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Know this.
There are shells

you crack and find air
but bright

like a mirror
suddenly shrieking

can you bear
the sound of looking

when that is all
it meant to say

7 May 2001

trees exist to shade
ground that exists to grow trees

7 V 01

and suppose they really were there
the given

ashes in a brazen urn
sifted down from all your poetry

all round us lilacs and leprosy
all the logical consequences
disguised as human history

inconceivable origin without origin
far-off rumor of the real

7 May 2001

could I understand the one who isn't on the face of the coin
the one who understands parallax as a gesture of lovers
slightly aligning noses so that tongues in mouths become
firmer nested propositions bracketed around the eau de vie
of shared saliva let this notorious sentence I can't speak speak

8 May 2001

but what if I asked how, would the wrench
fall out of God's hand and the garden break?

I feared and fell.

The only sin is silence
I said and sinned.

The wrench squeezed the root of my tree
God said: This is desire.

I broke my silence and said: Who made you?
Which one of us is real?

Neither.
Which true? You.

But who was speaking?

8 May 2001

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I can only be
By hint of hearing

Hearing calls
One is by listening.

8 May 2001

THE DECABRIST

The kabbalah
of what happens to be there.

I wait for you to pass me —
there are lilacs everywhere round
scattered road kill
on which noble crows are browsing.

Everything chooses. Choosing
is the same as autonomous
presence. No,
I am independent, a filthy mind,
it is not raining.

This is a treatise on logic not
the most elementary forms of
flags flapping over precarious identities.

This revolts against all future czars.

8 May 2001

PROUST

Imagine the obvious. Again. There is a doubt. The doubt is can you. Do anything other. Is imagination just the breaks of memory. Is memory just the breaks of language, language that happened to somebody at the same time some other thing was happening to the same someone.

I don't think anything happens before language. I don't think you remember anything that happened before you began with language. You get born in it and then it begins to happen. As you grow you have it happen to you and you happen with it. Happening with it I don't think memory exists without language. I think memory is the shadow of language lost or gone. The echo of a mishearing. Shadow. No wonder Proust had to use so many words to remember. By building words he built a wordful world to happen in and let us happen in as well, the way it happened in him and to him and around him, language.

9 May 2001

(Proust talks about sensory recollection — the madeleine (which is abstract enough to occur instead as a piece of toast in *Contre Sainte-Beuve*) in tisane, the broken pavement stumble — but his work is slyly not of the senses at all, only the sense of words — to match known words to the lost memories so as to find the primal word, the link between it and me, the link between all possible perceptions and their perceiver. The great crisis when the young narrator seeks in vain a great word, a great phrase, to sum/summon/surmount the intense experience (the stream, the green, the shadow) and can come up only with *Zut!*, which turns out to be — o baseness of language — only an expression of his feelings, not a magical dieresis that links while holding apart two distinct potencies: the seen and the seer.)

Who is close enough to waking up
That they can look me in the eye and say You are sleeping?

It is a matter of onomasticon, the names of things,
All of them in my little world,

The ones that speak in my right parietal region
When I stumble past the bourn of waking.

Hear this. This
Is her name

And I do nothing but listen
All night long to the dark until it speaks it

A name wakes me
A name wakes any body.

9 May 2001

There were so many sympathies
an alarming absence
broken over a blue world
I tried to find you
Until we gave this blank
A telling name
Brightness we called it
Bigness farness god
But it was nothing
Only the silence of waiting for you.

10 May 2001

Hastur

In the cold
dwelling

a place I heard the name of
like a tree falling

remember me
when you are alone
with that other

we came together
and never parted

sometimes ice
but always water

we are continuous
by nature
of what we are

molecules us

10 May 2001

for Diane Rothenberg

O kin
A way

To come
So far

To be
So home

Eleven days
The island
Spent them

Showed them
The secret
Place between

Religions
The fields

Hidden
From the gods

Where people
Are.

10 May 2001

SOMEWHERE MY BRONZE SHOES

wait for me to be reborn
out of the dust that fills
creases my weird toes
made in the leather once

a new foot will understand the earth

memory of infancy
what can it mean
to celebrate what neither speaks nor remembers

a hard shoe

to mark a time
when everything seemed possible for them and nothing for me.

And nothing to lose

nothing but shoes
they're gone already
they never fitted

where have they gone
where all shoes go

time has a warehouse all its own
locker of lost things

the tune I can't remember

where are my shoes now
who's been walking
in my feet

who's been using

my little hands
to feel the world and hold it

and what does who want

or caught
between the want and the won't
the wick and the flame

the blue air vacuum at the heart of fire

I wonder where my old shoes are
and the old streets they shuffled down
and the old hands that held my hands
in such negotiations of the daytime

bronze of sun and bronze of sundown
and bronze between my eyelids
bronze of sleep.

10 May 2001

But was dust on hands his
So that the leaf was
Emissary from another world
So solidly it was in this.

10 May 2001

sitting in shade on a hot day
and the shadow is no cooler than the light

but still, the shade is still
void of the flat yellow blade
wields the sun.

10 May 2001

Dark glasses are or aren't. By terns
stones ranged beneath a fall of shell.
Shutter bangs again. Talk hard to seal
a compact with a selfish rose this
carnal ear. By camel to the city,
embed in a unique flagon the mill-end
portal of your aunt's gazebo. Drink this
in cool summer, darling, the prelims
are over now, we are the love
we used to have to make. Lich-gate
I called it, where the dead man rests
on his way to the imaginary everlasting
so long that journey, we rest there
also, our bodies soft against the wood
no matter how hard we are, no matter
how little we can ask of one another,
semaphore of a drowning man, a war
always waiting under the horizon.
Curry flavor with the king of need
half-pickled by the third act curtain
and all your wise still sleeping.
You are wet around the hips with doors,
with all the coming out and going,
and this door opens in and under it we see
a shining man in whole a sea's car,
sea's ear listens to the empty wind smite
a lean-to from the southern smithereens
corporal weather, we breed at last inside
the shadow beneath your chin we cross
a permanent frontier you forgive me at last.

10 May 2001

Topiary tinfoil top of the head
In sun I smell the bruise smoke censing
Idle god of improv hours my best art
You sweet marauder now you've got me too
You'll never lose me quivering with musth,
Your hoplite hunkering through barren love.

11 May 2001

PARK

Mallet and maul. Tent peg
samekh is that it, or *teth* a snake,

the ants walk on wood.

Everything falls. A cormorant
slides by. Young moms yell
at their progeny, vie in vulgarity
of the cry. The children hearken
and shriek back, come to heel.

The darkened lives of the young
snarled into obedience — I can hear them
abandoning language forever.
A fat man pounds a tent peg in.

River's a mostly waiting game
that while we hardly notice goes,
a breeze says hello, noon and hot
a truck at its good hour spends,

leave her to heaven, golf cart in shade,
I remember that movie, it was a boat
with a bear in it, no, a shark
nostalgic for the sea.

What a day
it will be when all the images go home.

11 May 2001
Clermont

That all these things
their dialect of pain
speak beyond
any one person's listening

until you

12 May 2001

The need of more
A face over the wall

Not an image a promise
A broken watering can

Broken water.

13 May 2001

Anxiety ridden merchandise
as if a sparrow
flew out of argon

or did he mean Argonne
woods, war?

Nobody means anything,
things mean,

words mean, words mean
what they say

and nothing before.
A sparrowhawk after all,

a predator, a mouth.

14 May 2001

But what could it be, the barren
cup leatherly dried beside the well
wall, who dropped it there, a scuff
of dust on one side a grind of fine
gravel on the other, earth
sticks to water, who?

I think it was a king on the lam,
a poor scoundrel of a gambler,
an exiled statesman, maybe
not even pottery, might be wood,
hard, even hard things rot,
could it even have been you?

14 May 2001

I want you to be my secret

in hidden pronouns

all my verbs pronounce

the dirty little secret that runs the world.

14 May 2001