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**Mares cock
owl's whistle
and the tree spreads down
above the town
until every house
is a fruit in it
and the girl is safe again
inside her dream.**

2.

It seems.

It says.

It sleeps.

3.

**Now be closer
or pretend the eye
can specify
what it sees**

**oh summon me
to be your raft
your palanquin
your mountaintop.
For I would alp for you
across the greeny plain.**

5 March 2013

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**I've been in the Rockies the Alps
the Sierras the Himalayas
but never yet walked on a glacier.
But once on a cold spring day
we walked on the frozen Baltic
far out from shore, the live
sustaining ice beneath me.**

5 March 2013

RITRATTO

**I draw
this picture of her
to forget what I saw.**

5 March 2013

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Something saying, something said.

It's too sunny to be difficult

I want to say one thing and get it right.

5 March 2013

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**It's always right in there.
But when the doors are all closed
something walks inside the body.
Walks upstairs and stares.
Far down there you hear the footsteps —
your footsteps coming towards you.**

5 March 2013

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**A man carrying a suitcase.
In one hand. The other
canted out a little to the left
in hopes of balance.
Penguin flipper silhouette
as he walks up the hill
if penguins had luggage.
There must be a station
nearby from which he comes.
Or could be going towards
but he looks dejected,
tired, on his way home.
I know of no station,
only the man on the road.
The bag looks heavy.
I know what he feels
I know how it feels to be me
knowing how it feels to be him.
That's all I know.
The sun is out, it's not too cold.
The road is as smooth and clear
as somebody else's road can be.**

5 March 2013

OSSUARY

**Room for regret.
Bones of dead Christians
behind glass
beneath the altar
side chapel I saw.
To be dead
is to be interesting
I learned. Waxy,
grey-white, tallow-yellow,
split or whole.
When the living marrow
is all gone the bone
becomes holy. Look,
this could have been a saint.
You never know with bones
who they were or what they said.**

5 March 2013

=====

**Where was the church?
Where was the steeple?
Who climbed to heaven
and never came back?
When I was young I
wanted to be a steeplejack.**

5 March 2013

FABULA

But the king bedazzled
by her beauty cried
“Rather a salmon
silver in my stream
than a lost twilight
waiting on thee!”

And she
from inside the green
shimmer that was her clothes
replied in calmer manner
“Better, sire, the sly
silver of your thigh
than such a brief word
said over the forest.”

And Matter was her name,
and we were her meaning.

5 March 2013