

10-2014

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**Trees walking,  
men sitting down.  
Ocean nearby.  
Women chatting  
on their devices  
with other places.  
The tolerant sun  
moves shadows around.  
Terraces. Tables.  
Nobody watches.  
Me least of all.**

**16 October 2014**

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**I am no scholar of myself  
but I think I wrote this very poem  
years ago when I was old  
but never knew it, now the time  
has come to tell you. But what?**

**16 October 2014**

## HELIOTROPE

Enough daylight  
spoils the kingdom.  
Iron-treadled the works  
run themselves beneath  
their dancing feet.  
The machinery of love  
begins far away from the body.  
Languor coaxes it and the smile  
is a kind of circuit closed —  
no one has touched me yet.

2.  
Because we believe  
mostly in dream.  
There is a rational side of me  
I seldom show and never to you —  
what good are my explanations  
when the real thing stares in your eyes?

3.  
You sit in the sun  
as much as you can.  
By the big window the sun  
analyzes our situation —

**voices making sense.  
It doesn't need us,  
not really, but there we are  
figures on the balcony  
over a dark sea.**

**4.  
But be slower it says  
and set like me  
a little sooner every day  
until the river freezes  
then turn again, instead,  
manic, talking big,  
and say out loud the thing  
I left you thinking.**

**17 October 2014**

## TO THE ARTISTS

Never say I never answered—  
this letter to you is to you  
and means to tell you  
all it can't know how to  
but you do, so show it for me,  
the sensuous intelligence  
of mind shaped like a star  
of David, interlocked  
symmetries, angles  
pointing everywhere  
at once, all things made  
deeply part of itself.  
And from that core  
the radical thing  
called beauty spills.

17 October 2014

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**Anticipate the obvious  
then I will be closer to you  
a hand on the scale  
weighing itself to give you  
full measure of what it feels  
finding you. Wharf  
with no boat, black harbor  
with no moon. History  
was always like this,  
someone alone on the shore.**

**17 October 2014**

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**Suppose you could write with green  
or talk to light  
what would you say?**

**Why did you take my Lydia away?  
Who was born this day  
in some year nobody knows,  
and why can I still see her eyes?**

**2.  
Death questions these are,  
sovereign nature's  
left-hand man  
and still he lets me jabber  
and never an answer,  
just new grass sprouting up  
on the shoulder of the road  
new-paved, new-planted  
as we go into November.**

**3.  
These are supposed to be  
consolations and actually are  
taken the right way, just**



before noon, when you look  
up from the work and see them,  
wet leaves, new grass,  
cars pass, the sense  
almost specious of  
continuity, if only  
you have breath enough  
to sing to the end of the song.

4.  
You call this a song?  
This lyric hoo-ha,  
I'd trade it all  
for the olive in your martini,  
that has taste, that  
has been somewhere,  
learned something, something  
that it remembers.  
You can call this a song  
but the girl is gone.

18 October 2014

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**Rain darks the trees  
agreeably. If I were  
a minister I would  
make bold with some  
observations, claim  
baptism of autumn  
to purify the nature  
of nature, make  
us kind again  
as the word allows.  
But I am me  
and live by color alone.**

**18 October 2014**

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Let me try again  
to understand the rose.  
There are no roses  
in October, no roses  
any time at all, only  
roses in Rilke, he  
said all we have to say  
about roses. Roses  
are words in songs,  
paintings, baptismal  
registers, book titles,  
operas. No chance  
to understand a rose,  
not even Pentecost  
could bring down tongues  
enough or fire to understand  
all the endless connections  
of the rose, that alchemist  
among the flowers—  
mostly I suppose  
roses are the professors  
of a secret doctrine,  
something about the root  
primacy of women,  
something about choosing  
the right time,

**something about color,  
transformation, generosity,  
kindness, allurements,  
something about thorns.  
That a rose needs no man.**

**19 October 2014**

**== == == == ==**

**The dying patient reaches out,  
clutches the candystriper's thigh.  
This interchange of blessings  
sustains the whole world.**

**19 October 2014**

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**Distinguishing birds from leaves  
on a windy autumn day  
when the branches of the spiraea  
scratch against the window screen  
startling me, the senses  
interpenetrate, the skin needs glasses  
to feel aright, the winds  
confuse me too, sing-song weather,  
my vocabulary, my Sunday shoes.**

**19 October 2014**

## **COUNSEL**

**( I want to slap you  
and send you home)**

**(you have no home yet)**

**(what shall I do)  
(what shall we do?)**

**(I see you trapped among people  
people who don't know who you are at all  
and you let them. you have to imagine  
each one of them into someone you can  
learn from or love but they really not those people)**

**(good exercise but enough already)**

**(come home)**

**(not with those people with whom there will be the  
weeping and what the gospel calls the gnashing of teeth.  
Rabbi Jesus says so, and he of all men must know)**

**(I want to slap you  
for my own good)**

**(so I can sleep o'nights  
not feeling I neglected to warn you)**

**(for your own good)**

**(you're in the wrong place the wrong story, even the weather is wrong)**

**(wrong place)**

**(come home)**

**(always travel east  
against the sun  
to find Wisdom, *hokhmah*, the story,  
the story the world tells itself  
to keep going)**

**(what is wisdom? wisdom is going home)**

**(east is where you began. Where you begin)**

**(I want you to come home)**

**(come home and marry  
the old man on the porch  
give him a last chance)**

**(take a chance and be home)**

**(marry the cow in the meadow down River Road)**



**(marry the white horse you see in that gap in the trees  
you see the river through)**

**(come home and marry the gap)**

**(marry the river at last  
simultaneously being there and going away)**

**(marry the river always here and always gone)**

**(come home and be gone.)**

**19 October 2014**

## EXORBITANT PERHAPSES

1.

Stand at the gate goes  
towards the moon  
you know the one  
the girl on the steering wheel pumping the horn  
the green-leafy citizen of somebody's trees  
color me yours!  
everything strange nothing interesting  
*because I was* and then the flame  
heatess from *himinan* (heaven)  
you tell me, you're the chosen  
and if the horse comes home  
without a rider *that will be me too*  
a serenade for morning  
a mere mistake

2.

amphoras stored artfully  
on planks in caves  
still hold pale Samian wine  
maybe, the oil too is present,  
thick now, resinous,  
sticky as time itself that  
will not let us go.  
You want miracles?

**Watch the trees walk,  
the naked woman pass  
unbothered through crowded  
pick any street you choose  
in any town. And you will be she  
and them and full of shame  
and secret glory, and the sugar  
maples will walk you safely home.**

**3,  
For instance. That's what  
the faeries told me, those  
quiet musics that uphold the mind  
and let us get our bearings  
in new places. Stand still  
and wait for them to speak**

**4.  
Animal enneagram  
two beasts with one will.  
Call it tantra, or Shiva  
busy at his loom made  
entirely of ice. Men  
are women first and then  
something bad happens  
in the weave. Be strong,  
go to sea like Ishmael  
and forget all this. This**

**is just human physiology.**

**19 October 2014.**

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