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THE DEATH OF FAUST

Fortune's agreements
have her wheel built in—

a brick for breakfast often
and a ten-foot rule

I know, I measured it
in you, you who are all about forgetting.

2.

Never forgive.

I have no room
for the republic
in this ode,
this is me-stuff, you,
my hero, you
who of the noblest forbearance
disdained to fly higher than

your indigo shadow cast
an architecture of disquiet

to city me. I am inhabited.

3.

Rainish you think in me
annotating everything. The gleam
of getting rid of you
is like an oxcart,
and its white ox seen
lumbering over the stones up the hillside
in the last light.

4.

So I too can forget
the elegant dispositions of your waist,
the narrow pass, the empty dining all
with all the regimental banners tattered
hung down from the dusty gallery

and all your victories were over me,
your only enemy.

5.

Who brought
the leaf in?

And set it, wet,
on the table, oak leaf on oak wood,
is it some kind of joke?

And while I telephone the devil
and flirt the morning mist away
some poor man seems to have had an accident
and only the orchestra hears or tries to help.

8 November 2006

= = = = =

Cut skin be mind
or be light
 gleam
comes out when knife
comes in
 a life
honed edge to catch
light takes life
blood is the mind
a man peopled red
river in
 coasts of begin.

9 November 2006

= = = = =

My mother called me on the telephone
but you're dead I said o your voice
I wanted so many times to hear again
how can I be hearing now?

Your face. Angle of remembering,
planetary remembering. Where are
the others? I hear your voice
on both sides of the telephone,

O my son I call to warn you, you
who made me so much grief,
don't look too close, my dear,
and woe betide those who actually

do see the pattern in the carpet.

9 November 2006

= = = = =

Catch the last wind
before it falls

a splinter is wood
a sliver is glass

I have heard it
to the end.

10 November 2006

= = = = =

Not be a word for it
skip stone
hunting pond a mist
a morning best

then solve me
!constituent balm
squeeze the moon
gunshot chattering geese

day.

11 November 2006

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Slow me please
and undersell
greenmantle prophecy

not a book
a color between
me and my eye

please.

11 November 2006

= = = = =

carried bags when they came
in wetfoot acre bronze
waiting burns a hill
habit close sword cleft

a rock breaks anything
if you let it diamond
rigor a rain squall a

horse.

11 November 2006

= = = = =

but how can I find
your voice in these meek
Sunday morning solemn words
spacey as a drowned forest
blackened stumps of theory
from what someone
meant a summer air
once and where are you
when I need you, your voice,
you, all we ever need
is one another, sound
like yourself the only song.

11 November 2006

[responding to Mary Rose Larkin's little book]

CHANCERY CURSIVE

Handwriting. A good script relieves the hand
of thought. Then we can be kids together
comparing clever passages of skin
with one another. Touch this. Now this. No.
All right. The weather understands us
perfectly. Apple blossom, sycamores,
you name it – it rains inside your clothes,
it snows inside your brain, what you'll soon call
your Mind, that lissome fugitive from space
only evidently seems trapped in time.
So that (as the Poet says) history.
Happens. It is the other that stands near me
waiting for the bad news every day. That
never comes – how can it find room to stand
among all the commonplace disasters
that maim our living room? Death waits his turn.
Despite gender and Cocteau I still think
Death is a gentleman, at least a man
more dapper than cartoons let him seem.
His scythe a little diamond necktie pin
like a Noble of the Mystic Shrine
come for shivaree and fun and quick goodnight.
This is what my handwriting said to me, dear friend,
should I trust it? Can you be taken in like me?

12 November 2006

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When they actually yearn for the bite of the dog
there's nothing to do with them but give them the wooden key
the blue map and let the kitchen wall fall down

and there they are, kingdom of spades
and they shimmer, actually shimmer with sheen
in their anxiety to be done. Do.

And the factory begins. Handless,
a blue machine like you. Blueless, a sky
in pieces rearranged. An egg dismembered.

Beautiful time, we had you together.
Maybe that's enough, or Tegethoff on his spindle
over the Praterstern, a ship become all mast

sails straight up into the sky.
Because we still believe we are the all-highest
because we raised Lazarus from the dead. And we were Lazarus.

13 November 2006

= = = = =

From the in it says
to the out a song
it will not be less
as long as it's wrong

Hope is more than have
lies tell the truth no
truth can speak and love
goes faster than go.

13 November 2006

= = = = =

Touch this or straddle
what I didn't mean
and ride it side-saddle
to prove some sort of irony

and yet the foolish horse goes
perfectly straight, takes me where
it means to be and there
I have to be too, along with

everything that ever went and stayed
while the wreaths of roses decayed
all round the necks of the winners
of the imaginary steeplechase.

13 November 2006

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The cluttered walk around the simple mind
my household business to clear out today
so that, what? So that old-fashioned
two-step we call thinking can stroll along
unimpeded by evidences of its past
prowess or defeats. *Freie Bahn!*
just like Johann Strauss, full speed ahead,
nothing in sight except what comes to mind
all by itself. But o that self! What self
is that, or whose self is it, for whose sake
wielded among the gears and apple trees,
what are you thinking of now? I miss you.
But it's not the kind of day to talk about that.
The biggest mystery on view has just
been mentioned and passed over, Husserl sleeps
still damp from the baptism of anxiety.
When something happens by itself what self
is that? Now back to music, Mendelssohn
keen-visaged who tried to make the human
apprehension of the godly a burst of speed.
Frenzy in control. The *Octet*. The pleroma.

14 November 2006

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Too many specifics for a single road.
We'll have to go barefoot
a path for each toe to sense the right one

somewhere to go. *Loa*,
where the gods went, where they always are,
where they wait, *Loa*, to mark

your sweet skin already tattooed
with the permanent *vévés* of your pores,
your actual other, you. The mark

gods leave on you. That all men read.
Luster. The sheen of an intuited identity
they'll give their empty lives to linger near.

14 November 2006

3½ LINES FROM A DREAM + SOME MORE

So that Sin by going backwards
against God's intentions, reveals
per contra what the world should be
or should have been

so sin shows.

Sin saves. That's why it's cognate with
the simple German verb that means 'to be.'

So *be* and *beyond* are our lessons today
the crunch of guessing what beyond would be
if being itself is what we get beyond,
leaving the irritable and sometimes irritating
Danes behind with their be/not be,
either/or dualities,

and going beyond
into a state of lucent awareness
as far beyond being as being is beyond
non-being or not being – something
like that. Or the other side of sin.

15 November 2006

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Could it stop there
a face over a fence,
three girls dancing on Youtube's
little screen of iffy lust,
can any body any more
feel what these gestures signify?
Isn't it pure sign? Video, virtual,
and the soul aflame with thirst
surfing these dry pixels.
Who were you when you were you?
And what are we looking for
who are so busy looking,
for some ultimate expression on a face.
Love is somebody else's dance,
bright window on no world.
Video used to mean 'I see.'
Now means I want to be seen
the way I think I want to be.
The mask is the machine.
Everybody looking. Nobody seen.

15 November 2006

= = = = =

Not said. Spoken. The difference
"to me." Sore throat November rain.
In two days the death of Osiris
comes round again. The weather

is a rock I tumble in my fingers,
change, intrusions, luster, symmetries.
We too are crystals I suppose
in someone's "living hand."

But someone has to be looking.
Somebody has to care.

15 November 2006

= = = = =

Morning out in weather.
The long time. Since this.
Has been the case. The miracle
of what just happens. Now.

Men like me must
have been the first settlers
here, on the special
blue planet of the ordinary

where the march of things
around us quick made us
stop being and start
becoming. The Fall.

The famous occasion.
And then the other autumn.
The one here now.
Winter coming.

16 November 2006

BLACK ANALECTS

Crows nest not near.
Enough to hear their habits.
Discourse and observation.
Protect the boundaries
only they can see.

Understand the above.
The below. Confucius
could have been a crow.
We could have met then
halfway up the sky

in hill country, crow
country. If you understand
the morning you
understand everything.

16 November 2006