

11-2001

novA2001

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The beginning is wherever you begin,  
wall journey or pilgrimage to sex  
— bathroom to bedroom and back  
again, seventy years — or the church  
door that answers to *bronze*  
the first word you hear that means  
the same thing it says, sincerity  
of tarnished metal, in secret  
dreams you polish brass. Your tongue

can't translate this gleam any further.  
Light. Not even with your fingers.  
Shine. The sun does and you do your shoes.  
No one ever makes it out of childhood whole.

1 November 2001

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Organize more effectively  
wing beats of the butterfly until  
esperance itself looks over your fence  
all smiles and green tomatoes for you  
neighbor neighbor.

The thing is  
you've got to organize reality.  
give them names and make them stick,  
live up to what you think.

Every  
chipmunk is a challenge. we're all  
animals, neighbor, you've got  
to make them come to terms and stay.  
As if language were a city they could visit,  
like the place, settle in,  
get on welfare, find a window of their own  
from which they stare come morning  
just like you out at the never ending  
syntax of street and traffic lights and dogs.  
Never. So far away your head reels  
because the boulevards are so long  
and you can't see where the city ends  
and the natural takes over. Maybe there is  
no other nature. Her brain  
swarming in its hive beyond her face.  
The hand you wave at her is a machine.

1 November 2001

## SHELLAC

Writing with amber  
a pretty big word  
to soak deep  
into the grain of wood

1 November 2001

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Waiting  
the opportune  
the woman  
you think she is  
I wonder

shift the thinking  
she is waiting  
importune wonder  
if you want so much

2 November 2001

## AGAIN AND AGAIN FOR JOHN WIENERS

Examine the obvious  
Heart line of a small pudgy Viennese  
(trope)

    in the groove  
of which or whom  
the spores of Thomist logic

propagate ironic music still.  
That's all we know  
in tropic Boston  
about the world,

    the healing  
solemnity of our clichés,  
caught things, trapped things.

Some day the city will give up and be the sea.

The reason we live such hopeless  
fantasies: we only believe what we can see.

And evidence is nothing but cliché.

2.

Scared children dream release from syntax.  
We die as old as we are young,

youth an incurable condition  
you learn to live with  
until you and everybody else forgets it's there.

2 November 2001

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After all it gives you take  
one thing more

a scar in the sky  
tries to give light

crushed red flower jammed in the cracked rock  
told me you were here

you were the gospel of entrances  
I was a shadow that fell through your doors

There is nothing left of us but language  
slowly settling to a resting state

clear water when the rain puddle  
recovers from our insolent quick feet

playing through it what we thought was together.

2.  
But we hurt each other's vocabularies.  
Some words we can never use again

and those are fucked away, faded  
wedding bouquets, sere syntaxes,

phony hieroglyphs. Conversation  
with anybody is a minefield now

after you  
after I did not let you lead me

away but did not let me stay.  
The contradictions adhere to each assertion

like color to its substance —  
you stole the red from my apple

and wet forgets to mean water anymore.

3 November 2001

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word forgets its thing  
the broom  
fragrant with dust  
dreams in the pantry

placard  
    the news  
is stored so no one  
believes

        a voice  
is what we doubt  
always the changes  
its fortune

and women's eyes.

3 November 2001

## THE INTERRUPTIONS

Nothing to add to the birds.

At the feeder shading  
by their flurry the  
sun from my eyes

shielding.

Or just add sky.

Birds.

Consorts of fiddles as

the old man said  
when he was young  
a miracle  
just another word

imagine a silence  
takes itself seriously  
an instrument  
balanced in the hand

I wonder

Miriam, or The Interruptions

how can he replicate out loud  
her hidden body

tune in next week

melodrama of desire

you Bible me so

sentimental  
lost in the creek  
the arrow of light

elm shadows fast

how can he analyze her chair

that's what he wants  
and want is water

fluent with observing  
masterless

her eyes look tired

a pilgrim mirror  
questing the True Face

insert a color here  
by which you signify  
the secret practices of love

once he stops moving towards her  
there is no end to observation

each difference a desire

that was the heart of the matter

only the urgent unobservant impulse  
wins fair lady

laud

Martha means master  
Mary means bitter

two sisters make one lady

each turns into other

the other other was his mother

Mary all attentive all observant  
lost herself in love  
the gaze of rapture  
Martha all action and fulfillment  
wipes her face on her apron  
the master mastered by her own glance

her face lives in the cloth

I kiss her kiss

two people gazing at the same person  
become the same person

this is gospel fact

this is a bird flying across the brow of the sun

end of part one

The grammar lesson

Please leave space here for sky

sky here

then light the birds

unwary fate  
to cheat  
each day

ehue a morning nailed to night

fence post

arrow pointing to the ground

sortie prochaine ↓

now write a hundred sentences beginning I want  
then another hundred beginning I want you

deinde centum

another hundred I want you to...

how many of the last were in the latter  
how many in the latter in the former

I say it I say it again

in this way write  
your brief for the court of love

the law meant just for you

the doorless door

today is eight birds

uncountable the seeds of things

seed of the telephone

I lick you here and there

with speech that liberty

or do I presume

sun caught in a shapely piece of glass  
Swedes shaped to fit the hand

a blue band of color writhes inside it  
circuitous  
pathway of the fleshy arrow  
on its way to the sky  
as if all these years I was intended

promesso

I am your husband  
you throw me down

to throw it back

up there

where the light comes from

this is a play

where the light comes

as if I were born to throw it at the sky

a play with Jesus Miriam and me

muta persona

only the language speaks

and I the dumb one have all the lines

miracle! A play!

Didn't you realize it before now  
all this poeming is just to feed  
a mouth starved for language

lines on its way to speak  
the occidental wisdom of the flesh

that it matters

which one I touch

whose shy hand brushes my shoulder as she goes

the touch of matter in a thoughtful world

the taste of manna

it's because of what he sees in her eyes

that he wants to hold her hips

isn't that strange

anybody's body just the shadow of the face

shade of her identity

I touch

all that anyone can feel

on this earth

shade? shape?

transparent in the mind

perfectly held

in mind

the light pours through her form

and he has been here before

close your eyes and be there evermore

same wisdom repeated becomes a bore

a bone?

hence Miriam and her scandal with the gardener

hence the other

other in her

short lines  
haiku-haggling their way through love

Interpol wants her  
for crossing the line  
out

to live in a world without erasure

that would be terror

without measure  
the unforgotten kisses on my morning lips

she throws me down the stairs

part dream

after this uncontrollable

falling

actual action  
a man falling down a long flight of stairs  
powerless to stop and trying  
with what passes for instinct in such an etiolate character

learn to pronounce it  
before I say it out loud

you did it

broken bones at the foot of the stairs

one long flight

she did it

exasperated by his passivity  
she pushed him  
out of her life  
and out of his own

a pile of bones with sunlight on them  
stained glass effects from a dusty transom

photoshop amend this corpse  
dead among flyers from Thai take-outs

bones of the day

or not dead  
the play will find out

unbearable  
to endure  
such endless workings out

the boredom of destiny  
peripety perpetuity

plot lurches on

having enough words to get there

for all of our mouths

sequencing sunlight  
in the staircase  
shaft of light

motionless  
dead in the dream

he's stalling now  
waiting for space to answer  
those famous nameless  
birds of his

cocks of the trees

how pressed against her once

she with her back to the wood  
impaled him on the sky

improbable ecstasies

foretell, the celebrated crucifixion

later, when the language learned to talk

birds

unreliable shadows even

wide and leery was the sea

there is no ocean in this play

raped by the rising sun  
the sea's too busy in the morning

too busy to be

stretched wide against the arrogant machine

earthworks an island

he told you all the truth he had

the teller took it in her skilful hands  
not enough, monsignor, not nearly enough  
and she waited with her parted lips  
and thought of some other place other wind  
not this vault in her to which men brought  
the practiced shadows of their inadequate desires

just tell me what you want

as if a naughty monk instructed a new age  
Do what you actually desire

what could silence him like such permission

he might still be alive at the root of the stairs

part more

acts up

it is how we punish us for wanting  
sometimes by taking sometimes not

twilight of the gods every afternoon

the interruptions

are all we have

to go on

the interruptions are the blessed  
space

between this body and the next

the blessed bread she sets on the table

to meet a new person  
call out a name

new names for old

the old name is broken and sticks in his throat

an apple bleeding from your bite

he has to know this  
before the day begins

otherwise one more dream  
dragged screaming  
into the doctor's office of daylight

logoectomy  
cutting out the meaning

doctor analyze the absence

he has to know  
the day begins  
without her

that is the story  
yellowline this my students

nothing  
with her shadow on it.

4 November 2001

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Being able to give them everything I want

Their mouths being open

The leaves blowing in

5 November 2001

## **Rhaps ode**

Strange feeding  
fill the ink wiring eye  
with mellow information

then they call you cool Or cul  
the warmth down south  
of the alphabet

blue pennies from a yellow heaven  
conventionally pretty  
high school haiku

teach them to shut up till It speaks.

5 November 2001



## DEAD LEAVES

But that kind of death  
goes back to time  
and gets washed away

a thing is left  
that presently turns green

Christ, it's just the oldest story

your face wet with making her come.

5 November 2001