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FIRST DAY OF WOODPECKER

Sentinel pines
the British are coming
the British have come
we'll never be rid of them
Chaucer and such,
we live in their grammar

I mean
a house is everything that has us
a daughter a beginning
stringed instrument other culture
something with jungles
twang of lianas whipping the veranda
no window screens in winter

a daughter a departure
when you hear this
you have all that I am

the body twitches with words compelling
compulsion is the dessert
to every feast of theory

if she is the daughter of love who is the father?
who is ever the father?

let me hold the candle while you read

**the book is pale and thick, a mist
coming over moorland to find you,
when we are best we are island,**

**let me hold your candle, or be it,
the shadows on the wall are words too**

all we are is movement

**when we sit down quiet
we are someone else
not a bad person but not much use**

sit down quiet out loud inside instead

**or else you are nobody
a beautiful rhapsodical nobody!**

**(just an old Irishman who can't keep warm
go throw a blanket over the sky).**

22 December 2014

CITY

Edgware Road the corner
and going mildly up
music at my back
comme d'habitude

I was the kind of sailor
who stays on the land
moving easy with the wind
or reefed to stand there

gawking in some window
at a book I lust for
but will never read
not here, this mamaloshn city

on the wrong river
pretty as a Turner and the air
gulled enough to cry
but up I go, my back

to all that, back to all this
where the language
is sucked back into the sky
and I am quiet, happy

**to watch a woman walked
downhill by her dog
and a Swami looks like
climbs into a cab.**

**What am I doing here
all over again
I wonder then I begin
yet again to explain.**

22 December 2014

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Art is the intersection of Showing and Being.

Showing, or as Juliana of Norwich spelled it, shewings.

Shewing = revelation = dis/covery = dis/closure

Art is where Being discloses itself,

unclothes itself.

Puts on new clothes that show it better.

Show what it is

to be.

22 December 2014

PAGANISM, 1

[Dream definitions:]

Paganism is the worship of parrots.

(I saw the parrots, green three of them, I saw us bow before them)

[And a little later:]

Our priests somewhat amend:

Paganism is the worship of three smiling girls.

But these girls had been boys.

So paganism is the worship of nature trans-natured.

23 December 2014

PAGANISM, 2

**Order emerging from the fog
on this December morning
bearing Law in its arms.**

*** * ***

**So many answers
so few questions.**

*** * ***

**Quiet paganism
to last a lifetime—**

**it pervades all religions
in the form of Wisdom Herself.**

*** * ***

**Paganism is what we do in the country.
Religion is what they believe in town.**

23 December 2014

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**Appalling evidence abounds
leap for it
you'll catch the sky
under your fingernails**

**you'll stagger back
amazed at the pressure
of the light descending,
the air trying to escape
from your breathing in.**

**Lie still. all
you can do is succumb.**

23 December 2014

MEMO TO S.H.

**When you have eliminated
the improbable
only the impossible
can possibly be true.**

23.XII.14

== == == ==

**The way of the wood
the ordinary, what Arendt
a little misleadingly called
the banal, is not banality,
just ordinary. Just us.**

23.XII.14

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**Snopalescent sky
why should we worry
the light gets here
through the trees
like memories
in the patient's brain,
no way out, no
way in — frail
balance of reality
pale as your eyes.**

23 December 2014

DARK DAY ALL KINDS OF LIGHT

**The cars come slow
down Cedar Hill
glow of headlights
slipping before them
on the sleek road.**

23.XII.14

THE LAND AROUND GALLATIN

And if the love-
liest wreathed
the weather round them
would they be
nearer to me
than those hills?

Sight of those browngreen
moorlands over mist
and under cloud
mean who I am.
That is me over there.
I am an impostor.

2.
England of course it felt like
what else could I feel
my own county and the one next door
this is my stuff
and all it can do
is mind me of another.
I have lived here
half a hundred years
here in the heart of elsewhere.

3.

**It has to be about beauty
that far-off thing you feel right here**

**has to be Greece and Hölderlin,
has to be the cliffs of Donegal
and the blue hydrangeas dotting
the monsoon hillsides under Darjeeling,**

**no picture, no body even,
just the tune of feeling this strange
thing inside me never far.**

23 December 2014

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Mists and why not?

These trees in love with me

**again, old Vikings swarm the sky
mere color is rinsed from the world**

**—and they blame the flatulence of cattle
for the harm that only money does—**

**fog comes down the hill,
patient explorers still discovering America,**

**go home to your old world and bring back cheeses,
without cheese no culture, and conversely,**

**bitter smear of streetlights
please turn off**

**the light hurts
the dark hurts too but heals.**

2.

**On the inside we smell like fish
because from sea we come—**

**no logic like history
that empty set—**

**some deer in the mist,
that's all.**

**3.
To call anything
by the name of another thing
is to set it free.**

**I call you tiger
and lick your paws.**

**4.
Look at the other light
the heart inside the swift image**

**standing still — the meaning
is what is remembered**

**not what is meant.
Whatever happens is the other light,
black sun, trapdoor, the animal asleep.**

24 December 2014

= = = = =

**Enduring the particular
on the way to the dream factory—**

**I am the prom you're on the way to,
I pretend to be all music and caress**

but your corsage withers at my breath.

24 December 2014

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**As if an answer
to a question no one asked
it begins to rain.**

**Was I the only
one who understood?**

24 December 2014

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1.
Recidivist like springtime
manila folder
open on the lawn
to file away the rain
later, after its words come—

Know me for what I am
says the sky, know me
for what comes to you.
I intend nothing. I persist.

2.
Because the sky
everything the same color
it could be the moon
or a man across the highway
signaling for help
or offering it — how
does he understand me?
Do I need him
and not know it?
So many cars go by
without meaning.
And he's gone when I look again.

24 December 2014

CHRISTMAS 2014

The giving part is over
now the city part —

the being with
what we have been given.
What we are—

the political axis
Dante called Love
that binds each deed and every word
in mutual relevance.

As to say
it's Christmas, darling,
I live for you.

for Charlotte
25 December 2014

