

3-2009

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I hold it  
I fold it  
over, a map  
of the sky  
I blow my noise in it  
it is a hand  
sized flag of a bad  
country a piece  
of paper.  
A piece of paper.

2 March 2009

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Elegant? Don't you wish.  
Cocktails—there's a funny name  
and popular again, everything  
is packaging, merchandising,  
spin. I adore you  
because you fall for every trick.  
Rum. Go-go boots. Remember  
kiwis? The clock (if any)  
lives in your belly, like a bronze  
Venus from an age before cocktails  
even, when getting drunk required  
a simpler dedication to reality.  
Such as it was. Things are much  
lighter now but still don't blow away.

2 March 2009

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The size of the thing oppresses  
mostly, not the shape or delicate  
finials, the sweet little faces of  
nymphs and dryads round the shaft  
anxious waitresses in the doomed café.

Art understood as a kind of money  
bothers him, he wonders why he wrote  
a diner menu in Gaelic in his dream  
and his boss frowned at what he called  
'presumption.'

But even the Irish  
have a right to eat, and have a right  
to know what they're eating. Let them  
eat bread like the rest of us, monoglot  
meat.

You must wake up now.  
What did his disapproval signify?  
In the jungle it is said that white men die  
because they pay no attention to their dreams.

Who was the boss? I ate in a restaurant,  
the Italian names of dishes seemed zany,  
plucked from northern dialects, cutesy-poo.  
The meat was good, no Irishmen in sight.

Was the superego telling me all this,  
poetry just makes people frown, feel bad,  
frown at me, try to get even? A sonnet  
meaningless as a Gaelic wine list?  
Tender lamb shank expressed in Attic Greek?

2 March 2009

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Brahms told me.  
It was winter and.

Enfold me, arms.  
I have waited  
too long to  
say everything now.

Now it must be.  
All these sounds  
to say one thing.

It is always winter  
here, a mistake  
has been made.

It is not too hard  
to live. With it.  
The snow also

a thing like drums  
you hear them  
where the light stops.

2 March 2009

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What was I thinking  
when I was thinking

all I remember is  
the careful focus  
of the lens

not a thing  
of what it saw

was I even there  
with all the thinking

a mind in trouble  
a man taking  
a late afternoon nap

night when he wakes.

2 March 2009

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for Lisa Sanditz's *Sock City*

Not everybody can see these places

I see cities in the arid rock  
but she sees comic book Apocalypse  
in the colors of mere things—

buildings fit the world buildings are landscape  
the land makes buildings what they are  
everything dangerous and nothing ugly

all there is in the world is color

color is the bone on which the mind is strung  
slung

beauty is dangerous on the other rock  
the building wall a wall is as good as a window

she sees things as colors  
and she can look right through the color of money  
and see the colors of vision that drives us all

every commerce means a kiss

factory means to build a mind

a million men can live in a million women

these stupid socks in my hands ready to put on

she proves have walked beyond the galaxy

into the actual world

gathering the dust of all remoteness here.

2 March 2009

## TIPHARETH

So what is missing  
is quiet splendor

the sun in the center  
of the body  
middle of an eye

No matter how clothed  
the body's middle  
shines. It is geometry  
not apparency  
makes this happen.

By the light given off  
by the Other's body  
we know to move

this isn't a love story  
this is love.

3 March 2009

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(among all the asperities of Paul Celan  
his easy pronouns)  
(always shock me)

3 March 2009

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Crouching by desire  
a thing about waiting  
shadows in the rafters  
of a house you never owned  
haunt me

certain books on the shelf  
collect my seeing  
and hold me—  
they too are unread

as we are to each other at last  
books we'll never open  
lodged in the mind  
inconceivable identity.

3 March 2009

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Something is always  
a word  
broken from its tree.

3 March 2009

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*Peterson's Illustrated*

FIELD GUIDE TO EASTERN WORDS.

includes CD with all of their  
calls, distress signals, songs.

3 March 2009

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Near now? Mozart's  
famous smile.

If we can't give our bodies  
what can we give?

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Close to a face  
its features blur—

identities exist  
only at a certain distance—

we depend on it to be  
who it is we think we are.

3 March 2009

## **HEAT**

When a house burns down in winter  
the flies asleep in the woodwork  
wake up just before they die.

(I hate the grimness of that,  
the truth of that,  
the fierce red cock screaming on the roof)

3 March 2009

## OPUS 61

is the famous violin concerto  
recast for the piano. It is wind  
replaced by water. Sunlight  
replaced by desert rock—  
heat carried into the night.

It is none of these. Things that music  
makes us think about are our things  
only, not its. Nothing belongs to music.

The weird soft geometry of women and men  
lets them turn out the sounds of music

but what lets music itself happen?  
And why does it depend on nothing?  
Or on everything? Piano trill.  
Suddenly so quiet in here.  
I wonder if the morning birds outside  
are listening. And what they hear.

3 March 2009

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Just ask the question.

Then hurry out of the room.

Do it. Just for a change

you be the answer.

3 March 2009

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Shrill the ears at morning why.  
The non-stop music of the mind  
sometimes lets me hear it  
like a mosquito going by  
or staying. A jungle quick  
growing up around my ears.  
For a long time I thought it was the world.

2.

I thought it was summer  
or you in the other room  
humming. But it is just me  
hearing in my unrelenting sleep.

3 March 2009

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Exorbitant celebration  
of mediaeval masses—

flowers were not invented yet  
they had to make do with music

luscious young voices but  
imagine a world before roses!

Had to make do with birds  
outside the window pigeons in the rafters

and people people on their knees  
saying old old words with all their might

a single moment halfway to heaven  
flies buzzed. There was a piece of bread.

3 March 2009

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Room for me left in the clutter of whose heart  
stumbling from Jericho, sees big light,  
sees me like a stain on her handkerchief  
stain on her apron, star in the sky.

Where else would it be? Brown dust  
in old books, the gutter between pages  
adrift with it, to read is to breathe—  
a poisoned book sent to his wife's friend,

Cicero's *De Amicitia*, it was, treatise  
on friendship. Now do you remember me?  
I was the one who tried to write it right,  
to heal by word what sickness came from feeling.

3 March 2009