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What does one love  
when one 'loves' music?

What is it exactly  
when one says I love Bartok,

I love Strauss?  
What is it in music

that fits the heart?  
The fits the I?

11 October 2007

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Wordless today, the gaunt  
apology. I love all these  
people. Who are they?  
I don't know. My love  
leaves no room for identity.

11 October 2007

## POINSETTIAS

A. Do you know how the poinsettia happens to be on the other side of the deck today?

B. I didn't move it.

A. Didn't say you did, but it didn't get there by itself.

B. The restless poinsettia! Sleepwalking houseplants – you've come up with a new concept for horror movies.

A. I still want to know.

B. Want to test it for footprints?

A. Seriously, it's strange. Yesterday it was over there, under the rail.

B. Are you sure?

A. Well, the day before yesterday, just before it rained, because I watered it to make sure.

B. It rained two days ago.

A. OK, so three days ago it was there. And now it's here.

B. A lot can happen in three days.

A. Evidently. But how did this happen?

B. Don't look at me.

11 October 2007

There are poems that can only exist as dialogues from broken plays, 'dumbshows' in words, word mimes. They arise like waves, and fall back, and the ocean is not changed. Such discourses are the opposites of drama, which (I think) always has words entrain action, action entrain resolution.

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But is there always  
or isn't there always

something else, a blue rose  
in which the distant glow

of ancient television shows  
is crystallized and still gives light

a rose unhanded by its thorns,  
a rose in name only.

11 October 2007

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Not to know  
even the shape of the house  
one lives in all those years—

but no, the shape  
is always slowly changing,  
maybe the knowing  
is changing too—

and one day the two will meet.  
And the empty house will  
suddenly fill up with you.

11 October 2007

[DREAM DATA 12 X 07]

*(Dream:)*

Carrying shlock by camelback from afar,  
the tiny country where all the things are.

Far, far, the other man I love you for\*.

*(Right after waking immediate understanding of dream:)*

The asterisk was in the dream. It meant: \*implication: whenever you love someone, that someone is a personation (or impersonation) of *another*, earlier, further away, lost or at least not found, gone or at least not here, forgotten or at least not consciously claimed. We love another when we love someone.

12 October 2007

= = = = =

Too big too sloppy a wolf  
is a very fierce animal isn't it  
can be. In Chicago Navy Pier a wheel  
or Prater. Where you are. Names  
lead only to other names. When we stare  
deep into each other's eyes we see  
other eyes and other eyes all the way  
back to the soft yellow eyes of the wolf  
looking in at us from the harmless woods.

12 October 2007

## GENEROSITY

The devil will give you  
Everything you ask for  
If what you ask is a thing  
The devil can give.

If not, the angels  
For their amusement  
And your enlightenment  
Will give you something

Else, where else is  
The other side of the mind,  
The other side of anything,  
The dark face of the Sun.

12 October 2007

= = = = =

What are these things waiting for us

like Uncle Joe's thick old reading glasses  
smudgy in their old clamshell case  
ready in all their feebleness still to show  
him a new word or a new world out there

so maybe even the holy sun itself above  
is just the dimmest instrument  
waiting for us to use the light  
instead of letting it just lie there

dusty light left on the piano lid all day long.

13 October 2007

## MY ELEPHANT

All the surprises are waiting for me  
packed on the back of an elephant,  
a blue velvety carpet protects his back  
from bales and boxes of stuff coming to me.

Slow and sure such an animal advances,  
swaying almost prettily for all his size,  
how daintily settles down each massive foot  
with a soft splaying of blunt toes as he treads.

And all of it for me! I can walk like that too,  
or try to, bringing things to people,  
in my arms if not on my back, armloads  
of books, green eyes full of innuendos,

my lips parted to say something intelligent  
something that will please you, something  
you can actually use. What could that be?  
I'm afraid to say the wrong thing, or nothing at all.

So instead I'll tell you all about my elephant.

13 October 2007

[DREAM DATA 14 X 07]

*Heard into waking:*

Gunshots at dawn.

Bad dreams.

I have come to a new city  
and am not welcomed there.

I am an alchemist at last,  
far from home.

*Continued when awake:*

But this place is your home.  
Yes, every place is.

Which is why the tepid welcome  
of the named people, the dog and so on,  
counts so much, hurts so much.

To know all the names  
and still be nowhere.

14 October 2007

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I seem to like something a lot these days,  
black leather sofa, red leather chair,

something is always up to something  
that's what I like about it

green damask armchair, cherrywood table  
climate of Portugal, wine on the floor,

something is plenty for me, something  
is always enough, scroll on the doorpost,

animals bleating, something lives  
also in the sky, a flutter of light waves

a shimmer of recorded music  
testing my patience, o something is always

and something is close, something  
knows me and I put up with searching,

something analyzes me, I can't help it  
I clutch something in my hands

but something's always in control, blue  
satin gown, pullcord of the ceiling fan.

14 October 2007

## PORPENTINE

Lives not here.  
But over there  
across the river  
in a book or up  
a hemlock tree  
is yes. Furious  
as a word always  
is. How not.  
Especially seldom  
in any mouth.  
Prickles of it,  
the dog howls  
and runs away.  
The mind stays.

14 October 2007

## ALPINE SYMPHONY

It is the nature of everything to be far away,  
as far as it can, any kind of weather, even now.  
Keats heard it, of course without going there  
or staying long. Another country  
is usually mountain range enough for us.  
Sky travel used to be harder before planes  
but not unknown, the witches  
with their creamy thighs, Frenchmen  
a-dangle from their slim balloons. But now.  
Now it's all music, all here and there,  
phone pressed to the ear we advance  
covering one ear with the message, letting  
the other ear listen to the glacier. Scree  
is a pretty word, crevasse another. Dawn  
over the Matterborn. That's not quite right,  
that's me you mean, a poltroon of fact  
miserer my lexicon. That's right, that's who.  
Thunder. Music knows so much, young  
as it is, and rock for all those years so innocent.  
Do you know how to listen to a rock, do you  
in fact know what you're raving on about?  
If I did, there'd be no need to say it, talk  
is always an investigation, no? Or *hein*,  
as the French books say, and Canadians  
denasalize and keep as their pet *eh*?  
Where did that come from? You can't have  
mountains without tourists up and down 'em,  
can't have a sky without a sun in it,  
every natural thing there is has a way  
to hurt you if you let it. Here a Tyrolean  
fell to his death, I saw his body in the town,  
his face a study in surprise. Yes, things.  
Confronting the glacier I was quiet a minute  
and let the wind do my lying for me.  
Listen, you said again, but I'm done with that.

14 October 2007

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But it always could be something else  
all the while I thought it was this,  
the heart too can make spelling mistakes,

I wrote what I wanted on the face  
of the sky and the earth brought it to me  
and I was wrong. But it was right,  
it always is, at least the contrary  
is not often permitted to be claimed.  
Thunderbolts, gaping chasms suddenly,  
the punishments of hubris. Hubris  
means entitlement. No, I was right  
but it had changed, or I gave up  
wanting and took up welcoming  
and then what happened. Everything.

14 October 2007

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The email you sent me is in code.  
Mountain means your mind.  
Or mine. Moonrise is running away.

A glass of water in your hand  
means wine, spilled wine,  
the harvest spoiled, but happy  
peasants drunk on last year's wine.

But what does it say  
when it says your knee  
sore a little from the climbing,  
Christians all round you and genuflection?

What power does it mean  
when you say I may  
stay here till November?

The ancient Celtic year begins.  
There are ancient people where you are.

I have changed my body,  
now I sprout iron wings,  
I danced with them last night.  
I was sober. A rock  
rolled down the hill  
hungry for something it could not speak.

14 October 2007

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But for the rest of it  
there is always a tunnel  
running sideways through the ear  
from what you hear to what you want

and there I rest,  
my sword slishing back and forth along a branch,  
a man forever waiting for you  
and you never have to come

the sound's enough, the marble  
hallway we imagine is just the moon  
but in our hearts we know better,  
we know we have always been together

no coming and no going and everything a door.

14 October 2007

## TROMBA

I hear you again  
sea trumpet  
the old nuns  
strummed you  
with their thumbs

the groan of wood the groan of iron  
people make the very things cry out

their fictive 'instruments'  
that make noises in the heart but do no work

no codfish are brought home, no irish moss  
sweet as elk milk brought home from the shore—

it was a bowstring  
waxed and ready  
strung on a harp frame  
and with their hands  
they could make a sound  
heard far at sea

here is a house  
it said in starless night  
here is what you seek.

14 October 2007

## HYACINTHS

Everything is where it should have been.  
A sonata by Hyacinthe Jadin,  
the young maple by the dining room window,  
the mole on one's temple. Change  
must all be inside. The sensuous  
potency of those who will die young –  
three years packed into each one. He died  
at thirty-one, old enough to see it coming—  
which is mostly what it means to be old.  
Sometimes if you put your ear to such  
young skin – above the hip bone,  
nape of the neck, deep of the ribcage –  
you can hear the reverberations of the interior,  
of the future itself echoing inside,  
a little scary, like an old Methodist  
pumping the harmonium. So lick  
the skin and forget what you heard.  
You could live a long time on the taste of this.

15 October 2007

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Open the door  
a bat flits out.  
Open a number  
and the silence  
thrills. Inside  
any number  
is everyone.

15 October 2007