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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