

11-2002

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## MORNING BELONGINGS

an astute truth  
trumpets from where  
dream should play

but that dawn  
theaters closed  
just a word

instead of a story  
a feeling  
instead of a word

leaving me  
with just this  
you see around me

a desert of things  
in the glare of morning  
dry hands

birds own the distances  
I am here  
at the intersection

of their cries  
a hard silence  
between their so-called songs.

10 November 2002

## **THE TIME DEMANDED**

Nowadays people want  
urbanity in poetry  
since they're all nouveau riche

but they want prophecy too  
because they're scared

send for elegant Isaiahs  
and see why Auden's popular again.

10 November 2002

## **PEACE MARCH**

Children of the nouveau riche  
on safari through reality.

10 November 2002

## **THE WORLD**

The world's the weirdest theme park yet  
but what on earth's the theme of it?

10 November 2002

## **WEATHER**

Just mild enough to sit chilly on the deck  
being severe about reality. Juvenal  
in more ways than one.

The leaves though  
are pretty at my feet. They make me feel  
a minor god on a cheap vacation  
full of cultural attitudes and no work to do.

10 November 2002

## **SURNOIS**

Whence this vein of surliness  
this terror this despond?

Grumpy grey sky  
you look so sexy when you get mad.

10 November 2002

# χεαλλαιγ

so named, I expect  
adversarial  
relations  
as a New Yorker  
seldom disappointed

but a smile  
(north Florida, Italia)  
disarms me

when I don't know who to fight  
I don't know which end is up

but in my heart I want them all  
theses and antitheses  
and on my grave expect to see  
I am the Philosophy of Both / And,  
where you are and where I am.  
I want everything.  
I want everything again.

10 November 2002

## ISOLATION ANIMAL

Sugar cane  
it's going to rain

so many islands  
to catch  
a little pleasure

dancing persons  
frazzled with music  
no one listens to  
but every body does

sugar cane  
I need to relent

south my maples  
and mangrove me

half submerged  
I Floridate

sugar cane  
all that passes for the best

like a door in Germany  
opens into hell  
the devil  
has to eat breakfast too

I am the alternate energy  
chief role in a bad play  
ran a month and never knew  
who won the war I tried to be.

10 November 2002

## REGRETTING MY TATTOOS

I think I'm sorry  
I ever let them  
mark me

itemize them now  
like Villon give away  
what I barely have

yielding to you  
what is left  
of me

the blue scars  
the scarlet traces.  
I have no tattoos

I'm sorry now  
the inalterable change  
I did to me

in your name.

10 November 2002

**BRAHMS, VIOLIN SONATA Op.108 in d.**

a boy and a girl  
playing with tools  
the giants left behind

when they went back  
to heaven or forward  
to hell, *nephilim*

left this music  
so much darker  
than our pale hands

can represent  
or understand,  
all sense

lost in the sound of it.

10 November 2002

## Dvorák's Trio in f, Op.65

I don't know

I don't know this

the lyrical excitement

of an unknown lace

death after all

might have something to teach me

somewhere to hide

beauty, *et ravissements*

the cello staggering towards bed

we are made of love

the way candles are of wax

and when love's gone

nothing can support the flame

but I do know this music

I know the dark corridor

through the mine

stretched below the sea

wherever you are listening

a light of some sort  
finds you  
or runs on before

we chase it, it leads us  
element by element  
down beneath the material world

till in an endless cavern  
we see the star of alchemy  
blazing like a little  
saucer of milk below the table

always going, going away from us  
but not very fast

a light we come to the shores of and go in.

10 November 2002

*éparpillé sur le gazon*

the phrase insists  
it will be my name  
a new word  
a dirty joke  
hear it and swell

paradox of participles  
how can a singular be scattered

and how can all those leaves of grass  
be one lawn

does it even mean what it says  
or what I think when I look at it  
the question we always ask  
about the calendar  
    it is November do you love me?  
we live by reassurances  
interpreting the smiles of strangers  
passing by

dismembering daisies

count on me, I told her, and I lied.

\*

so what is scattered on the lawn?  
these oak leaves Onan's own

seed, the stains of light  
that slip down through forests  
the children's toys, the cookie crumbs  
a page of God's diary smudged with tears

\*

they teach us to bring one another  
to orgasm not to make love  
blood type O universal orgasm donor  
they teach us to come  
and make each other come  
in a universe where we're supposed to go

\*

lawn is to forest as  $x$  is to people?  
I have no logic for this operations  
I was left out overnight, got wet,  
bats flew north above me  
indifferent as the stars

I think there's a heart inside all this  
a blood-soaked stone  
about the size of a woman's fist

if I sit here long enough it will rain

the colors surround me  
which way can I turn?

\*

these stars my father taught me  
draw five points in one continuous line  
a lineage of sorts from the first days  
how I have valued everything I learned  
the sound of speech a trick of fingers

my father was double-jointed I am not  
I had to use the words for that

a liar was something my father hated  
so I had to be a liar to be anyone at all

\*

in each small cake (Latin *placenta*)  
will be found just enough nourishment  
to walk from dawn to afternoon

after that you need a car or camel  
something you actually believe in  
a pretty lady you see in the street

\*

even a cat will do, the incongruous  
citizen of low places who yet is skilled  
at leaping up. Suddenly he is there

warm and soft and dangerous in your lap  
bringing strange pathogens to infect you  
the awful purring tenderness of things

blinded with tears we lose our way,  
we fall off piers, down stairs,  
drive into one another on the road

a wind stirs in the fallen leaves  
a yellow wind no matter how grey  
the day, to dry our eyes

on this oak tree a swollen gall  
from this make ink,  
unsentimentalize

a cat  
feels like money. A girl feels like a cat.

11 November 2002

(I woke with the French phrase in mind, and presently recalled or guessed it meant 'scattered on the lawn.')

## CAUGHT, & INCONGRUOUS

I was on my own way  
and no one  
had to be me

but they were,  
this was the voice  
that whispers from the ground

you heard it  
when you were very young  
on Sunday afternoons

when there was nothing to do  
and the light went grey  
not darkness really

but some other loss  
through all the trees  
the endless boulevards

all the fallen leaves  
and you sat on a rock  
or on the ground itself

what it said to you  
was so clear  
it was like having snakes in your lap

writhing  
through one another  
till you knew

you are made  
of life and only  
life and you listen.

12 November 2002

## INSTRUCTIONS

Sit on the ground.

Handle things.

Listen. Listen  
with your mouth

you never know  
what you'll hear  
until you say it

sit on wood  
and think: water  
sit in water  
and think:

far

from myself  
I am flying  
to meet me

there, where listening  
is. Warm.

Sit

by the fire  
danger around you  
and let the Safe Place  
inside you  
talk, lure  
you and everyone  
into its huge quiet  
metropolis.

12 November 2002

