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# HORTONVILLE

It is still  
inside me

the kingfisher  
poised

for fifty years  
waiting to fall

one lip of light  
and he's there

& back again  
in heaven my  
soul in his beak.

1 October 1993

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Sign upon sign  
bed magic  
a loss of sense  
upon innocence

bright barrier  
a riddle  
posed between  
two thieves

in Armentières the bivouacs  
smoke in a dawn sun  
after the year's first  
frost. Centuries!

1 October 1993

## THE WARS

*Gamsakhurdia Sarajevo*  
*Srinagar Romeros*

I think I will find  
every war  
discussed inside me  
what my childhood

holds, the times  
incompatible,  
Russia in Finland,  
old Ad raving

against the Confederate  
foe, my father raging  
against the Republicans  
in Spain, voting

for them at home.  
War is strange names  
pronounced stiffly  
at breakfast

as if the radio  
were in our mouths.  
Like everything else  
hate has a history

written in me,  
so hard to find  
the names of efficacious love,  
pronounce them in me

out loud move  
in their service  
as if I also were  
something love could say.

1 October 1993

## THE AUDIENCE FOR POETRY

I didn't mean to have a low  
sense of the audience for poetry.  
It's only that the wind changed  
and the bellies of spinnakers spanked against the sky  
till the boat sang — we've heard it,  
hush of hurry under the bows —  
and you know that this place who gloriously are  
all alone on the bright bay  
is yours by privilege and high minority,  
glad on the ocean of money.  
And thus I manage to offend  
the only ones who understand.

2 October 1993

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Yet to speak: the gay inspection  
of our lunacy.

Words in isolation  
never clumsy, it's the neighborhoods  
that go to hell, not the houses  
on that planet,

the word is interesting  
ever, an obelisk —modest—  
on the banks of the Seine, a sphinx  
in London  
or have they come up with something better  
there,  
where some even more civilized river  
hurries to inform the desperate sea?

4 October 1993

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So we are waiting  
near the ambulance  
for the last report

—he said the sun  
shone brighter there, he said  
the elephants beamed  
a kind of light  
from the hoses of their trunks  
and swabbed the sky  
with something cleaner  
than old tired light  
of suns and public natures

he said the light  
sustained him  
better than coffee and cigarettes  
he said the wind  
found its way to him  
and he died.  
But we're waiting still,  
the ambulance drivers  
have something to say  
how they watched  
over his body  
and smoothed their skirts  
nervously and smoked they saw  
a great ribbon of luminous whatever  
reach out of his chest directly  
caress them with an eerie  
and not pleasant coolness  
and be gone.

Then we let them drive on.

4 October 1993



AT LAMA NORLHA'S MONASTERY

Worn out with leaving  
I love you. Silence  
around the dry pond  
with so many flowers  
nowhere  
in this region are there so many  
so bright. The ordinary  
law makes sense here,

water seeps into the ground,  
an eagle passes hugely  
silent overhead, low  
into trees.

It is not like  
someplace else, not like itself.  
Those blue flowers could be pronouns  
in a sentence  
you really want to hear,  
faces on the TV news  
joyous in a bloodless coup  
that turned my mind back  
into the capital of itself.

No self. My hair smells like hair.

5 October 1993

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1

Myself among the giants  
and me only with a little stone  
a little stone in a web and a whir  
as I throw it into the dark

2

and the dark goes with it  
and the light's not far behind  
and what is this I see  
neither dark nor light?

3

I wanted your mind to be  
and be in place of mine  
I was proud to give way  
since way is all I has to give

4

way or sway or come away  
it is not light so much as waking  
not waking so much as being awake  
not being so much as being there.

6 October 1993

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People do get tired.  
Not of doing but of stainless steel,  
fair weather, the manicured  
lawns of hospitals. The sun.  
People get tired of paper also,  
and of spring chive grass and chemistry,  
it feels like gum or sawdust when they wake,  
it feels like dry inkwells  
on antique school desks  
you buy on Third Avenue for more than my father  
earned the last month of his working life,  
old oak with initials intaglio'd coarsely  
the way they did in 1923  
when you weren't born not at all  
and people were tired then as well  
and money continued to do us no good.

7 October 1993

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Riding with it and getting  
invented by it as you go —

some way like that  
to move in honor  
up the line to where it began —

but the beginning was only for the sake of now,  
*aleph* was born for *tav*,  
Christ made the world to solve it on the Cross.

7 October 1993

# THE SAILOR

*for Charlotte*

Am bold  
man wave  
Roc of fortune  
sun shape

I am a scintilla hé thought  
off that anvil

lost into now

Hurry grrr, elegant pains  
of middle passage

to be hot for what happens to me,

lot-crazy, spic & span  
the decks of me!

A sailor is all offering,  
wind apart, all headland  
in the process of interesting erosion,  
swallow me.  
It takes some skill to be as bad as this,

Snaggle-shanked the apple trees  
shear over the far hill  
toothed by worm deer  
easy fallen the specious promises  
of a lasting language,

an apple we could ever eat!  
and he knows it,  
fears it, falters and eats,  
delicate arounding worm-bites

and lets the core fall  
to do what those things do,

I also am seed-scatterer  
to what known end?  
I have loved to lie on beaches  
and let the foam find me  
on the animal of coming in

inexorable seduction of the tides  
and the sun hits on me  
and I am married to the day.  
Bay. Where I keep  
my sandals (schooners)  
my golden griefs  
(tempestuous epyllions  
of seedy ruins  
girl by girl in the dawn light  
seen to be stars)  
(theory of muses)

runagates inkstains  
I misjudged this permanent,  
word, and I stayed.

8 October 1993

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Thrilling in or of it  
they praise  
the by-ways of me

not the music I cut  
through the interminable forest of not feeling,

just the odd  
clod tossed off a spade's edge,  
a book review, un dédicace.

9 October 1993

