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## **TIJAX**

Cut with knife  
sleep anxious wake  
after Walpurgis  
nacht should  
be May morning.  
Some sort of criminal  
running in our land,  
quarrels in the air  
on both sides of sleep.  
Police gather in the street.  
Barefoot the villain  
runs, his own dream  
intersecting theirs.  
Nightmare. Magnolia  
in full bloom. Dawn.  
Everyone against everyone.  
And that is a dream too.

1 May 2003

## USING THE OTHER SIDE

of the mail. Mail moving around,  
no one sending, no one reading.  
Ear ache. Eye itch. The pieces  
move through space  
as if space needed motion,  
Brownian movement, wedding  
announcements, vitamins, entropy.

Information on its way  
from no one to no one,  
mail takes itself so seriously  
envelope gourmet glue  
government stamp  
— a little insecure  
our information  
to require  
such formalities  
of registration,  
it aspires  
to inform  
someone who has moved  
leaving no forwarding address.  
Forget the dog. We need  
a mail catcher  
to clear the world of homeless messages,  
all these vague cries.

1 May 2003

## **BEING READY**

I think it is ready for something  
something that does not think  
a friend ready to help

and no help needed, what is needed  
can't be helped, can only be swallowed  
like water she's held too long

in her mouth, tastes like herself, tastes  
like nothing named, something  
that does not taste itself, something that goes

and goes right down

< 1May 2003 >

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The peace moves  
more than space  
I am worn with hearing  
★★★fall off the flag

blue gentian flowers  
I found one in my fingers  
when I grabbed the rock ledge  
climbing France.

1 May 2003

## **FROM THE TIN MINES OF SLEEP**

Here is your tin  
it came from these islands  
wordless men  
bent to pull it free  
cassiterite the ore  
from which we come

Here is your tin  
watering can  
blind mirror  
sconce for candles  
Mexican

everybody likes the glitter  
the hard ancient way  
it gives the light back  
  
grudgingly, like blind eyes.

2 May 2003  
(from dream)

## ANSWERING THE MIRROR

The glass rings  
and you try to answer it.

The day turns into itself  
and the mirror goes away

unbroken. You knew its name  
so it lost its power

to make you feel one ay  
when you lit an oil lamp

on the last night before it was now  
o Sabbath Sabbath

and he still hadn't come home.  
Every boy penelopes his father,

years later makes every woman wait  
as he was tormented by the gaunt

mica hours, sidewalk hours, waiting  
by the car or subway steps,

so in balance she must mount the broken tower  
and stare out forever begging the deadly sea

to give her practiced traveler back,  
sure to come soon but never coming.

Waiting is what they do to each other  
glib as forests hiding fur-bearing animals

the slender shapes that matter  
coming not yet and the mind waiting

utterly convex with possibilities,  
death and drunkenness and all betrayals

soft as Judas the loved one comes  
finally. You look at the last face

of your desire. It says something  
you will never believe again.

2 May 2003

## AS IF IT

were after and a knife,  
the special glue  
pours from the horse's eye

it holds the seen world  
together, we  
with our small eyes

cannot look away,  
glued to what we see  
are seen, *obscene*

a word of unknown parents,  
as if it spoke marshland  
over a sun so that the light

had to hide  
in cat ice, the shiv of it left  
after the thaw freezes

and the spikes of things that grow  
tall by themselves and are silent  
bear the lean collar of ice

the whole sheet of it held in thin air

2 May 2003

## IN THE CARDS

The discard pile  
from which your fate  
protected you

you never had to be  
the Jack of Clubs,  
matter boy

or nine pink diamonds  
stabbing your lady,  
the wounds

of more than one Christ,  
you are brilliant  
in what turns up

the soft red Ace  
on my green lawn  
fallen, sunrays

lance the spot,  
you swoon, you  
lose track of the game,

what game,  
there is only this  
and I am you,

your last card left.

2 May 2003

## SILVERY MISSIONS

Longitudinal appeals  
a Central Asian democracy  
oil butter horse

carpet mother  
sierra of the middle  
seam of the world

open now  
reveal the gentle  
slope along her kidney

amazing truth skin  
try to hold so smooth  
hip of the hour

an equation a catastrophe  
gone already  
fallen shadow

always a sort of smile  
was there before you  
echo of the visible

it lived in that place  
lurking eye  
in the rocks

you, you want  
always to be somewhere else  
do you know that about you

I am a sad language  
telling you  
because I speak only here

no matter where I am  
just as you are  
sand storm golden giving

light among the innocent.

2 May 2003

## MY CITY

People are allowed to use  
each other again.

Chelsea installation all the way west  
copying sandstone in silk.

An old drunk sits on the iron steps  
and remembers that it is May  
now and somewhere  
else are dandelions.

2 May 2003

## **DRINK**

Drink is not as common to abuse  
among the old as once it was.  
You've got to believe in yourself a little bit  
to get drunk, otherwise you couldn't stand the company

in that silent corridor of alcohol  
snug and dangerous and leaving no shadows  
down which you have to stumble always alone.  
There used to be brave men and realist women

who could spend their lives drunk or on the way  
but now the doubt is thick around the heart,  
the glass falls from an almost sober hand.  
We sit and watch ourselves young again TV.

2 May 2003

## **RINGS HER**

fingers know  
another without other

why silver numbers  
count years

belonging to  
someone self

not this  
emergency land

dark turn  
before sleep run

the light shouts  
out of your hand

3 May 2003

## THE OLD FRIEND

Claws of his feet maybe  
stubble of his jaw  
and you know he's here  
that unmistakable kiss

fervent the way a lighter  
burns the thumb when you try  
to light too many candles  
you pay a price for light

for tulips on the windowsill  
shadow of a bird passing.  
Everything owns. A dream  
without money is like a

girl without archeology.  
Everything is where it is  
and always was. Nothing  
comes of it but always

arrives anyhow. He knows it  
better than anybody, he followed  
one road and it led everywhere,  
I followed many to nowhere.

3 May 2003

## **HOMO SELDOM CERTAINTY**

Random afterthoughts of Pleistocene  
when nothing came before —  
a soldier's tale

I was a pilot in a simple war  
nothing led me to kill  
but the ease of doing so

arrow in the noonday sky  
the bedspread quilt below  
where people were just details  
in a busy pattern soon erased,

who counts the stitches?  
in the museum of time  
I was a small eroder,  
I left the world a little less.

3 May 2003

**WHIM SOMETIMES BE THE DEEPEST FATE**

Trim hips  
for your age  
I see you  
in and out,  
black dress  
I watch  
the Adriatic  
over your  
careful shoulders  
I think we  
are doomed to each other.

3 May 2003

## **RANDOMNESS**

Randomness as policy  
solicits bribes. It is like poetry  
a species of forgiveness  
before the act,

you beg to be beheld,  
you stammer with demand,  
ask it to make sense  
when you never do.

Apology includes grosbeaks,  
forget-me-nots take over the lawn,  
the wind's adventures  
on the way to your house.

Always you. You pay up front  
and they never come, you pay  
for hope, to sleep at night  
like a dog without a bugle,

a berry without a bog, a church  
without a god, all that  
flesh turns air to, breathe in  
and suddenly a woman's there,

a man you are. Cheated but happy  
you wake. On your tomb: Everything  
was sex. I only knew it later,  
I thought I was just what happened

to me but I was someone else,  
nobody in particular, just not me.  
There are some lies it makes sense  
to keep telling. The moon rises anyhow.

4 May 2003

## **EVERY LAKE**

Every lake lies  
open to the sky

there is a relation  
no matter little

the water the eye  
looks up the sky

looks down  
and where this seeing

is happening  
a line of more than sight

links earth to heaven  
everywhere nobody home.

4 May 2003