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FINDING YOUR LINE IN MY HANDS

for my Charlotte, on her birthday

Whose hair?
Whose happiness

balanced on such an imaginary
line between identities

an island between Spain and the sun

would we be this one?

I took the pen
it had your hair
entangled with its cap
caught from your letter
or from your sweater

the transmission

I saw you sleeping

an envelope of grace
a hair

because the sun knew something too
a thank you letter to the world

to you

for all

bread and no butter
bread and oil

bread and no wine
and all the roses
are mauve

which is the name of another flower

a letter to thank you for being you

for giving me everything
again and again

and being between me
and what terribly isn't

thank you from
what is the bottom of the heart and who lives there

forgive everyone before I go

how can you answer a hair

a habit of caring
of stroking
a thing before you put it away

so many things
come into our life

but still we find ourselves
among them

unlost in the material

only one morning in a hundred are you up before me
so I have the sense of you to the right of me
kind beside me, my kind, my answer
to a lifelong question

and you are that island too

what have I begun
where is the sun
on the empty hill over empty trees

can I get there on this road
trying so hard to reach you

the folds
the words in the woods
the furrows

the animal functions
return to God

you wake also I think
to the sense of me
not far

what we always are.

22 November 2001

Enthusiasm standing in the rain
Beholds Complacency arriving in a white car

America will be born yesterday tomorrow
And only the wind has any sense of history

General Grant is buried in Fort Knox.

22 November 2001

After the instructive museum the river the apple juice the wren
was it a wren divoting about on the neighbor's lawn

and where is he
anyhow it's months since he's been seen
what have they done with him
the wife the child

since June and here it is November

when is it where you are

and who is my neighbor?

Cain's voice Kane's voice my voice
the hoot hoot of a man's voice
trying to be nice about it

about what?
who is my frigging neighbor anyhow

is it you

all night

who?

You don't know what I'm talking about
Cause you got no blues I got the blues
They're all about you about you

Me blue you no cue

Touch it, it's yours
you made me into this thing

this amiable animal gnawing your haunch.

Yes I know I have no right to

but the walls are stucco and the sun is bright
we're all alone in paradise not a snake in

yes I know I am yes I know you are
we both belong to this exclusive club called you

you hear me talking
sometimes in your head too

don't you?

23 November 2001
Boston

Walking through the mirror
one day suddenly
remembered where I was

I crossed myself
a fine old habit
of the light
 a man
still waiting
for me to come out
so he could go in
and see himself too

these verbs haunt me
language also
is made of glass.

23 November 2001
Boston

IT

It's not supposed
to be
so easy to die.

23 XI 01 Boston

of course the women
knew it was an apple

they can tell a knife from a museum

and the big blue bowl
big enough for your sister to sit in

waiting six thousand years for enough light to fill it

23 November 2001
Boston

never content
with being
a man wants.

23 XI 01 Boston

VIRILE MUSIC

How could a clarinet
fly up to the roof
how could a chimneystack
have learned so much speak

smoke, Greek
and all the rest of ça,

this whimsy
once had wings

was made of bronze
came rolling
on small wheels
to abrade
your cherished vacancy

crabapple tree
the god of touch
will stay there
lingering for you

you will never be free
of his voluntaries his concerto grossos his blue mandolin

his hands are on your garden
a kind of art or work or food

his hands are in your grasses as I speak.

24 November 2001
Boston

TRADITION

She learned to drive in Mount Benedict cemetery
across the road from old Brook Farm

every age understands its destiny, everything,
even Abraham and Sarah laughing to be now.

24 November 2001
Boston

THE SHADE

As if from outside the shadow
a child ran in
and was swallowed
suddenly by that shapely dark
we troll along the ground

waiting to catch her. Catch everyone.
A living body is captured by desire.

24 November 2001

So many things I want to say to you
but I want to say them with your mouth

opening oracle 'sophisticated caves'
the world hides in
waiting for you to say them open

sesame millet beeswax cocoa smeared on your terrorist lips

words that I hear
coming up from the Spanish afternoon
permanently sun-stroked in the pit of my corpse

my zombie information making us both dance

because when my arms go around you it is a bird I am
a strange sea thing heavy and weary with coming from who knows where
folding my drenched wings around my own shadow

only it's alive in there it's you
in you it is a heart
beating the time waves with pulse of its own
and you're better than that better than this and

hurrying towards one another up the pathway wings extended
what does it mean

what does it mean to wait so long for your name in my mouth

can I give you yours, can I give you you

can I give you tours around your neighborhood
show you the view from my steeple

can I be the church in your town?

25 November 2001

NOVEMBER

Mild enough the deck
man talks about the weather
knowing the weight of things
to lift or fall
a view across the prairie
a thousand bare trees one crow
opening any answer to the memory of light

the call of light
in this space light is buried
who was our mother
I am home
to let the answer speak
or space that thing
in a world of things
mild but the guess is going

a wreath of dried flowers yoked around the moon
Stansislavski method be childish while you can
come home through Austerlitz
I feel these days
strongly the disapproval of the lady
dead irises they leave long leaves
dead leaves clog the leaf rake
leans against the leaf-attended wall

why am I explaining all this to you
you know it all
could this be silence
really and these
remarks a tuneful interrupt

a call

to let you know you know
meaty silence of an autumn morning
as if we had finally done with dying
the long rewrite begins
ordinary curvature of space
reflected in your common fluency
letters of your alifbet a scoop of palm
through cool water sifted lift it to my mouth
I drink your hands

and if the sun spoke
what this silence does is keep
personal agenda otherwise
so one by one the bird learns its mother's note
and we are what we heard men be
before

as I caress your alephbeth as well
blue-eyed jessamine fragrant responsive stock
you are the body of what I think

I've lost your address again
even the number dances

and when it does a different woman answers
I have never seen and has no claim on me

to speak a fortress of some living god
pale mythographers tardy to disclose

break the syntax leave the words
break the words and leave the sounds
let the sounds fall silent and what then
break the silence with something new
something that never said anything before
least of all me least of all you

now carve those six lines into one Chinese glyph

how language might make sense
we never knew

the trouble with poetry is everything rimes
an endline sound-same just rubs it in

rubs her fingers in the sound of it
applies to my funerary brow
I feel like a statue of myself in bronze
or two beads of water dew sparkling in a spider's web

do you know me
is my face the shadow that shows you dream
my broken body the landscape of your fall farm

the little gods and comrades we neglect
because we can't see them dreaming in the hill
at least at last a glass of milk for them

and be my pagan

mia mira mina mirador

the sound of someone almost making sense

25 November 2001