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*Euer Magnificenz, Verzeihung!*

**It stays in mind.  
The servile apprentice  
holds his ground  
with magniloquence.  
The chutzpah of politeness,  
unanswerable. Call me  
by simple words  
the Master might have said,  
But "Beg pardon, your Magnifence!"  
is simple enough. To announce  
the coming of the strangers  
who always carry from Iran  
mysterious dissertations  
meant to lead astray  
all but the Unknown Chosen  
who have no time  
for such chicanery, all  
the blood spilled in the name  
of truth, when truth, famously  
naked, famously alone,  
is sobbing under an almond tree  
her skin like the pale  
opacity that forms on yogurt,  
also called the skin.  
The Unknown Chosen pass**

**and greet her, offer  
tissues to wipe her tears  
candy bars and Chinese apples  
but make no claim, smile  
and leave her to her business.  
Which is grieving for us  
sinners sick with so much language.**

**13 October 2014**

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**The evidence mounts up  
around the hoofs of the impala  
shot in Boer War time and stuffed  
and still standing in the hallway  
but in shadow. No one is proud  
of such relics now. But tenderly  
history must be unpieced,  
unmasked, defanged. The story  
has its own meaning, listen  
and then try to forget. This  
is the purpose of memory,  
to rinse the sweetness out of  
this present moment, lest  
we fall in love with it and stay.**

**14 October 2014**

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**If I had only one thing left to say  
it would be cantilever. Or maybe  
semaphore. Or watch the courses  
of old brick lose their mortar over  
so many years of rain and ivy.  
Maybe that's what I meant to say:  
rain and ivy wash the world away.**

**14 October 2014**

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**Men make bricks but God makes stone  
said Maurice Nicoll and when I was a child  
I did think there was something wrong  
with brick houses, something impious  
especially when I saw them in the country  
where wood and stone made most  
of what I saw and was taken to inhabit.  
A brick house was like a city bus  
churning smoky through a forest.  
But now I like them, what does that mean  
about me, thrill to the lovely dirty rose  
of English houses, even the scuzzy  
properties back of the allotments  
you see from the train on the way west,  
but mostly the sun-burnt rose walls  
round hidden gardens, walls the birds  
have baptized and lovers blessed.**

**14 October 2014**

## **LA MÉTHODE**

**The synchronies  
know best  
how to touch  
flame to the wick**

**the word  
to the mouth it exits from,  
the articulate wind  
to the patient ear.**

**14 October 2014**

## **MASTERS**

**Rejoicing in shadow  
how a leaf knows  
or heart when to stop—**

**such goings on  
we are!**

**A weave  
of continuities  
so little space between  
web and weft, and yet  
some teach us to see.**

**14 October 2014**



## **BYZANTION**

**Generate a field  
and dwell through it  
nine centuries or say  
you did and do, who  
would dare deny  
the evidence of grass  
around your feet,  
the original ancient  
sky above your head?**

**14 October 2014**

## **SUNRISE**

**something happening  
to the sky  
through trees  
white fire  
it makes me remember  
a time before time  
a time before me.**

**15 October 2014**

## **BROKELAND**

**where I was born  
over the opaque green river  
close to the clean ocean  
never was blue when I looked  
always the white foam of arrival  
always looking for me  
when you are a child  
things keep coming at you  
waves words attitudes  
creatures of the night.  
How did we manage  
to survive? To drive  
my own root silence  
through the heartland  
of their language and you  
know who they always are.**

**15 October 2014**

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**And if later you asked me  
which one of them was me  
of course I couldn't tell you  
I was the rain as much as the pale  
sidewalk it fell on, claimed  
nothing, hoped for explanations.  
Still am hoping. Childhood  
is a disease that never ends.**

**15 October 2014**

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**It was playful  
I was not. We lived  
together, boy and house.  
The stairs were hard  
the bed was hot,  
ivy dimmed the window  
and the sky was very far.  
I never knew how  
much was enough,  
things break and spill  
the way they do  
and I am guilty of all  
their imperfections.  
Things are perfect  
till I come along.  
The sun was aimed  
at me and the snow  
a long forgiveness.**

**15 October 2014**

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**How little they know me,  
the ones who know me best —  
how little there is of me to be known.  
I am a seashell that once heard the sea.**

**15 October 2014**

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**I keep exaggerating  
the other side of anything.  
There must be more  
than this I keep saying,  
turn it over, pass  
to the other side, be a bird  
in this fenced world,  
be a kind of light  
shows through the cloth —  
tulle let it be,  
dream glimpse of strong limbs  
as of a dancer  
someday soon  
about to leap.**

**15 October 2014**

**=====**

**Gap in the pattern —  
soul looks in through it  
so you finally see yourself  
out there,  
                  not in here, this  
heap of meat you think is me.**

**15 October 2014**



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**The vitality of the undesired  
amazes. From trees,  
underground streams, birds,  
forgotten relatives it arrives.  
It gibbers at the door.  
If you're lucky you're not home.  
Otherwise a tedious  
interview with otherness  
ensues. Dirty cups  
you find in the sink.  
Out-of-town newspaper  
left under the bed.**

**15 October 2014**

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**Once a year  
they blow the leaves away  
or once a day.  
I think it's raining  
but you can never tell,  
it's all evidence  
for an absent theory,  
think of something fast  
before the leaves  
blow away by themselves.**

**15 October 2014**

**=====**

**We wear bodies  
to give each other.  
Why would we need  
them for ourselves?**

**15 October 2014**

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**The governor  
is a voyeur. He peers  
through your bedroom money  
where you, like any miser,  
count and re-count the body  
of your wife,  
lover, husband, he  
doesn't care, just  
wants to know  
the inmost boredoms  
inmost raptures  
of your life  
expressed as money  
he can tax.**

**Taxation is a sexual perversion  
prying into private places  
to make you pay  
for his vile useless things  
like flagpoles and monuments  
congressmen and war.**

**16 October 2014**

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**That was a Picasso sketch  
a girl turning into a machine.  
All these are sketches,  
no paintings anymore,  
paintings need walls  
and there are no walls  
only cells inside cells  
down to the last breath.**

**16 October 2014**

