

5-2010

mayI2010

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## POSSESSION

All things that belong to me  
long to be.

Possess is somehow to confer  
*esse*, being  
on things apart as if it were  
lifeless wood  
till it becomes my door

or yours,  
as if the tree's entity got lost  
in lumber till  
we take the wood into our souls  
and share our entity with it

our dangerous ownership.

27 May 2010

*{Note: Americans think that the more they have the more they are.}*

## THINKING

But why fuss with ideas  
when I could be thinking?

Are words the faeces of thinking?  
Or the prime material from which thinking comes?  
Or both?

This is speaking alchemically.  
This is not thinking.  
Thinking is more like rain,

it happens to us by itself.

A word is an umbrella  
that shelters us from what *we really mean*  
that is, what the thinking in us (as us)  
is really thinking.

Thinking has no product.  
Thinking is hot lava pouring down the hill.  
Speaking is trying to light a cigarette from the burning stream.

Dangerous, irreverent, sometimes catches fire.

27 May 2010

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Something simpler than a brick—  
unicellular animal  
further than (closer than) God.  
A geometer's imagined point.  
The notional beginning of something  
that for all you know has always existed.  
The world. The world was created  
this morning and we are equipped  
with sudden imaginations (we call it  
history) and believe in weird magic  
(we call it causality). Nothing  
is simple. A brick is just a breath  
in the long life of clay. Wherever  
I look I see someone looking back.

27 May 2010

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Waiting (wanting)  
to know a little bit  
more about you,  
keep the blood moving,  
the cryptic e-mail,  
the lost garden.

How soft you  
sometimes are,  
bed in meadow,  
ancient cities  
thrive in your head,  
watercourse with  
willows, no harp,  
only the wind  
is music adequate,

am I warm yet  
have I figured  
out your in?  
You laugh and leave me  
wondering, the grammar  
of our common tongue

defeats us most  
when we try (I try)  
to say something  
new I keep touching  
you I keep saying  
is this really you?

27 May 2010

= = = = =

Over the morning  
sweet smell of new-cut grass  
and the hot oil reek  
of the mower  
that cuts it.  
A cool breeze  
all of a sudden,  
a prophecy  
of storm, of hail.

27 May 2010

= = = = =

People listen to a wall.

They have eyes but keep them closed.

The wall sounds like seashells, seas,  
deep curved sugar bowls held to the ear.

Try it. There is a roar in the world  
all such things know how to hear.

The wall knows too. So people  
forget their own languages and listen to wall.

It is the sound of everything, I suppose,  
so everything must be in it, perfectly clear.

27 May 2010



= = = = =

Have it come down to breakfast  
let it roost on the ridgepole and shout  
let it put it in black and white  
let it be whatever it needs to be

grass or grout or tuba bellowing  
parade of kilted waddlers anything,  
anything. Seems to me these days  
everything makes a lot of noise.

And as the sad saints say, only God is silent.

28 May 2010

= = = = =

New identities

made of polished brass.

Ashtrays full of coral beads—

you had a little altar once,

even you, holy things were on it,

you always wanted something just

an inch or two outside the actual,

the other side of ordinary,

no glass, no film, no distances at all.

28 May 2010

= = = = =

Why isn't the news real?

Why isn't there any place to go that isn't now?

There are offerings slung on all the branches  
but who said that they're trees

and what do gods want or need with organ meat  
and long intestines festooned in greenery

birds of prey yes but gods?

I say my prayers in Sumerian

sometimes I even pray to you  
hoping you'll never find out that you're me

i.e., that you and I are the same person  
randomly assigned to often differing bodies.

Only celibacy will help us now.

28 May 2010

= = = = =

As if there could really  
be a taste left in those lips,  
perfect lips in syenite or limestone  
from an Egypt ago

her eyes are on the memory of it  
was it oil or an almond,  
was it a kiss she was trying  
all too successfully to suppress?

The things that make us wonder  
are little things,  
                                  the intimate. almost unconscious caress  
between an object and your skin,  
for example,  
what it felt like for her  
to have something lifted to her mouth  
and remember it 3000 years.

I reach up and touch the stone thigh,  
trying to answer.

28 May 2010

= = = = =

I don't want to talk to you

I want to talk to your mouth

with your mouth even I

could say something finally true.

28 May 2010

= = = = =

Why does everything turn on hearing  
as if from Rilke onwards  
every question had to do with listening  
and listening was our purest science now

as if somewhere were speaking?  
Looking at a photo of some favelas  
heaped up color by color against the hillside

or the huge garbage mountain in Richmond  
with gulls patrolling it white white white  
it seemed to him that everything  
aspires to beauty,

                  will tend in our slowest  
hands and devious dreams to reach  
that homeostasis of light and form  
we let ourselves call beautiful.

29 May 2010

= = = = =

Revarction and entrome—  
we stirp for it, then gled.  
We overmood it, spilth  
of evening down us bird  
by bird, then the trawm.  
What do in dim? Men house  
have hule banit, the habit  
of troth alongs you soft  
on the brath and we sid.  
We go on sidding. Day  
ferler than any far  
until we know our keaves  
and speak it clear can.

29 May 2010

= = = = =

Being near enough to things  
to taste the shimmer of them and not touch—  
for touch is science and possession  
while the slim afreets of taste  
angel the essences of things right to your core

where several of your souls do live—  
Magic is where the world ends  
and starts again, the world  
changes its name to you  
and you wake up then  
dry-thighed from a tattered dream.

That was not thing.  
This is thing,  
now. Sun in tree.  
The taste of sun.  
One of your souls curled in your mouth  
limp as a smile, still waiting.

30 May 2010



## A CURVE OF CALLIGRAPHY

woman stretched out up the stairs  
she is the ladder

Jacob climbs up the cloudy mezzanine  
he keeps hearing voices come from there

he has to ascend  
the geometry of her difference

fractals help him  
the harbor close by the waves are still

there is terror in every going up  
at the top of the ladder there may be no world

shelter needed from everything  
it is a long time since anyone has looked down the well

out there in the courtyard  
when he gets to the top she'll bring him water to drink.

30 May 2010

## LEAF

Your leaf loves me  
so that it knows  
how to say the thing  
you can't say

it lies along my lips  
and lets me know it  
front and back  
I trace its veins

all the way back  
to you, we flow  
together in this green  
manifesto who

decides what makes you  
you what makes me me  
and says what we don't dare

*Listen* it does say  
*you have licked*  
*the skin of her mind*  
*not even I have been*  
*closer than that.*

30 May 2010

= = = = =

As the house shades the lawn  
long spring evenings  
so his mind shades the woman,  
shadows the figure of the woman where  
in green dimness she endures  
the sluggishness of his sciences.

30 May 2010

## TIME AND WIND AND WATER

do most work.

The savvy foreigners we are  
moved into such elemental  
neighborhoods and took our ease,  
eating this and spitting that  
and tilling, tilling, till we got  
such crops as suited the arcane  
digestion we discovered in this place.  
We are supposed to eat just light.

2.

But light is costly now  
and not much taste—  
the thrill of insertion small  
and we are made of holes  
our pleasure is to fill.

3.

Arcane. We still don't know how  
it really works, turning cheese into Chaucer,  
turning spring meadows into Messiaen.

And only a few of us – don't look at me –  
know how this processing began  
way back in the mind, or time,  
  
when we fell on thing and became it.

4.

But let a new thing happen—  
maybe the way a tree invented leaves  
or geese wrote Greek on the archaic sky—

but something now, full of why and wistful,  
something we could finally give each other  
among the lusts and punishments and doubts

something carved out of our first light  
but shaped by all the time we've shared  
going nowhere quick into beauty.

5.

Now time.  
Is it real.

Is it human.

Is it even the lady  
cardinal at the feeder  
one more image

to distract me from the question.  
The question of time.

Why do we think of its as passing  
when of all things it is the only one that stays?

31 May 2010

## PHONOLOGY

This vowel usually occurs as long  
but sometimes in liquid contexts as a breve,  
thus *ūk*<sup>1</sup>, *ūmjyt*<sup>2</sup>, but *hǔβ*<sup>3</sup>  
which in hurried speech can lose its rounding.

31 May 2010

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<sup>1</sup> sparrow

<sup>2</sup> far away

<sup>3</sup> woman's lap. (A man's lap is *ledž*.)



= = = = =

(Things that you worry about  
and things that worry back—the difference

the latter are the ones you can't stop  
thinking about. If you can call it thinking.

It's really them, worrying you with your own  
equipment, your neurons and stored imagery.)

31 May 2010

## JORDAN

A rock on a table  
a cup and a pen.  
Hallows. Of unhewn  
stone this altar also.

31 May 2010

## THROUGH SCHLIEREN OPTICS

The full fur of the trees.

The day. The need and the belonging.

Something to do with songbirds,  
squirrels mumbling in the woods.

We pass through each other endlessly  
seeking the boundaries of ourselves—  
frontiers we carry with us, a veil  
of self around us as we move—

warm, moist, they say, our own air.

31 May 2010

= = = = =

On the small ocean  
a large ship.  
A child drew this planet,  
buried golden figurines of soldiers  
deep under the hills.  
We hear them fighting  
sometimes when the wind  
comes that way, it's all  
they still know how to do.

31 May 2010