

7-2001

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As if the quiet light of rain  
gave the crows a strange permission  
they lend to me

                                  to be quiet in their cries  
to say words without intention  
  words  
just part of the weather.

8 July 2001

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**la part maudite** behind

of course it's what's behind  
in every sense the social  
turns its back on feeling  
so it can make it out there  
where fear is and the knife of money

thin blade of hundred dollar bill

(to go on)

8 July 2001

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*in memory of SJK 1900-1990*

I want to be a house on earth  
I want to feel what I feel then forget it  
And when the old man dies let them engrave him  
Reverently into the annals of the ground

A life writes a word or two when it's lucky  
I bend to hear

8 July 2001

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J'ai fringale de tes textes he said  
woman at the keyboard  
bent on translating  
everything there is into this one thing

8 July 2001

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J'ai une fringale de ta lune  
because it comes and goes  
all full of knowing and showing and no.

8 July 2001

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That there would be more  
a man and a light and a knife  
brought home from Burma gore  
still thick on it the wolves  
are howling at my thought of it  
right now in actual Annandale

because what we think  
attracts the world. Attunes the world;  
or otherwise inflects  
the dialects of desire  
and the special code of fear.

She is not close, this animal,  
but close enough I know her voice  
lifted through the katydids and little rain

a furlong off  
a memory like mine, a mouth.

\*\*\*

So I remember my childhood souvenir  
— a Japanese knife from the Burma Road —  
and a wolf howls. All wars are now.

\*\*\*

I hear you weltering in twi-mind  
like an assassinated harp

you sit on a gravestone beside me  
talking about your father on the road to love

we are in the graveyard of the core.

8 July 2001

## NAÏVE AMERICAN FANTASY BUILT INTO THE SKY

Erastus Salisbury Field (American, 1805-1900)  
*The Historical Monument of the American Republic*

Is why. I love it. It is the kind of thing I dream about  
And not just I.



And Field died

a week before my father's birth so  
he must have become my father.

Who drew imaginary horses. These are houses. These are all

I mean to understand my body with.

9 July 2001

## THE WAVES

*In memory of Marjorie Nicholson*

that she comes into the room and sits down at the table  
and is a certain age and wears a purple dress and reads  
out loud in a strange mid-Atlantic voice the way a  
deaconess of old Atlantis might have sounded at vespers

because all religions are one as the poet tells us  
what are not one might then be the devotees the fanatics  
and they must have had them too, fishy old poets  
who chanted stories the echoes of which lingered

long enough for Spenser and such to write them down  
so that we hear the ways of dragons and virgins  
both those who are and those who seem and ocean  
busy long ago with both kinds of lady all kinds of men

vanished under what in their language they called the muscles of the sea.

9 July 2001

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a mercy room and rain  
surround me  
faint and soft and green

green rain sane room my sweat  
has the sound of Mongol flutes  
you know them  
they snarl twin-  
reeded by the Siegessäule  
every day a victory but whose?

9 July 2001

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Then something was going to say itself

a cluster of anxieties  
around a poor old wall

and a wall's a hard thing to be around

it's so full of standing and going.  
Shepherds cough in the itchy underbrush  
hiding from their flocks. A quiet  
smoke, a page or two of Rabelais  
then back to work. Moi,  
I have no other work but this,  
sweeping shadows under Gothic steeples  
coaxing clouds this way over sticky hills.

*And I, I have no other work but you.*

9 July 2001

## SUMMER LOGIC

To be a manual of birds  
to be early and a pond  
almost imaginary in twelve feet of mist  
everything is a road and you

2.  
almost America almost a cloud  
tattoo of a swallow on the horizon

3.  
the wilderness between the body and the person  
I pioneer —

this is science and a thing unknown  
the balance the horizon  
or how the feelings reach the world

or how I can reach you through your skin  
seems the most prosperous magic if I can

voyage into the strange democracy of touch.

10 July 2001



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Being able to count  
and the smell of wet cedar in the yard  
and you being

in my house and you being my house  
and the stars sometimes of course and the rain  
and the shimmershiver of poor memory

these are my sacraments  
we've been in every room of the house but one  
to do something about that

the sealed book, the bible in Navaho.

11 July 2001

## PILLOW TALK

- Answer my questions with  
a hat tossed on the crescent moon
- you don't wear a hat
- and if I did it would be wood  
a wooden hat, how like you that?
- wooden hat on wooden head  
mildew soggy from a sopping heart
- but this heart invented you
- no  
all it did was eat away a wall  
it loves  
to see through  
and call what it sees a world  
  
then sees me in it, or as it,  
what good is that to me,  
this little acid notch you've worked,  
the heart is acid?
- how cruel the match is to the cigarette!
- and the changer to the subject
- oh
- there are no answers are there  
to what I ask  
or you have none?

— the breakwater in Dun Laoghaire harbor  
the clumsy amorists well flown in drink  
come down from Drumcondra  
to sprawl on the cannon meant for Napoleon  
something about the awkwardness of love,  
the sheer clumsiness of sex  
and yet a grace is there

— answer the question for Christ's sweet sake

— auto ferry  
full of Belgians  
belligerent  
she was from Tenerife she danced

— maybe you're right  
your heart is wooden

you're on your own tonight  
the moon's in trouble.

11 July 2001

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And had something to say to you  
Something blue as Samarkand  
Where it never rains but say I do

And we are kilns for one another  
And no potter anywhere

Is that the couch,  
The truth, the colors behind the eyelid  
Hidden where the names can't come?

Does one thing ever come from another  
(we are furnaces for each other,  
fornex and new bread, an arch  
holding the aqueduct above the city  
two thousand years

we are safe inside each other like an idea in a madman's mind

always waiting for the animal of us  
"if you were an animal with four feet..."  
shying shying

the cause of terror is history

(I want the naïve permissions of a glory just newborn)

12 July 2001

## LANDES

Are we near the gate yet  
where the guide  
goes?

Everything gets smaller.  
We fit in hard  
to the merest  
now. If then.

Because one cared  
another lingered  
isn't it  
as much as that, this Heideggerian  
dwelling,

this planet of it, this mistake.

And. And the word you won't pronounce  
shivers over the dry moorland  
white-tailed kingbirds shimmer in and out of underbrush.

13 July 2001

## A WORD NOT SAID

Barriers also, a wall across a street,  
a word across the space between us  
dangerous with restriction.

The definition.

Before this word was spoken  
traffic could pass freely between the two hearts,  
merchandise and musicians passed,  
tradesmen and busy priests

and children, children.

So many of them free to idle, free to play.  
Our life is a sleep they investigate,

to know what it feels like to be here in this  
person,

or over there, you, what  
it feels like to be you. They sleep into our hands,

they sleep into the way we look at each other  
sitting across such a small room,  
your hands sleeking along the surfaces of things,  
pages, books, materials

they sleep into us until we are only who we are.  
No expectations. Constantly interchanging,  
never know, never sure, always more, always more,  
free to want and free to fear,  
hard and soft, touch and tell.

But then the word comes pompous up the street  
beating its empty drum until we can't hear  
anything we feel inside us move.

13 July 2001

## ENGLISH COURSE

Way of laying bricks  
so that they stay  
locked in the structure they articulate

a wall a hinge  
a cardinal on a maple tree

and its name too will have to be declared  
in time, that endless dictionary.

Meantime a door is everywhere.

13 July 2001

## THE OTHER WOMAN

What can they be saying or doing

The other woman

The person at the gate who is the gate

The person sitting on the rock who is the rock

Nobody can get past her

And she is there for everyone

Like a moon in a fairytale

Everybody is allowed to see

Not like us

Not like here

Not like a real moon

13 July 2001

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The tree is on the telephone the tree  
calls me every day and says its name  
I hear its name among the crackle of the actual  
static should mean standing still

the tree is trying to get me to do something  
sing maybe or call somebody else on the phone  
the tree wants me to do things for the world  
it says the tree wants me to love you

but I want to love you for your sake  
or for mine but the tree is adamant  
keeps calling back and won't leave a message  
but I can tell the deep slur of its breathing

the tree is on the telephone again I answer  
its says its name and I say mine then it breathes  
a little and says your name I sigh and repeat it  
it says for the world not you for the world not me

so I say something rude to the tree the way I do  
when I'm not sure if you're being you or I me  
and the tree is quiet so long I think I'll hang up  
but it's no use I know a tree always calls back

finally the tree speaks and says something  
I can't understand it at all but all at once  
I am filled with a curious peace and say yes  
then hang up and I have said yes to a tree.

14 July 2001

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nothing should have a title

nothing should have a plan an outline  
a mortal scheme

everything should come to light  
dar a la luz means to give birth  
everything should come to be known  
au fur et a mesure they say  
one thing after another

meaning forever

which is what it means when it says  
I will love you forever

nothing will stop appearing nothing will linger  
nothing will disappear

no more than a wave ever moves.

I am telling you the truth  
there exists no future only what we do

14 July 2001

*partir, c'est quitter la phrase*