

10-2014

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After we load our cargo  
we are animals again.  
We wonder where anything begins.

We cant find the leading thread or the selvedge  
it's just all round us, a sightless fabric  
muffles our singing. Just as well,

the neighbors think, those Protestants,  
those window shades. I grunt  
betimes before I find my chant

the pig and the rat are the most intelligent  
which shows what IQ does for the soul—  
beast you, beast me, every pronoun

drips with blood. The body is poisonous and true.

2.

I'm recovering from reality in a Swiss chalet.  
A thoughtful lady brings me morels,  
chanterelles, boletes. I don't eat meat.

Rain drips tuneful from the eaves, sounds  
like Papageno stammering. Cozy stove  
with tile all round, no need to stare at flames—

**I have been hypnotized long enough. Now  
the air alone is my conversation. Trust me,  
I have gotten over thinking, I live**

**among the beloved dead, their noisy bones.**

**9 October 2014**

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**Was that a yellow bird that flew across the yard  
into the wind it went so not a leaf  
now when leaves are yellow? Some bird  
unknown, a newfound cave in Celebes  
where a woman with a long slim hand  
(an Air hand we palmists say) pressed  
her hand against the wall forty  
thousand years ago and calcite covered it  
so we can feel her touch still, long  
pinky slender thumb, so prone to love  
and art. that other wonder thing.  
Was she our mother? Too many  
questions I ask, keep asking. Where  
are the answers I used to tell?**

**9 October 2014**

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**Silken weather  
inkwell at the wall  
we memorize the stain  
of everyone before  
we are. Their stains  
I am as stupid as a wall  
but o the marks on me,  
signs posted, pictures drawn  
by children's hands,  
the ink that links me  
here, everything you see  
is the other that made me.**

**10 October 2014**

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**Roads don't think fast,  
they ramble on  
full of where they've been,  
of all the important people  
who rode on them to their  
lovers for fled their crimes.**

**Suppose a road knows all.  
In summer midnights kneel  
down, put your ear to asphalt  
and listen soft. I did,  
and most of what I know  
I learned from what it said.**

**10 October 2014**

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**The need for rest.  
Resting. To be  
a remnant of myself  
is to turn  
this minute into eternity—  
no work required,  
it is already done.**

**10 October 2014**

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**Sandalwood  
in a clean bathroom.  
Skylight  
stars overhead  
germs of intellect  
scattered everywhere.**

**10 October 2014**



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**It's just light enough  
to get me wrong.  
Is the coin on the sidewalk  
a denarius of Tiberius  
is the Temple still alive?  
Where are my hands  
when I need them?  
Why is the owl silent  
though the moon was full?**

**Smell of sandalwood  
beads in my pocket.  
The Roman Empire never ended,  
that's the point of this,  
only the pronunciation changed,  
local procurators rule their fiefs  
while armies toil.**

**This is your soul  
speaking to you, white people,  
there is something left for you to do  
and you know where it is stored**

**Who made the gold  
who hid it in her pocket?**

**Empire Ownership Money—  
Armageddon has been  
with us so long,  
goes so slow.**

**Make a pact with your body,  
take it for a swim  
in the lagoon, see  
the dome of the cathedral  
from sea-level, your  
eyelashes dripping Adriatic—  
I'm a little disappointed, yes,  
but the seagulls understand.**

**11 October 2014**

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**The Exquisite**

**and after,  
the raft sprawled on the shallows,  
half-saplings bound, half flowers  
and no one on it,**

**my kind of craft, a page  
like the *Marie Celeste*, empty ship  
nobody home, floats the seas  
alone, a blank page like that  
full of the mystery  
of where all the words have gone  
that meant to fill it once**

**a blank page in Mallarmé's notebook,  
the last man who lived before the Silence ended.**

**12 October 2014**

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**Maples fewer  
blame Columbus  
we fugitives—**

**I would never  
have been a pioneer  
on land or over  
water, only  
by breath to travel  
landscape in the sound of words.**

**I would have stayed there  
listening to the Boyne or the surf  
off the foreland and the harsh  
troches of English names,  
English commands, harsh  
but I could bided my time,  
heard my way out,  
or like Raftery the old poet  
gone blind with the listening.**

**12 October 2014**

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**The old exactitudes  
one grew up in,  
Aquinas, Ignatius  
both sides of the brain**

**seem to desert now.  
Only the old contrast  
between essence and accident  
sustains me**

**and it is wrong.  
Our essence happens to us  
and we call it accident,  
the inessential, as if**

**red is an accident of apple,  
some grand blue essence  
growing elsewhere  
warmed by another star.**

**I cling to the wrong  
hoping I can take off  
the offensive garments of contingency  
and find you naked underneath,**

**my self, my soul, my real identity.**

12 October 2014

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**And who was this Columbus  
this quiet Italian Jew  
who brought us the news  
we had been trying to ignore  
since Plato's time,  
this western place,  
this mystery we still have never  
even come close to solving,  
civil war and rattlesnake  
massacres in Mexico the hate  
sent out against the different,  
the slaves brought here.  
Not anybody's home—  
how hard it is to live  
in this beautiful country  
this third act of a tragic opera  
this local honey much too sweet  
and yet it somehow heals.**

12 October 2014

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*Opus 110*

**How to say  
in the caverns of the fugue  
the turn-again  
that is the meat of love,**

**the philtrum of the angel's smile  
as we look up  
out of your bodies to find our bodies  
strong as the world**

**and needing no more  
than our need,  
the yearning that turns the mind  
to the everlasting accurate.**

**12 October 2014**

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**You are the lasting-place  
of what does not abide.  
The fruit once fallen from the tree  
(avocado backyard Altadena)  
has a highway of its own  
indifferent to whom or beast  
that eats it. The seed. The power  
(absent in banana) to continue  
beyond the individual. Sequence.  
Time turns gold. Autumn  
is a mask the winter wears.  
Winter is when the world gets to  
work and people sleep. Dark  
is what it needs and helps us  
be in the other condition from  
which we certainly heal. Amen,  
I hear you saying, you who are  
and are the lasting-place of  
what does not abide. My fingers  
for example are cold. Skin  
is a planet of its own, we always  
knew that as children at the movies,  
we had to eat or punch each other  
just to be sure we weren't up there  
where the undimensioned action  
was, those poor images trapped**



**in what appears to happen. We knew  
full well that nothing happens, milk  
chocolate in our teeth or gummi bears.  
I know you'll give me trouble now,  
I'd better sign this letter now  
before you get to read it in the mirror  
where I hide everything I am in hopes  
you'll find and transform me, hydrogen  
for example to helium, a great zeppelin  
floating safely over France, music  
coming up from village fairs, horns  
of the alpinists, the groans of goats  
and sheeps slaughtered in the alpages,  
or cadmium made less poisonous so that  
the red of your blood can inherit or exalt  
an oil-soaked canvas in a fierce museum—  
everything that exists will wind up  
nailed to its walls. That is why I am  
your friend and try to warn you off,  
I am dangerous and made of paper  
once you read me there'll be nothing left.**

**12 October 2014**

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**Know enough to not  
wet leaves can't tell  
dew from rain can you?**

**Rowboat half-foundered  
in the pond, swim  
among the turtles to.**

**Then the music ended.  
Archetype of innocence  
a glass of water drawn**

**from her own well.  
I beseech thee, dreamer,  
alternate remember.**

**To this day not sure  
am I the letter or the envelope.  
But then the music starts again.**

**13 October 2014**

## **HEADLINE**

**MEASUREMENT IS THE SAME AS MIND  
A CLOTH YOU CAN TAKE OFF  
BARE SHOULDERS OF THE ACTUAL.**

**13 October 2014**

## **TREE TALK**

**Prune for more flowers  
they tell.  
But the flowers are about me  
not me about the flowers  
What says me is not the same as who I am.**

**13 October 2014**

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**The heart is a piece of silk  
drawn through a sphincter  
yards and yards of it  
very fine, diaphanous, light  
is always interfering  
with the heart, the cloth  
always squeezed through  
the tightest ring, the agony  
of feeling, of being drawn,  
born, stretched, pulled out  
for all to see, the pain  
of leaving and the pain  
of having and the pain of  
losing and all the pain  
in one fine red weave  
yards and yards of it,  
you swing on it sometimes  
from your window when  
the world makes itself  
obvious out there, swing  
on it down the well where  
never-ending upwelling  
tears of love and misery hide  
themselves against the fierce  
depredations of rational light.**

**13 October 2014**