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1.

Talking a beginning
Dew on autumn tables
But bees at Christmas

A sign.

Tekmar, none clear from Zeus

To mortals,

Only the sky itself

And what comes out of it.

2.

Men in coal mines

Turning earth into sky.

I think sometimes about money,

Not often, not like Miller or Pound,

Just the sound of it destroying the earth,

Their arts murdering beauty.

What can I do,

I must hate beauty too

I use so many words

To talk about it,

So many trees.

24 December 2014

INCARNATION

... When the whole world was at peace

It said,

At this one and only when

And only then

Could the fusion happen

In or to the genetics of

This wise animal.

Or was it Calvary

A life away

From agony a *nuclear event*

That changed our plasm?

Was it peace or

War that happened us?

25 December 2014

THE LAST LAW OF THERMODYNAMICS

**People waiting
In the elevator
Of the building
To rise or fall—**

All motion is imaginary –

**It appears
Only in the mind.
We can walk through
Only the doors we are.**

25 December 2014

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**Trying to tell you
But there is no.**

**She told
Us long ago
We wear those chronicles
On our bones.**

**Even the window
Keeps trying to remember.**

**But the purse is full,
It holds no more.**

25 December 2014

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**Not the end of history
But the end of trying**

**This tablet
Or remember me**

**The cut tulips never spread
Wide the purple ones**

**And dreamt it was sixty-one
On Christmas morning almost was**

**Our friend had bees at his window
Slippery truth of weather**

Deep honesty of climate.

25 December 2014

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**Short lines are best —
Who knows how much breath
Is ever left?**

**We are at
The outposts of the obvious.**

**Beyond this gate
Each fate is different.**

**Pass through and find
The one who really thinks he's you.**

25 December 2014

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**Mercenary energies
Block the chalky pages—
No word sticks.**

*If you remember your dream
The day is different*
**If you forget the dream
Your life doesn't know what to make of you—
“how could they forget
What I spent the night time teaching?
O waking people are poor students,**

**Poor scholars of the one
Science they need.**

**They're too busy figuring the costs,
The losses, the lusts, the parables
They never understood,
Even the clock
Confuses them, the day
Is a blazing blur.”**

**Your life wants you to listen all the time.
Especially when sleep disarms the opposition
And their troops are asleep too in their trenches.**

25 December 2014

PASSIONATE SURGERIES

Passionate surgeries
Draw a straight line
Premises voided by aftermaths—
Tartan tie for dinner wear
Day sliced to ribbons by desires

Call the porter *por favor*
Let him — used to it — hoist
This heart from comradeship
To something more — call him
Albertine and hide behind the door

That day he read no further
And I went no further than ordained
Ostiaris in one faith but the door
Stays open forever — I did something right —
And Brahms on the radio forgives the birds

Nothing further from a bird than a Brahms
— we live inside parentheses
She leapt over the seat back and on
My astonished mouth bestowed her own

How far does a dream dare to go

**Even among the Irish — some valor
Tells the whole story with a single kiss
No angiogram required to tell that
Six deer leap the lawn and of them
One was young and one a dominant**

**We shoulder risks to leap the fence first
The avant-garde got left behind
Naked woman in a window the end of that
The other thing that art was all about
Rhymes with Chartres rhymes with Sartre**

**Old Tom's Quincunial Lozenge made of joy
To write pleasure in a pinprick pattern
No house is falling down around you
The Blessed Virgin mothered me knew me
In blue robe plaster even saved me**

**And shall I put the green robe on
To guide the pilgrim towards the shrine
The common people call just Morning?
What could be truer than the other?
Every wound a blessing language said.**

2.

**My body keeps its secrets most from me
Near the ridgepole where crows perch
Amygdala or Miriam from the almond trees
Never that far from Jerusalem o, holiest salaam
Pin likeness to the mirror and disappear**

**Who knows the other side of anywhere
Mints for a widow coins for a child?
What can you buy with half a mind?
His lozenge surrounds the heart with signs
A sign by nature points two ways at once**

**Art is harder than even that
You looked for passion and found suffering
Didn't teacher warn you, slim Jesuit
With a *dream* in his hand before you
In your first youth at the oaken table**

**Aye aye sir, it was the book as you suppose
Taught me true *vist the interior* it instructed
The dream the day beginneth not endeth**

**Carry the flag of no known country
Thrill to the republic of the empty air**

**Or so I thought the book was saying, it
Could say anything I thought because it's words
Reading them is climbing up the hill
Bare trees are waiting for their scholars
A room tells you all you need to know**

**Find the utter center and stand there
Wordless waiting like a frost-bit apple
Too high up for the deer to nibble
And there you are, half gone with longing
Till far away you hear her footsteps come.**

26 December 2014

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**Our old well used
For watering the bees—
Could that have been
The word I meant?**

**The hard fact
Of not knowing
Where water goes—
It stops running
Just as you're getting
Close or at least
The secret meaning
Of all that flows.**

26 December 2014

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**When you're writing you know more
That when you're reading. Things
Fit together quicker, come home
From further, link lighter,
In lovely strife with one another,
Every fact is wide awake
And with its mind on making love.**

26 December 2014

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Bird on roof.

Alarm.

**The sky
Comes down
Again and again.**

26.XII.14

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**The meaning is the same
But the destination
Has to be increased —**

**Do they all talk like that
The blue population
When the clouds drift away,
Skywards, *sky words*?**

**They're people up there, you know,
You just can't see them,
Not aliens, not strangers,
They live above the weather
But they're part of earth —
Just listen if you don't believe me.**

27 December 2014

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**Break the grass
Let resemblance out**

**The *sound of words*
Voice of a dragon.**

27 XII 14

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**But things were later then
But nothing exhausted
Orion still was lord of winter
Corn stob still yellow-ochred the fields
And foxes roamed.**

**What had I done
To the earth? Things looked at me
The way they always did, wary
But sort of saying hello.**

**But something there — what
Is the wolf in the sky? The surf
Pounding in the inner ear?**

Confusion

**Loves us, keeps us warm,
Shelters us from knowing,**

Knowing can be

The opposite of awareness.

The roaring sky

Puzzles us into clarity.

27 December 2014

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Every language has a word I know
If I can find it, all the other words
Understand me as well.

I am their business — to spell me
With a foreign sound that wakes my own.

(I should have thought of that
Before I bothered learning German, Latin
Greek, French, Hebrew, Tibetan —
To name only the ones I really don't know —
I should have waited silently
Till the Wampanoag spoke from their white cliffs
Or the gypsy fiddlers in that Vienna café.)

I am ashamed of knowing
So much and knowing nothing.
But that's just me.

I reach out for a crystal
But it's the first quarter moon
Caught in the branches of the yew tree.
My fingers are empty
But the moon's still there.

27 December 2014

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**The anodyne rewards
Of sweet life**

**Ponytail
Of the jogging matron,
Easy dog trotting by her panting heels,
The world as video,
 Flat,
Secure, abbreviated.**

**But the bandwidth of poetry!
The sky clearing!**

28 December 2014

GERTRUDE AUX ENFERS

How could it fail to begin
When it is always? Rhadamanthus
Said this. *As a wife*
As a cow she answered,
A love story she explained,
The halls of hell

Lit up at her text.

But Aeacus said Concentrate
On chewing your food, don't choke,
Coughing is intolerable down here,
The reverberation. But the woman
Laughed, her laugh, wise
As Paris, coarse as Baltimore,
Re-echoed through the vaults,
And Minos wept
Having troubles of his own.

2.

She had to go to the classical underworld —
All the other nice Jewish girls
Went to Catholic school, so they
Would have to bargain with St. Peter
And all the other saints who guard the mind.
So Gertrude stood in the meadow
— pré sacré — and watched
The glamorous vaporious shades

**Drift in and out just as Monsieur Gluck
Described them,
Lyrical, a little wifty.**

**She could make good sense of those —
They are repeating without repeating,
Time passes them from hand to hand,
Pretty girls exhausted by their beauty.**

***I never repeat* she remembered,
Understanding deeply that every word
Comes from the mouth each time for the first time,**

**There is no past, the children
Never grow up, no one dies. She caught
Her breath and in wonder that she had
Without dying come to the land of the dead.
And found them living, sort of, drifting,
Hearing, cheating at cards.**

**Then Minos spoke:
This is the queer consequence of being. Animals
And men change places, faces. Women rule.
We three judges are men, or were, and this
Is the only job men are fit to do, deciding
— when nothing hangs on our decision,
Fate
Tells each being where to go, the better
To enjoy or be repaired. We judge
With no power, we grieve for no loss,**

**Just grieve for our own sake, solemn
Our countenances, our fierce red weeping eyes.**

3.

**Ink like skin turns brown from sunshine
— what shall we make of this?
It was a Shepherd asked her this
I am no sunbather (but she recalled
Those sexy Bain de Soleil ads of long ago)
But a writer — shall I worry
That my words will fade away, or turn
Cancerous with long exposure
To the reading lamps of lovely ladies and even
Faute de mieux those rascal avant-gardists
Who tumble up the staircase at the rue de Fleurus
Just off the shady side of the Gardens?
I am in a place now where no one visits
But one stays, all of us abide, snug
And tedious as hymn tunes — O the South
Gave me such strength! No one notices
How African I am, and all I do is signify.**

28 December 2014

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**If I err able
then sing queer
would the chert
chip in my hands
glisten?**

**I'm trying to hear you
hard, Chinese towers
Turkish mandolins
the Black Sea spread out
beneath my plane**

**this is where I wake up
almost forever in Europe**

**this is where the finding
forgets itself again
in the shadow of the vineyard**

**so this is where
you've been hiding
while I hid in sleep**

**weird church
where statues riot all through the night.**

(27.XII.14)

28 December 2014