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## RADIO PLAY

Open the box. It makes a sound.

*Box opening, wooden, medium.*

There is resonance.

There is curiosity.

*Sound of a man thinking about the box.*

What is in it?

A color. But not when the box is not opened.

Something else. Guess.

*People guessing.*

What does beauty sound like?

People guessing.

*The sound of purple, plastic.*

A slab of obsidian, small.

*Stone noise, gentle.*

Do not drop this.

*Sound of it not dropping.*

All of this I give to you.

*Sound of a man giving.*

What?

*Sound of another person asking.*

*Sound of nobody answering.*

16 January 2005

## OFFERING

The offering is what waits  
for someone to pick it up and give it  
to somebody else to hold  
eat and drink it

or put it away amid last year's corn  
in deep barns, quiet,  
a few living things feed on each other.  
But the mirror swallows everything it sees.

16 January 2005

=====

Haven't I told you enough  
about my road my house  
my little river my tree

my weather the birds I see  
the people I think about thinking about me  
the ancient alphabets  
I pretend to read in leaf and bark

the moon above all and what  
I think about her,  
my wife, my window and my door,

haven't I told you enough about my gods  
my table, my cup, my hands?

16 January 2005

=====

A great abbey with a missing roof –  
God gets impatient with our clothes

It was the fig leaf, not the apple  
that got us thrown out of Eden,

the coyness of our shame.  
We should be ashamed of being flesh

or else of none of it.  
The shame of our desire.

Take off your roof, your wall.  
Be witnessed.

16 January 2005

=====

To know the face  
of the one that knows you

to count the numbers  
that add up to her

standing in the schoolyard  
rubbing snow into her blue wool coat

no sun anywhere  
but a lot of sky

immense skies over childhood  
cold taste of her skin on the tip of my tongue

17 January 2005



=====

But can I hear it the bell  
you mean the heavy one  
with the grey sound the  
time stone block cracking  
housing project in grey snow  
empty windows even  
hard inside trying to be

17 January 2005

*LE CHASSEUR MAUDIT*

Eventually he catches up with it  
the thing he's been chasing  
since his first communion  
when they first let him ride  
the horse of the streets  
all the way to the animal  
he must become he became  
and there he is his shadow  
broken on the curb his shadow  
crushed against the window  
he sees the eyes of the thing  
looking back at him pleading

17 January 2005

=====

Too much salt  
the idea tries  
to get out of the head  
arteries press  
thinking in  
love pain and red  
a revolution  
in the eyes  
a cold iron key  
held to the heart  
will stop the bleeding.

17 January 2005

=====  
Will I feel this father gold  
inmost working walking in me?

Is there really ever another,  
isn't it all this this this?

A pear tree down the road—  
they need some cold  
but not as much as apples  
—that much I know.

It will be zero tonight  
among the numbers.

Air view of a foreign city:  
the palm of my hand, empty.

17 January 2005

=====  
Where the road went  
I was waiting. This is an old  
song but can I sing it,

sounds like Vaughn-Williams  
setting Housman. It is cherries  
on it in August,

it is the scarlet-berried  
yew tree in December  
it is at my door

and singing, I don't have to do  
anything but listen –  
where the road went

someone was listening  
it was easy because time  
was mentioned, measured

by months of the year  
and people were named  
–me, you, someone–

all bold as birchtrees  
standing out of the snow  
believing everything they hear

a different kind of white.

17 January 2005

=====  
It's getting close to the hour  
that comes to meet us.  
We have trained the clock  
to sing like a wood thrush  
at midnight, we have taught  
the stairs to feel like gravel  
and going up is like going down,  
religious types on pilgrimage  
we pass, time goes by  
in oxcarts, and Death  
speaking bad Spanish  
calls to me from the roadside.  
I look again and see it's me,  
sobbing, trying to remember  
a sailboat lost in Prospect Park.  
Even as a child I told lies.

17 January 2005

=====  
Mercies galore!

All the girls in the Bible  
are letters of an alphabet  
disguised. Leah is A,  
Dinah D, the dangerous  
door. Rachel  
I'm not sure.

                    We have to  
begin at the beginning.  
Eve. Eve was H,  
our breath  
getting ready to speak.

The men mean nothing.  
They are there only to keep  
women apart or together.  
Moses is Miriam.  
Miriam is Pharaoh.  
One hand washes the other.

Adam is still red clay,  
unformed, no one yet  
has breathed into him.

All of history is yet to come.

17 January 2005

=====  
And then those footsteps –  
they were in my shirt pocket

they were coming close  
someone was singing

I thought this was my own house  
my own life

they were different  
they were avenues and corduroy

they like smells of restaurants you pass  
they make folkish remarks to girls going by

And they were my life.  
I could feel them on my skin

they way you suddenly  
feel shadow when the sun goes in.

17 January 2005



=====

So many birthdays.  
To be born so often.

Pick a day nobody was  
born nobody died.

Sound of feet running  
quick, furtive, gone.

18 January 2005

## SOUNDINGS

Doppler effect. I am a radio  
broadcast in your head.

Your shoulders hear me  
my shoulders feel your fingers

sign me from far away.

So much weather  
among men. So much time.

It takes three hours to say a word.

2.

Reading a book is climbing  
a slag heap, a hill in Staten Island  
where garbage scows deposit  
what no one wants,

no one but us.

We climb, climb,  
reading is finding  
every piece of junk  
can be a jewel the mind needs,

it runs the wheel that runs the world.

3.

Say it.

You have to stop reading to read really.

You have to stop reading and write  
what reading makes you be.

Writing is reading. Reading is writing in chains.

The digital clock hums to itself  
in Japanese. Don't listen.

You speak a language older than grass,  
You speak nitrogen,  
you write in carbon.

It flows from your finger  
like the colored light the Russians used to photograph  
with curious machines, light  
coming out of leaves or human hands,  
auras, energies.

But don't learn Russian.  
You speak a language older than water.

4.

We should close our eyes as we read  
and let our lips form new letters,

let them speak of how Time really passes  
through us on its way to the market

where everybody is.

Time  
is a healthy old man walking beside his donkey,

this is the radio message, sound effects:  
the gentle donkey's quiet clipclop

on its way through you. This  
is the animal that walks alongside Time—

what must it be? Do you think  
you could open your eyes now

and write down a name for it?  
Do you think you can ride on its back?

18 January 2005

=====

Sometimes needing more than having.  
Sun on snow.

We leave crackers on the snow for foxes.  
Someone leaves birds in the trees for me.

18 January 2005

Eve Dinah Miriam Judith Esther Leah Rachel Tamar Deborah