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Maybe some others
were waiting by the stone
to let them in,

let me in
I need the quiet
solid of your speed

a man must be in trouble
if he needs to be a stone.
And the stone rolled away and left him bare.

9 December 2009 (late)

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But what did I want of you
if I did?

I wanted to remember you
saying certain words,
permitting or insisting or beseeching,
each kind of speaking has its proper music
with me to be freemason of your single mystery,
that thing with so many pieces,
prongs and depths and sockets,
that single thing: the thing you want,

each word led to a special
want of you, a special part of you
that only that sesame would spread open,
a pain negotiated, the timid ecstasy
suddenly turned inside out.

9 December 2009

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Good day to stay home—
what if your home is the reeds
by the lakeshore or the sky
above it? then you're a bird
you're always at home.

10 December 2009/Day 2 Aj

ODE TO THE JESUIT MARTYRS OF NORTH AMERICA

The torn fingers, screams in the deep woods.

Maple. Oak. The human voice has a special
quality in those places, it is the sun
or as much of its light as can come through
hemlocks, white pine.

It is the plain where the Mohawk
River hooks onto the Hudson
like a broken arm. From west
to the openings, then due south to the sea.

They came from there, boat after boat,
to bring some message
that was not heard and did not survive.
They died in the woods
tortured the books say, with all
the little cruelties to skin and bone
children could think up. Then death,
that adult pastime, took them
and the woods thought they were done with noise.

Cruel Mohawks, innocent hunter
gatherers set upon by jive-talking Jesuits—
even now no one knows what Jesus meant
and why these brave men came three thousand
miles to celebrate their glad uncertainties
in the agony of martyrdom. Witnessing
that used to mean, means now to die
for sake of a meaning no one seizes,
to scream out one last mysterious word.

No one can bear that pain. Shock
presumably shuts the system down
a little bit before death silences the occupant
of so much ill-treated meat.
Then the cries and sobs are left to float
unattended through the hardwood groves,
any night you can hear them there
still murmuring what's left of the meaning,
o god there's no meaning there is only men.

Or on the knoll beside the Thruway now
where the round church squats
low under heaven, shrine of the martyrs,
you can hear it there too, the Indian wind
the rush of diesels down below
and you can hear god listening through your ears.

10 December 2009

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The sanity of love
telling a story again
of lap and hip

and then the nature of a kiss, how
soft she knows
relax her lips yet the lax

is focused, poised
in hot gentleness
to welcome this

her special taste
of wanting me
is welcomest.

10 December 2009

SILHOUETTE

Torpedoes in Long Island Sound
the u-boat fantasy but some were there
but all I saw of that same war
was twenty years over my head
in Annandale a Messerschmidt
at midheaven from an airport show
that matched the pattern in my head
and I was eight years old again, afraid.

10 December 2009

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Care, son, ease
your meady mutter—
no quill need puncture
sheer spooled rapture of
flash! a human form.

ca.10 December 2009

TCHAIKOVSKY

Music makes cold
but then it's twilight
already and on earth

pizzicati necessary
it is Sunday it is winter
wolves pad around

the fires in my head
the sky closes.

ca. 10 December 2009

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Paint your walls black
and space opens
the walls recede—
a single candleflame
becomes the sun

you can talk and love and
squabble round it
and each mind of you
a planet is.

If you live in a room
with no windows
paint the walls dull black
then you'll see the light
for what it is, a word
answering you always.

ca. 10 December 2009

ΣΗΜΑΤΑ

What to say of the blue under bridges? I pictured you naked in a canoe, face down, taking the sun as your lover. Taking whatever happens as your lover. There's nobody else who knows us, really, but the *signs*.

The sign is whatever happens. The signs are whatever catches our eye. The signs are what take us, whatever comes near, ignores us as it passes, waves to us across a crowded room, sits in an empty room and looks up when we come in then looks back down, we're not worth any attention. The sign is a person looking at us. Or looking away.

10 December 2009

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Seabottom allure
the hiddenness of God
who is always speaking—

how have we endured it so long
the invisible speaker
in the midst of mind

when all we ever meant
was lilacs and get married
nestle in each other

the way sunlight hides in a panther's fur.

11 December 2009

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Or maybe it is enough
to inhale the white
light of morning

and think nothing,
ask the cat
if I should worry

I want to know
what the cat knows,
he does what he knows

but I have no cat
maybe it's that
should make me worry

silenzio! the light
knows more than a cat,
be quiet, drink the light.

11 December 2009

OBJECTS

Apple is wrong to begin with. Not an object but a growing or a growth or something found on someone else. Someone else's hand. Is a fruit a thing or something different. A tomato is a fruit, a tomato is poisonous or was first thought to be so. Who. Who now would take such a fruit as a fruit and imagine in on a tree. There are fruits on trees and fruits elsewhere. But isn't anything you look at an object of attention? If such an object, then an object it is. An apple for instance, wrong to begin with. You wouldn't call a buffalo an object or would you, would you call a canal?

11 December 2009

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An anchor in the sky—
my heart in time

in school we learned things
it takes fifty years to forget

we learned to count
but not what numbers are

now you know what they are
now there are too many things to count.

11 December 2009

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Unemployed ideas
stand around in the brain
we need a change of government

More beast less priest

and I carried that sign with me
shoving it in the faces of those pale people,
novelists of family and relationships,

that is, all the people in the world.

11 December 2009

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Morning of the exploding egg
pan boiled dry while I palavered
pastness, an egg is less white
than this snow on which yesterday
the mountain lion passed, slow
stalking along the ridge, down
to the road behind the garage
where your books are stored

she said, winter, we are accidents
prone to one another, what I know
is hardly worth taking to the post office
but she, she sees the whole picture
and our place in it.

Stick to she and the sun stops shaking.

12 December 2009

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Amortizing the evidence

till you can prove nothing,
just see everything
as it always was before

before the crime of culture
happened, bright sun
on clean old snow.

12 December 2009

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I have to try
that new religion,
whirlpool for a face

and the trees
suck sulfur out of the ground
and lick the salt of heaven.

God hides best in language.

12 December 2009