

3-2015

mar2015

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Recommended Citation

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Genesis 12

**Nearby knowledge hawk.
Closest crow.
Being near sees far.**

**Separate the guesses
put silence in between
the sounds of words**

**thus move the sun—
we are the conquered
and the conquest**

**up and down
the town
begins us**

***lech lecha*
you must leave here
to be where you are.**

1 March 2015

PREDICAMENT

**Sometimes the end comes suddenly
perfect Saxon features dark chocolate skin
spoke expressively to me with gestures
lips moving but I heard no word—
all my life I pretend to understand—
fourteen months he'd be there, alive was it
or still in prctcice? — May 2017
was what I reckoned. The dark doctor
fated. Bound for the city. What would I do?**

**1 March 2015
(dreamt)**

=====

Try to turn it white
to life, the snow
promise to renew
what we can believe

spring lives under the ground
listen through asphalt gravel mulch

An arrival knows us—
I too am a river
aren't you? The curvature
of the earth returns us
to ourselves. Friend
vanishing in trees,
I can barely make out her form
in all the whiteness.

I speak a resurrection.

1 March 2015

=====

**There are children playing down there
swimming in and out of the wreck,
finding poignant evidence of former life
a table mat, alarm clock, glass chrysanthemum.**

1 March 2015

= THE SINNERS

**Would you show this
to your mother
she has one too**

**along Oxford Street at stroke of noon
every human face a window
so much of me on sale**

**and you, I bought you from my mind
there's no way back
the pain of privilege that it lasts
the pain of knowing something**

**someone lives inside you too—
maybe all of them do,
a friend is someone reborn inside**

**And there you are
thick with beauty and despair
you touch them on the telephone.**

1 March 2015

LES VOIX DE JOGGEURS

**Voices of joggers
come through the snow
their cheery brainless shouts
like scraps of poetry
in a dying language,
these are its last native speakers
gone already into the white.**

1 March 2015

=====

**Sin wears wet socks. Soaks.
Snow. Sin serves someone.
The sound of words the only.
Sense. Sin. Save. Sense.**

**The only thing could make this truer
is to say so. Once said,
never wrong. SPR in Latin
means to know, in Hebrew to write down.**

And all we have is spring not yet.

1 March 2015

=====

**And if nothing passes
is it still a road?**

**The goers have all gone,
only mercy is left,**

a permission in space.

1 March 2015

THE CAUTERY

the sun

out for a minute
to heal the sky and then
snow's grisaille
again— you've seen
those meek panels
from the Dutch Renaissance—
all colors fall away
and leave only light
madre de todas —
that language owned us then.

2.

See now who I claim to be
a frivolous pretender, suspiciously
prognathous Habsburg, never.
You have seen the crypt
where I am buried, have wet
with your tears my drear sarcophagus.
For I am everyone you ever lost
and still keep talking.

3.

So that's what it says
when it comes up in me,
spokesman for sunlight
yet chill I am and much afraid.

1 March 2015

=====

**I swear it didn't cost
anybody anything that I'm alive
and ride the white limos you send me
and sit half the night in glittering dives
adoring the springtime of your flesh
then sleep till noon sub crimson coverlets.
This soft glad life and no one damaged!
This must indeed be the world
and I must be an animal of it
I fit so snugly into silence.**

1 March 2015

A CURE FOR THE COMMON HAIKU

**If you can't say it
in seventeen syllables
don't say it at all.**

1.III.15

=====

**Most poems are
too long
but not enough.**

1,III,15

=====

**Empathy is breakfast
not a day job.
A bowl of rice
and soon hungry again.
Hyperglycemic.
And there you are
and the other, alone
in the shareless dusk.**

1 March 2015

=====

**You were lit up like an airport
but I was not a plane.
Drove my fast
admiring your runway lights.**

1.III.15

=====

**How can I help it
if the quarry sent
only marble pebbles
for this noonday carving?
Everything depends on the stone.
The Stone.**

1 March 2015

=====

**And then not to be answered
by any of them, birds,
deer, companions of the Quest
they — like me — have almost
forgotten. But sometimes we
wake in the night and remember,
sometimes even wake one another.**

1 March 2015

=====

**We are the Grail company
and we have lost our way**

**and found our ways
and maybe we are closer than we thought.**

1 March 2015

SNEGUROCHKA

out of the snow she comes whiter than white have two feet of snow on the ground whiter than white she comes she spreads her arms and something happens more white comes she spreads her legs and one by one we vanish into the white places the shadow of a white body is white into the white places we move we are her shadows we become white whiter than white but not as white as she comes out of the snow but she brings the white places with her, winter is only an accident of her whiteness which is the beginning of anything she comes and begins us till we are her white places.

2 March 2015

THE COAST

1.

The coast of women

where the pomegranate
and the barque I sail on
stood from native walnut—
there seek blue meaning
mornings before her sun—
coastable regular as by periplus
there seekable sensual secular
leading allegations of witchcraft
for whose sake alone I took silk
I cried from the fo'c'sle and you heard.

2.

Enough there to count pebbles!
So many mothers! All the stars
were foxes and fled away
then it was day. Come ashore
fellow lawyer I heard someone call
but her voice came from over
and a bird walked the slow sky
osprey or gannet and I doubted.
But the women selves were silent
yet I felt in me their smiles welcome
so I ditched the ship and shored me.

3.

So hard to be certain — who
was I trying to be being? To come
home should be the opposite of achievement
yet here is where I wanted to recur
ampoule and amphora, goat and song.
And gong — because the Temple's
here if anywhere, no wonder
all the priests are boys, who else
would so gladly serve The Woman
who is the same as the world?

4.

But let me leave the theologians
those stuntmen of the lower sky
never breathed the wind word of this island
fructed with moral excellences
the rites of dawn, the nun of noon
and gloaming's queen a coming home at last!
But no one spoke. Irrawaddy, I asked,
or Danube? Both, both, said one, cream
contralto of a voice, every syllable
a sermon on the Law of Return.

5.

But will I read you tomorrow?
Will the book of your welcome be open
still at the same page? For I wake late
the law is easy, I dream a doing
just as well as doing it. Lights
move in the woods they must be listening.
Coming near to you as I can get,
paw politics, haptology maybe,
the lost ancient art of being touched —
do you have streets among you, sciences
and steeples for my immediate ascent?
Silence as usual but smiles all round.

6.

Had I given too much away
just by saying and by seeming?
ream me better, Magdalen
and again silence studied me —
language is a devious affront
sometimes, a tight collar,
spangles on a stranger's bra,
Again, will you? And yes we will.

7.

See how short a sure thing tells!
Silence and in the softer shadows
as if I belonged! But isn't (argued)
longing to be belonging enough?
O pale philosophers ashore
I touch with awe the warm
persuasions of your fingertips.
To be alive is to be halfway home.

Note:

Maybe I misheard the word. Maybe it said *the coast of Rimmon*, as in the magical walled garden of Moses Cordoveiro ("From Moses to Moses there is none like Moses.") Pomegranate in the second line would make me think so, *rimmon* = pomegranate. It was still dark, not five o'clock yet, the first snowplow had just dropped its blade outside. I woke at the sound to consider the empty rooms of my house, always coming back to where my love was sleeping undisturbed. I kept the light on low, and ink flowed quiet, dipped from the old orange Parker with no ink sac, just a fine straight pen now. No pipes had frozen — even water flowed easily. Street lamps on snow, what else to report except what they thought in me, were thinking, those women, or the words they sent all waxy with the seal of sleep, the aftertaste of dream.

2 March 2015

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=====

**Pisces or pulchritude?
Slim sleek quick
forgetful. Isn't that
why men chose marble
to write beauty down
who swims so fast
always and everywhere
just past our grasp,
Praxiteles?**

2 March 2015

ALBA

**Soon the light will be it
and rush around to find me,
touch me, make me
useful to my fellowcrafts,
my company, my kids
my sultry army
waiting out the war.
Be light! It told me,
be me already
and all over, one glimpse
is all it takes
bible and eucharist and truth,
fierce photons of our shared desire!**

2 March 2015

=====

**Pick the way
that makes least sense—**

**it will last the longest
it will go on meaning
long after you've forgotten
whatever you meant.**

2 March 2015

=====

**Opening the answer
the mind's larder**

**the door is everywhere
the wall nowhere**

**but it's safe in there,
a flock of blackbirds**

patrol it in the dome iof light.

2 March 2015

=====

**How many days in a day?
News can't be trusted
it comes from other people.
You can't even trust
the heat of the day—
it comes from the sun
and she goes away.**

2 March 2015

=====

**Car moves, sun glints.
That's all there is to it.
Now extend that to all
the operations of the mind.
See what I mean.**

2 March 2015

=====

**I hate it when I get short and smart.
I want to be long and soft and hard
and Whitman in a meadow,
want the words to loaf along
taking their ease, leave sense behind,
touching you on the way.**

2 March 2015

=====

**I need a mirror to escape this place.
The road is long ahead but very bright.**

**When I get there
I shall have been.**

**What else could any journey yield?
But have no mirror, the glass shows**

**only what I poured in it, taking *there*
and bringing it *here*, just the opposite**

**of what I want to do. Pour me
into your chalice, other hands, other lips.**

2 March 2015

=====

**Birds are back.
Light tells them
and they come.
They bear the cold
they use the wind
they choose us
year after year.
We are somehow too
their family. Assembly
of the allies, bearing down
on the coast of spring.
Time is our pivot,
we spin identities.**

3 March 2015

=====

**Now the mail comes
everything on time
except time itself
which is always too late.**

3 March 2015

=====

**No matter how grand he is
he still wears socks.**

**Always remember
what you can't see—**

**it's the best cure for
all that seems.**

3 March 2015

=====

**In a snowstorm watching baseball on tv
should be illegal, it's bad feng shui
or something forbidden by Hammurabi
way back when, like fire in the bathroom
or planting flowers in the sky. Spring training
they call it, we too are getting ready for
something but not yet. Not yet — o the gloom
of this pale stuff in streetlight, the moon
darkened near its full, the deer mere
hungry shadows against the pallor move.
Shadows of shadows. And there in Florida
the young men move quick, the middle-aged
talk incessantly and we watch, bemused
by motel and Viagra ads, learning the names
of the players we will think we know
all summer long but not yet. Never yet.**

3 March 2015

= = = = =

**sung sprung broken time in half a sound dissevers space
a sound is the only evidence of space of us of anybody
moving in the house the plaza the flame arising as if the
flower or as if nothing we can specify and who are we?**

**remorseless evidence I mean a woman in an empty
theater directing phantoms in an ancient play about the
daughter of Herodias or anyone else who never lived
except in the dreams of sorry men and angry women
and who are they?**

**we can name no one we can eat the economic products
of the new world such as potatoes maize quinoa or chilis
but that does not bring us closer to the moon or does it
isn't the moon maybe a part of our local geography our
moon and not some other heathen continent's and who
is the moon anyway?**

**wheat has grown in England for eight thousand years
fact read it in the paper who knows who brought it but
we taste is then they must have brought it here against
the advice of the moon planted it in the burnt-off
grasslands of mid-america and we are still but who is
bread?**

3 March 2015



A weasel on the back of a green woodpecker in flight. I say the name of this picture translated from French. That's where the words come from. It looks like a ferret but they say otherwise. But where does the bird come from and where is it flying? And whom shall I carry so easily when I go?

3.III.15

CHILDHOOD

So he breaks his own rules
and what happens then?
Rule is short from *regula*
do it this way not another.
A rule is a time or a piece of wood
a saw its teeth lubed with hand soap
you know how, a child
learns by watchdoing, a saw
is a fierce friend, the wood
must hate the bite of it but that
resurrection smell of fresh-cut pine!

4 March 2015

=====

**I'm sorry, judge, we do it all
to please our senses — five of which
even you must know, or at least remember
since you are old and in charge
and authority destroys sensory pleasure.
So can I go home now to my furnace
and the pool, woodlot and pizza parlor?
The cloud I came from is closed today—
there's always some death in the family.**

4 March 2015

THE ROAD RIDICULES THE TRAVELER

**I feel it sometimes
welcoming a little, laughing
beneath my feet.
It won't hurt me but it knows
all this going is for its sake,
or nobody's sake, nobody gets there
ever, anywhere, a road is a circle,
no matter how far we walk
we're always at the beginning.
And cars get nowhere even faster.**

4 March 2015

=====

**Transmission alliance
smokestack reverie
it begins it begins
the orange truck rolls by**

**ship aboard the *Odessa*
that schooner pale-winged on the lee
shore waiting for thee,
for such as me, hungry truants**

**from the lost academy, all we know
is verse and we can't scan.**

4 March 2015

CREPUSCULAR

Mind congested with my own opinions I spent a weary hour with Mme. Verdurin. She talked exclusively about people she knew—the rich, the not quite famous—as if she were nobody at all but the glory that they cast on her such as it is. Whoever she herself actually is, or was, lay deep muffled under a lexicon of high-class gossip. The painful part is that for each of her disclosures I had lots of opinions of my own. Sick with her prattle, sick of my own attitudes, I yearned for adieux and moonrise, and o my God I even had opinions about the moon.

5 March 2015

=====

**Wet road
goes there.
Call out
halfway
so it can hear
you coming,
be ready for
what you think
your message
is, tree bark
pool of ice melt
at roadside
bare trees
lean reflections.**

5 March 2015

=====

**Sometimes they let you see.
And then the reflections
of bare trees stand upright
down the sky you see in water
right at your feet, the glorious
puddles of an hour's thaw**

**and then the freeze is back.
The images turn into ice, luminous
opaque. Now you see only
what keeps you from seeing.
We belong to what happens
no agency of our own
except sometimes we get to see.**

5 March 2015

= = = = =

So I admit it
I want to turn you
into the sky
the whole of it
plus the little stretch
of earth, my earth,
that aprons up to you,
your horizon: towns,
fields, gas stations,
empty churches, barns
where leaf tobacco aged,
roads with asphalt
smoking after summer rain,

you. Your skin. Your deep
sense of interior worn
so lightly on the surface,
easy virtue, easy victory,
bridges everywhere spring
into the busy air and carry
me into all your silences
where I can sit down at
last and hold my peace,
just a man rubbing his knees
after a dubious journey, glad,
listening to the place itself.

5 March 2015

=====

Adjustments in the visual field
not all *brightness* is theology
there are sparrows busy in it
and more always than before

and cardinals though they winter
here are more in evidence
staking their claim. Above zero at last—
we need our numbers now

out there in Circumstance,
our endless city. Native speakers
of archaic anxieties, a fear before
speech came to share our terrors.

6 March 2015

=====

**Old men have eye problems
because less and less they
like what they see around them
the cult of violence the chic of war.**

6.III.15

=====

**We are prayer wheels
spun by the sun
if only we could learn
the simple prayer we say.**

6 March 2015

=====

**Adipose avoidupois
and nothing more.
Man's waistline is his fate
said Heraclitus' wife.**

6.III.15

=====

**“Spindrift philosophies”
the book said
mockingly, I spent
years trying to catch
the spray of them on my tongue.**

6.III.15

FONT

**Go into some church
and stare at the baptismal font,
ponder the personalities
this simple water touched
into difference. Does it matter
you wonder, sitting in the old
creaking pew, does it change
anything in the child itself
or even in the grown-ups
who stand around beholding?
And when the water dries?
Shadowy church, shadow people.
Put the lid back on the water,
then sit there remembering.
None of this touched you
yet here you are.**

6 March 2015

=====

**How much do I really like
doing the things I'd like to do?
Desire is so deliciously tentative—
taste of those pears just
out of reach over the wall.
Things taste better in
the mind than in the mouth.**

6 March 2015

=====

**A wooden duck is not a decoy of
or on the snow-dight balcony
a passageway for Juliet to glimpse
the last lute shimmers of her leman
an old word meaning the me who means
at you and never stops, string strung
sung, the sun comes up and she's alone
always. That's the way mercy has
of giving us some breathing space, time
to recover, vita nuova, all that. I must
be gone. She must have herself
all to herself, while downtown her
analysts squabble on her diagnosis.
I always get the word wrong, don't I,
but you know what I most likely mean.**

6 March 2015

=====

**Proofreading problems
I listened you too long
the line went dead. Another
time I'll use a fountain pen,
an ice cream cone, a parking lot.
Yes, I know I need a preposition.
People like me usually do.**

6 March 2015

=====

**Suppose a day
had only one word
how many others
would you have to speak
to say the right one**

**other words or other days
will I ever meet
the right one on the right
bright morning, too
little sleep, astonishing?**

7 March 2015

=====

**The warm breath of machinery
calms the room. Space
comes in many sizes
and all of them close us in.**

**Roomy, we say, but the walls
are always there, stare at us
solemnly, our priests our judges—
this far only you may go, here**

**your world ends. Horizon also
is a ring around us. And from
the top of the sky a million
eyes inspect us all night long.**

7 March 2015

THE SHAPING, 1799

Haydn's animals—lion, stag,
horse, sheep. worm—
illuminated by sounds
that show them, not the sounds
they actually make.
Except the lion maybe—
but orchestras are always
roaring. And what music
does a worm ever make?
Deft illustrations in a picture-
book for ears. But then half
an hour later we get to humans,
so Viennese they are, our Eve,
our Adam, they're Papa-
geno and Papagena, nuzzling,
kissing the hand prettily
two hours after chaos and darkness and dawn.

7 March 2015

= = = = =

**There's a window in my house
that looks out on a different
sort of neighborhood
from all the rest. The trees
and roads and distant farm house
are all the same but the light
is different. A mist is always there
or as if it were snowing gently
fine light snow even in hot summer.
A grey and linear light, like old
Flemish grisaille, or dusty sunlight
in Irish parlors through lace curtains.
Only that one window in a wall of them,
startling me when I look up
from reading in the next room
to check on the world outside
and find two of them. And this one
is the one that I believe, the quiet
gloaming, twilight of some old heart.**

7 March 2015

=====

**Exorbitant liberties
size of an apple
soon the crooning
of treefrogs won't start —**

**there are deliveries
to be sung, brown parcels
to undo, the wrap
is a lost lady and a bird
above.**

**Oh Lord of Sundays
be my every day,
oh Virgin of tree and stratosphere
entrust me with your
blue encomium,
the snow your petals fallen.**

8 March 2015

= = = = =

**Suzerain. Sovereign. Solitude.
Street. Walkill brown haunted
northward flows, flannel,
oaks? tomorrow Toledo.
It's the tune of voice. Only a little
snow today, lithograph of the Sacred Heart.
In winter the uniforms are the same.
Canary. The vertical abstraction
Stäbe gäbe as if, as if. The shallow light.
Tamarind flavor popular soft drink. Father
is the call for Catholic priests. Surgery,
bistre as color of skin, Anglophone century,
strike out for new terrain beyond the alphabet**

8 March 2015

ALPHABET

**Insert dental scalpel carefully between E and F
opening a new sound, less vowel, less continuant,
but *still it hurries to the horizon* — that's
what the letter is. Or between L and M a liberal
feminine presence reclining by an oval pool
half in sun half shade. Understand?
It's all in the division. The dissection.**

8 March 2015

LISTENING DOWN

1. *Impulses* (Vicente Alexim)

shivering of the vessels
tropical Kabbalah:
bird flies out of the
word tree — all three
are green.

Which one is me.

When there are enough words
the animals peek out.
Now they come. When word tells
it gently roars. Listen.

I am a man
I stand by my hammer

accuse me of silence

the shade rolls up quick
I pull down slow

the structure more compelling than the *klang*.

2. *Still Life* (Matt Evans)

A sound knows.
A sound knows how to swallow

too much happening itself
for this to be so little

aggrand the tone,
we are not your bell
though of its metal made.

Phoenix time, tune
yearns back to fire.
We no longer believe
in our own agency.

3. *The Ghost* (Tamzin Elliot)

I think I'll write a novel
sell a million copies
live in Monte Carlo
sobbing all day long
but oh the night,

the night!

*

**Build a house of brass
raise children in it
so their voices are strong,
surgical song.**

*

**The blues
make me
see red**

*

**The little boy gets
a chemistry set
for Christmas,
by New Year's he
has learned enough
to fill a beaker
with water and three
chemicals from his
little bottles,
warms it in
between his hands**

one whole afternoon
while upstairs his
folks listen to *Messiah*
and Strauss waltzes.
By sunset the water
begins to seethe,
sing, a little
lady in a long scaly skirt
swims up to see
who has dared
to summon her,
sees him, kisses him
until he sleeps.

*

Choruses understand nothing.
If numbers could sing,
a chorus would be zero,
queasy with Middle
Eastern melodies

4. *Lighthouse* (Dylan Mattingly)

The sea is “a grounding
experience”

**excitation of anxiety
a Welsh preacher
scorching the heart.**

**One says at last
what has to be said.**

**8 March 2015
*Contemporaneous Concert***

=====

**A parchment or permanent.
Skins of beasts used to write on
sheep and calves, and swine for binding,**

to write into an animal

**things to go on with
priestesses of Ashtoreth,
plane landing on a carrier,
the sea broad enough for almost.
Palm fronds and clutter, old safe
yawning open, empty. A glass of milk
with green dust on it. Meniscus.
Tradewind. The *Passat*
at dock in Travemünde
touching the hull is
equivalent to sailing in.
Fact. Suppositions are all true.
A laundromat on a spring night, crowded
with midnight. My beautiful lost socks.
If only you really knew what this word means
belltower on the Adriatic, marsh full of widgeons,
my house is a cave on the moon I can't go home.**

8 March 2015

=====

To be serious
is to be carried away

“elves, fauns and fairies”
—not all the same,
not all rooted in *place*
though place knows them.

In 1961 the poet Paris Leary, walking with me in the Catskills, explained that no *ontological evil* resided in our American woods. He meant the ancient brooding evil beings of the old country, the sort that Arthur Machen knew or at least told us about. But Leary was wrong, or was right then but wrong now. They have come here, the good ones, the bad ones, and the ones so neutral they seem even more frightening, the cold eyes of a stone. They have come here, and keep us company as they did in the cold countries — as Leary had known them in England; his priesthood, his poetry, his alcohol all left him vulnerable to them, yet in some many ways each was a safeguard too, a thing a man can do against the incomprehensible.

9 March 2015

=====

**Affluent reasoners
at the wrong end of Cambridge
elegant bridges building
that go nowhere but o the
spring of their cantilevers,
long bowshot of their stretch!**

9 March 2015

=====

**Money maybe
cures philosophy**

and maybe poetry?

**Too poor to tell
though I have plenty.**

9.III.15

=====

**A
m I the man who woke up
twenty minutes ago from
dreams of fairy raptures,
am I the man who feels
every morning like a pilgrim
facing the maze of the mirror?**

9 March 2015

=====

**Grey light of morning
dense in bare trees,
snow everywhere,
grey roads. In all
this white and grey
only one line of black,
a power line. Color
is an accident of time.**

9 March 2015

=====

(of Faerie)

**Wanting them to be
can bring them close.
They often doubt our
presence too in this
shared world, sometimes
they reach out to
convince themselves, make
contact, fondle us.
That's when the music begins.**

9 March 2015

=====

Accidents of rapture,
morning comes in wet clothes,
running home on empty streets,
glistening black of naked parking lots.

Sleepy diner, thoughts interrupted
by language, camouflaged.
In some airport a white phone rings.
And then it's all done.

Sits on the formica table
swinging her legs like a child.
All the other Americans are
bishops or bankers or gone—

only she has survived.

9 March 2015

AERIAL

1.

**Things melt marvelous
Masha, the light
is like a trampoline**

**or for the first time
in months you can see some
roof under all that snow.**

**I blame you for spring—
swaying on your silks
above this common sphere,**

**how dare
you climb the air?
And now at last**

**you bring some mercy
down from the almost blue—
we are the limit of the light !**

2.

**When the silk unwinds
you are one of me again.**

**Wonderful terror of a world
where we are each other!**

**All of us! No exceptions!
Every I the property of every you.**

**As if we all made our way
down from the sky.**

9 March 2015

=====

**Ragged *Turm* a ruin maybe
over Rhine or Neckar
where from the broken tower
you see Alps shimmer
on summer days away south
maybe, or is it heat rising
from the factories, the gorges?
Think of the fallen-down castles then**

**and this huge ruin we inhabit.
For I was a mason once
and counted my ruddy bricks,
I built a beach of stones
to hold the ocean in
where women swim with seals
they soon become—
if you don't know me yet
you can always remember.**

9 March 2015

POETA SUM

I want to dance
mysteries for you
to solve.

Not puzzles—
summer evenings
with no meadows,
just
those commandments
you keep by dancing
or break by dancing more

dance to no tune
but the air
I give you
too little or too much,
word make you move!

9 March 2015

= = = = =

But I don't like any of this.

**It's not given to you for liking
or any attitude except to say.
attitude is human —
only the words are divine —**

**each language has a god
to keep the words clean
after we use them,
use and abuse both the same,
heal the word
from the lover's mouth who speaks it
heal it from the bishop's rant.**

9 March 2015

== == ==

**Dog as tower, siegecraft,
dog is enemy dressed as friend.
The claws can never retract,
the bite is automatic.
So the dream told me,
brakes failed, inept
but friendly mechanics —
but at the end of pain
(end of dream) I received
my manumission document,
as of February I was
no longer a slave. Woke.**

9 March 2015

=====

How to attend a poetry reading:

**Have no theory
just sit and listen
and see what happens
you as you hear.**

9.III.15

=====

**A whistling man
between his garage
and the lilac bush
spindly with cold**

**only sound
flourishes in winter.
There is no tune. Only high-
pitched breathing focused
between lips remembering song.
In winter everything is far away.**

10 March 2015

=====

**Things to decide.
Deceive. Decision
is always a deception
yet it... In Devon
the village near the sea.
In Ireland a flat plain
or a western coast
where palm trees are.
Genetics. How one
comes to be
you. Or me.
The ancient ones
still run
the machinery
of choice,
they hum inside
every living one
and then go on,
always ready to be
wherever this is.**

10 March 2015

=====

**The life I lead in dreams
is nothing like my own,
not even like the daydreams
sometimes inhabit me.**

**The dream life has people
in it I never knew
and the home I'm usually
trying to get to is 60 years ago**

**in a city I never visit
with my eyes open.
Cars and crowds and never
get there ever but**

morning always is.

11 March 2015

=====

**All the prices are different now
I woke up too soon.
Milk 4x, Gas 20x, Cigarettes 40x
Gold 100x dearer than before.
The contour of increase
is what we read. The shape
of what we want changes. The cost
of wanting never goes down.
Good thing the heart can't read.**

11 March 2015

=====

**The profile of transformation
is like the face of some
great unknown leader—
a Bedouin sheikh, a king
of Broceliand — our fingers
count along chin, lips,
philtrum, nose, brow,
linger on the eyes themselves
round as memory, but firm.
When you have seen too much
the hands take over, try
to touch what that great being
knows, grasp it, misering
the names of things, your world
in other words, because you think.
Because you dream your way along,
running on dark roads in pale clothes.**

11 March 2015

=====

**Have come out where I went in.
Coney Island Tunnel of Love
little boat dragged through damp
theatrical darkness, a chance
to scare and squeeze your lover —
already it seems you're inside
each other's body — but then
sudden mouth, sunlight, giggles.**

11 March 2015

=====

**Finding the way
to get where I am.**

*

**The road is long
but your eyes are closed.**

*

**Everything you see
belongs to you.**

*

**Let it go.
It's gone.
And you're still here?**

11 March 2015

SKIN

**Watch we are wading through
the innocent reprisals of a tropic moon
because we so love skin—**

**skin makes us happy to touch,
be touched, behold,
beheld. So Nature hurts us there**

**pimple, cancer, leprosy,
the stakes keep rising
because we're not in charge.**

**Fact. My skin belongs
to someone else.
Someone I never met,**

**can't name, just guess
who it is but why it is
no one can say.**

11 March 2015

PSYCHOPHONIC

Dial your seven-digit number in all the area codes and see who answers. They are you in a different place — by the time you've talked to several hundred, you'll have a shrewd idea of who you really are.

.

11 March 2015

=====

**1.
Worthy answer
to a null question
is everything else —**

**everything I see,
everything you can be,
and the river flows
backwards but
reaches the sea.**

**2.
Short of breath
the athlete lingers
by kindly boulder
if only he could
share its complacency
its contentment
with being one place
at a time
all the time.**

3.

**Then he runs again
pursued by a demon
at the back of his skull
the terrible imagination
of being someone who.**

12 March 2015

=====

**Multiple of what I know,
the sorry story
of memory's cupboard —
we call it hard drive now
but still forget
and good thing too
sleepy Goliath crushes
vivid David every time —
don't believe me,
read your Bible
upside down and sound asleep.**

12 March 2015

= = = = =

**Freeze it into the morrow
when the spring consents.
River solid still.**

**The soaring bridge above it
looks like mere effrontery —
come walk on me
the river says.
Even the channel
the Coast Guard keeps open
is chilled over, ice
comes back together, water
still knows how
to stick to water.**

**Shadows of pine trees
toss in the March wind.
I wait a solution
to the problem I am.**

12 March 2015

= = = = =

**What would happen if between
the sounds another kind of silence
rose, convex and not concave, one
that comes to love us or at least
touch us with its delicate calm?**

**Would garbage trucks still roar down Perry Street
and baffled lilies fail to open in the dining room?
Is silence a living part of everything?
Forgive me. Questions are so noisy as it is.**

13 March 2015

=====

**The eye knows
how long
anything should be.**

**That is why rivers
reach to the horizon
always, why the sky
spins in circles
around us, we
have no wish to let it go.**

**It is our sky, round us,
and only us, holds us
soft as sleep.
No wonder Romans worshiped it.**

13 March 2015

=====

**A sad people
who never will know
what this world is —
taught by religion
to look away.
To be joyous
we must look through.
Put that in your ragged gospel
music, reverend,
rush out of the church, rush
through the trees.
Through the tree.**

13 March 2015

=====

If there were a place
we could begin by seeing
all the rafters bare
and from them hang
drying herbs and saucissons
and still be in bed asleep
but not dreaming,
at peace to deliberate
images presented
by the fingers of the world
nudging the back of the brain
that pudding of shame and delight
never mind what time it is,
time isn't, time
is only for the working man
the waking mind
and who has one of those
or wants to when
the images caress?
Certainty is like rain,
it starts and stops.
The philosopher
wanders in the graveyard

studying his place
where some of him — or all?
Who can say? — will reunite
with the earth. Call it
a churchyard, call the whole
earth that, a quiet cemetery
with noisy kids playing in it,
tumbling gravestones, piling
them up to build houses,
whistling on their grass flutes
their thighbone trumpets.
Or so he thinks. Rain
on the friendly side.
It's not like that at all
I swear (he swears)
we live alone in charity
and hope. Faith is hard.
He imagines what it will say
on his stone. A name,
some dates by digits,
an axiom from his easier books.
He lays a wilted flower
on the place he'll be,
he doesn't know what kind,
he found it littered
on someone else's grave.
See, somebody still cares.

14 March 2015

=====

**And all that's left to say
is another day. Year. Eon.
Marriage of opposites, elements
under control. Rain. Mist.
Spiritual gifts.**

Boston, 14 March 2015

== == == ==

**I hope makes sense
the startled sparrow
skimming the ice melt
for water and wash.**

**If we are at all,
we are grass,
Eve offers us a bite
from her pomegranate
a taste of the first
loaf of bread ever baked
warm from the ashes
of the first idea.**

Boston, 14 March 2015

HYLONOETIC MANIFESTO

against timid cosmologists

**It doesn't matter how matter
got here, we've got to hear
what it has to say.**

**Loathsome binary: alive or lifeless—
all is animate
objects are subjects.**

**This world so intricately
tenderly personed,
statues strolling through the park.**

- - - - -

Poetry is the science of hearing objects speak.

Boston, 15 March 2015

=====

**Not enough left to decide.
Decode. Why are words like that
so close to each other, pouring
silt from each river into other?**

**Hard to think of just one word
all by itself, even a bare bone
comes with hundreds of other
bones to make a woman. A man**

**falters at the altar, the priest
at least breathes some wine
in the wind the cup captures,
words whirl us round by our ears.**

Boston, 15 March 2015

=====

**Shelter an image
from its meaning.
Meaning is adulterous,
comes and goes
whereas a thing
stands in its splendor,
local, particular, true,
waiting (for us, its skilled
r cackhanded lovers'
embrace), patient,
a selfless self,
mother of the mind.**

Boston, 15 March 2015

=====

**Stand upright
on this speeding planet**

**measure sorcery
by its mildest hour**

**kiss the cross
abandon wanhope**

**belief is futile
just know**

the truth you are.

16 March 2015

=====

**Not too cold though the sun rescinds
its momentary fulgence — Calpurnia,
I have survived one more Ides of me —
and in a little house in Bethany white
bedclothes are turned down for me.**

**All dead men are the same —
that's what needs to be remembered
or disproved. Snow melts, clouds
bivouac above your house and still
persuasion percolates in your desire realm,
that copper pot you call your torso, cooling
steam emitting what you call your thought.**

16 March 2015

LOVE SONG

**Be me
or let me be.
Annex
your flesh to
mine or whine
away afar.
We can't be
together until
we're we.
It's up to you
to be me.**

16 March 2015

=====

**Carrier pigeons
from the quietest battlefield —
aren't mirrors extinct,
didn't the highway slither away
where no one goes?**

**The world is different now,
Peter has given one
of his keys away, now
we all can climb that heap of rubble
shaped like a stairway to heaven
(starring David Niven)
though in England it all has a different name.**

16 March 2015

=====

**Pickup truck
carrying a sign back home.
Take me too!
Read me,
tell me what I really say.**

16 March 2015

== == ==

**Marxist impersonators
eviscerate education
of the no longer young.**

16.iii.15

=====

**As if the wood had sung
and the owl in it only
flummoxed by music
flexed its wings.**

**That sort of wake-up,
night, sweated collarbone,
a cough. *Pèlerinage*
a human life the old
book said, eyes too
are pilgrims,
too tired to read.
Nothing to fear but now.
Suppose I should go
back to dream
the end of some
matter I never knew,
I missed it or it
me, I woke instead
as it said.
Locum tenens
for another who.
Clueless. No dawn.**

16 March 2015

=====

**Looking for glory
scrape the sky
in dark those clouds
easy to read.**

**Rend. An eclipse
is on its way, that energy
dances in me,
like a bone, a
dull pain in a bone,
a game you don't
know how to play.
Or somewhere organ
old church music
not Bach plays.
A stream of certainties
vanishes into the ground
there, under the bushes
by the dry stone wall.
You see it all
the time in sleep.**

16 March 2015

=====

**The secret is there is no secret.
Powerful void at the core of belief.
We build without stone. We need
nothing but our will. Our want.
The void brings everything towards us.
Everything hurries to emptiness.**

16 March 2015

=====

**Grace comes from else—
able to see it
if only a minute
of it, able
to recall
what has been seen,
recaptured
from where it has been.**

17 March 2015

=====

**Let me sit a while
in the sun
and pretend to be me**

winter was very big
**but much snow is gone, a field
shows through, a call,
the sunporch is warm,
the drifts outside
theatrical, no threat
till dark. Right now
the sun and I pretend to be.**

18 March 2015

=====

**What a nice place
to be together.**

**I like words like nice,
decent, like,**

simple as smiles.

**A fangless welcome
of what is.**

**Be simple, Solomon,
your time has come**

and lingers still.

18 March 2015

=====

**Philosophers
never shave.
Women don't have to;
they confront
barefaced ythe truth.**

18 March 2015

=====

**Oh this warm
girl of a sun
nuzzling my cheek
so comforting,
luminous erasure
of every thought but her.**

18 March 2015

= = = = =

**Tried to many
times now try this.
Snow. A word
stretched out for miles.
Here and there a little
sense shows through.**

18 March 2015

GETHSEMANI

**This too will be a garden then
birds will settle in
and a man despair. This cup
never goes away, the whole
world drinks from it.**

18 March 2015

AUNSHINE

**Window be my barrister
plead my case
before that high court.**

**Sun doesn't even know I'm here
it told me so itself.**

18 March 2015

=====

**War's everywhere
now, new redshirts
battle in the streets
with new browns.
I wonder if the word
is quiet enough
or if every poem
is a whispered rumor.
Silence may cure us
yet, the way light
cures us at least of dream.**

18 March 2015

=====

**Down the little hill
big deer come
stepping lightly,
food could be anywhere.
So many plots,
so few stories.**

18 March 2015

HE

**His grandfather went to India
wrote something home about
carriages, gold, Australia.
End of story.**

**He was my father, my whole
life I've been trying to learn.
To open the story.
To getr there
again for the first time.**

18 March 2015

=====

**We knew the boat was riding
on a wave not of our weaving
but we knew. We watched us
from the crow's nest scurrying on deck—
subways and bullrings and battlefields—
but still felt clean air in our lungs,
sucked in from somewhere else,
not even where the wave came from,
something honest that happens
between our open mouths and the sky.**

19 March 2015

START AGAIN

Start the calendar again.
Move Monday to the middle
and come out fighting.
We need lulls from our labor.
Or as my rich friend says, Don't work.
But my hopes went down with the *Titanic*
with the grandparents of that heiress
I would have married and lived at ease.
So I am poor. That is (as another
friend defined it) I work for a living.
So I say the only chance is change.
The sun is on me from the window
and it isn't even Friday. Get the calendar
right next time: saint's days, patriotic
holidays, days of mourning, rogation
days, harvest festivals, equinoxes,
Lent and Ramadan. Until all that's left
is one lone day when all the year's
work gets done, and what doesn't fit in
waits for next year. All the other days
all we do is rest and play. And milk the cow.

19 March 2015

= = = = =

**Reading strangers' thoughts
from their syntax—
something good
has to come of that.**

19.III.15

=====

He wasn't sure
what he meant
so he said it
hoping she would be.

It happens that way
seldom but the sun
rises anyhow she
explained, refining.

What is to be done.
Or as Lenin said
What to do? You
know more than I

we go out to lunch
everything gets better
bread and butter
she eats carrots I eat kale.

19 March 2015

=====

**I know what they're thinking
until I start listening.
Then their words
sweep the curtains closed.**

19 March 2015

=====

**This is all my business is
why so guilty when I do it?**

***Guilt pervades the animal—*
we are killers and we eat**

**and we know it, this bone
is from someone**

this simple soup.

19 March 2015

JOSEPH

**strangest of saints, the sanctity
of being no one, being unknown,
having a job and doing it,
while all round him the angels
et cetera flurried, words
were spoken and dead men raised.
He kept his eyes on the wood
where the lines of poetry
run straight and meaningful.
Cut this way. Every chair or table
somehow is a chariot too.
The quiet man lives a mute ascension.**

19 March 2015

CANTICUM

[begun 17 March 2015]

1.

**I take
myself
to my awning**

against the sun

2.

**I am Solomon
wise**

**some ways
unforgotten**

3.

**have had enough
of saying you**

**you always you
have had enough
of saying
never enough**

4.
theoretical vineyards
sour wine
I choose
the milk of wild goats
give me

5.
barren
the energy
sly the shadows
quick
the sunlight
and then

6.
I meant to be
because of me

7.
bird tracks left
in the gristmill dust
small as sparrows
broad as crows

**8.
soul among matter
Solomon's mother**

**9.
bring me water
antelopes and foxes
cool water
from the cistern
I built the sky**

**10.
they walk by
testing their powers
I sit still
still measuring**

**11.
each night
the one I want**

**12.
it's up to them
the foxes
the adventures**

**silk and linen
only a king could
even care**

13.

**from so far come
to be so near
call the prophets
tell the miracle**

14.

**I adore you
I said to her
she tested me
by listening
so hard I heard**

15.

**small night noises
raindrops on the canvas
wakes me to evening**

16.

**I wanted more
I thought**

17.

I liken thee
to a pomegranate
bitter white pulp
around tart sweet
multitudes inside
gloss of shell

accept

my likeness
this coin
this misapprehension

18.

diamonds proffered
their glittering maybes
from the lesser archons
tribute brought

the whole world
a single thought

19.

afraid to touch
a fingertip
to your hip
I am lord
of chariots

20.

invest in birds
the orange
sunset
tells

22.

nothing more
the weir
catches fish
the slim canoe
headfirst over
I watch them
from the shore
every observation
is a tower

23.

she comes from
there she brings
the shadow of it
with her here
I shrug it
round my shoulders
lest I be cold
be old

24.
sparrow or such
I teach
to perch on her
fingertip instead

25.
my minister
for lilacs
has left his post
my minister
for long dresses
is in retreat
the wind
is very cold

26.
I cope
with myself
deepest
of all contingencies

27.
the populace
is a quiet beast
roars politely
in my undergrowth
truly I hear

them as myself

28.

**I will go up
to the house of women
highest on the hill
and let them see me
coming for once
not just instantly
suddenly be there**

29.

**there is a kind of air
trees know
how to exhale
we breathe**

**my father's harp
was hard**

30.

**to touch music
with an actual hand**

31.

**so much light
in daytime
splendor**

of the obvious

32.

**I tasted the soup
she left in the bowl
it minded me
till she came back**

33.

**mille centum
a thousand and a hundred
the virgins in my bed
in my stead**

34.

**because most men
need a woman
to be them
and a king is most men**

35.

**what I learn
from lusting I lose
from listening
or something like that**

**the danger of music
we hear
only it**

36.

**I sent a bird
to tell her,
one of the six
kinds of dove
we have in our
lands, our hands**

37.

**flutes I never
cared for
and drums annoy
sound me only
voices, one
voice at a time**

38.

**holiday in Jericho
incognito
taught me what
old people think**

about me,
I am
for them something
between an apple
and the sea
or an ivory-knife
too soft toe slice

39.
as if from Egypt
a leaf of papyrus
floats from
your hand to mine

o hand, hands
the only message

=====

=====

1.
Things wait
minds seed.

Fewer birds
this day though
snow be less.

Go argue
with the dictionary,
eclipse a trumpet
call to must,
the sweat compulsion
to renew
the self in others.
And that is true.

2.
Go argue with the priest —
he protects his laws
as the sexton protects
wooden statues in the church —

**manmade artifacts
sometimes full of grace.
But mostly night.**

**3.
I can't help
loving you the old
song says
I wonder what it
means when
it says you?
Go argue with music
go slap a soprano
bludgeon a baritone,
they'll never know
what hit them
just like you.**

**4.
Yes imperfect,
no's no better,
the world's
not a wrap yet
for all your sly
etymologies.
Man is just
a fragment of woman**

**the normative,
the yes beyond yes.**

**5.
Go argue with biology
there has to be a reason
streams at flood —
nine feet of snow
in Boston, eight
in Gloucester, five
here, what kind of
animal is this
we live in the fur of,
nervous prepositions
to its immense noun?**

**6.
Or sack the editor
who prints such
stuff as this,
gloomy gossip
of quiet morning,
the trouble with words
you have to stand
still to read**

a lot of them,
and with too
few words the
truth shows through.

7.
Remember that museum
where the statues had no clothes
but we were bundled up
none too warm against the chill?
It was another country
and the art was old —
but isn't art always
as soon as it's made,
seen, remembered?
Every glimpse
a classic, each
unforgettable triviality?

8.
You thought I was getting
somewhere
but we're still here,
as usual, the glorious,
immediate, palpable
here. Go argue

**with the angels
who led us here,
go fight with faeries
who taught us to think
in images
and learn from sleep.**

**9.
Go fight with time
because it's now,
first day of spring
and only just
the meadow
shows through the snow,
someone I love
is singing upstairs
or is she too
like me
only listening?**

20 March 2015

=====

**Ink on my finger
blood on my mind.
Am I a writer
or a fugitive
hurrying, using
all the words I
know to flee
from what I'm thinking?
Could this
also be poetry?**

20 March 2015

=====

**A white van goes by
spelling trouble. Either
it's someone I like a lot
delivering arugula or
a car full of thieves.
Appearances stick
to things, no way
to loosen the hold.
Seeing is be-
lieving alas.**

20 March 2015

= = = = =

**When I reinvent the wheel
it will go uphill
rolling all by itself**

**I will teach it that gravity
is no friend to wheels and men
Aspire upward! we will cry**

and my wheel will turn into the sky.

20 March 2015

= = = = =

Sudden rapture
of an exploding
desire, no, not a
desire an idea
it said in my head
as I came down the stairs.
Am I paradise enough
or is this still mountain?
Biography is
the weirdest weather,
the pleasant bits
are what you least
like to remember,
olim, olim, as the man
said, the man you were
when you were other.
Isnt it possible?
Isnt that what desire
secretly really means,
that we are all
every one of us re-
incarnations of the one
same person, castoff
identities now, mariners,
painters, witches, weavers,
children of Eve?

21 March 2015

=====

**An idea
that falls
into the keyboard
loses its virginity**

**language contaminates thinking —
how do language-less people think?
or is what we call thinking
only an echo of words**

rattling around inside your maybe head?

22 March 2015

LLANTO POR GARCIA LORCA

**When you mention a thing
people forget for a moment
it's just a word you're saying**

**the old road in Andalusia
is still empty.
No mule. no moon.**

22 March 2015

=====

**I tried to tell stories
but I wouldn't listen**

**the faeries took
all my plots away**

**and left me glittering stones
rubies mostly, and a few**

pearls to comfort fever.

22 March 2015

=====

**Most of the snow has melted
things have a way of waiting**

***Kairos*, the right time**

**A small vocabulary is best
like a bikini,**

**shows what you've got,
even this.**

22 March 2015

=====

(Riesenrad)

**Always again
like a ferris wheel
you see the whole city
then nothing but the faces
of people around you
which is all a city anyhow is.**

22 March 2015

= = = = =

**Why so short
these songs?
Leave room
for music.
Touch the breast.**

22 March 2015

=====

Too new to be old
though the old also
understands —
 dawn
is leftover light —
the crucial ligament
by which we run.

Over the harbor by now
four hours east of here
brightness forms

as the bird cries.

The core of what it says
is that the new is old,
no completely unfamiliar
character ever enters the story.

23 March 2015

=====

**Reverse direction
like adding musk to pheromones
or mute patchouli
that makes men dance**

**let us know all we can
what little we can hold,**

**by the spaces between things
we learn to understand.**

23 March 2015

=====

(in the tho-rangs)

**Not that the sun is late
everything happens on time
there are no mistakes in politics,
death is inevitable, relax —
I heard it on the radio
the scattered dreams men call the news.**

23 March 2015

AN EPISODE IN TOLSTOY

**Where we were standing when we fell
that is our own patch of sky up there,
look up, Knyaz Andrei, that
is the light of everything you mean,
the blue lap of God you fell up in,
your one true thought.**

23 March 2015

=====

**I remember falling
lungs bursting with light**

**we drown in air
sink through matter**

**morning is grasping
takes us into itself**

**all surface, all illusion,
only the sky is stone.**

23 March 2015

=====

**Winter is our only chance
to examine the real sky**

**other times the trees the
birds the clouds get in the way**

**so now I am posted at the window
sentrying the measureless blue.**

23 March 2015

= = = = =

**Someone very still
walks fast down the hill**

**Seeming is everything
Being is sheer mystery.**

23.III.15

ART

**Not everything is possible
at every time he said.
Sometimes the relevant Muse
is busy in another country
playing with her sisters
on the furthest island.**

23.III.15

NIGHTTHINK

Hell is the middle of the night
when the ashes of memory
stir in the body's stagnant air,
spool out through the blood of sleep
and we, suddenly awake, know
it's all wrong. But the qwrong is really
illusion, shadows, false interpretations,
what the old alchemists called *faeces*,
the shit of consciousness from which
Genius (the imagination) will lift
brightly the new day.

2.

In the Psalms we pray to be delivered
from *negotium perambulans in tenebris*
the business that walks around in the night.
hat is our fear of loss. The burn of guilt.
We dream of lost lovers when it is the real
lover we're at risk of losing: the *youth*
within, that muse, that mentor, the glorious
You that teaches you to do and make and win
and understand. *Do not grieve*, the Gita said,
for grieving is losing the moment, grieving
is turning your back on your soul. Wake into work.

24 March 2015

HAWK AND OWL

/khra.'ug.pa/

**Knowing the way
to get there,
bird on the move
sees all.**

**But do we know
what we know
if we don't
know who we
are who know it?**

24 March 2015

=====

**A new tree walked into my yard
last night, I swear it, maple, maybe
ten years old by the look of it, slim-
hipped and neat-footed in the slope
rises from the bird bath, the old one,
to the stockade fence, right there.
OI thought it was a tall stranger
when I first looked out this morning.
I may have been right. How still he stands!**

24 March 2015

=====

**Is it getting lighter
or are my eyes getting accustomed to the dark?
Whose side are you on?**

25 March 2015

THE DAY OF YES

**She said to the angel
assenting
to the least obvious
embodiment**

**from above
to make below
inside herself
a while**

then give everything away.

25 March 2015

=====

**For all who see sunset
how many see dawn?
No wonder grief
is our usual measure
and hope a pale patient
with an unknown disease.**

25 March 2015

=====

**Lift the pyramid
and hope to find
the other mind
we had when we began**

**before all the gods and lilacs
wen the rain was language enough
and the moon came down and down.**

25 March 2015

=====

**Light-hearted are we
like a tree on fire?
A lighthouse on an eyot,
no ship to warn.
The ocean needs us
to complete its work,
sandbars with seals on them.
We ask a lot of water,
and the sun roars.**

25 March 2015

MEASURE

**Number of life
number of wool,
what is the lifeline
of standing still?**

**All those reticulations
of your old fugue
pale ankles
vanishing into the woods.**

25 March 2015

=====

**Even before leaves
color is coming back
to the forest itself.
Sun in the trees.**

25 March 2015

=====

**Climbing up wood
that's all this is,
stairs as if stars above
to get there at last
and still come home.**

25 March 2015

= = = = =

As if we were near enough to
what is it that people do
when the air between them
disappears and there is nothing
but them themselves out there

or in here, what is that called,
the weird haptological rendition
of one self in or on or at another?
We often know what to do at that
precise moment, and do it, but
what is it that we do? I struggle
to understand what my body knows
perfectly well. And yours does too.

25 March 2015

THE USES OF HISTORY

Not knowing what year it is
you can't know the name
of the president's wife—
only one was a bachelor
though I wonder what he thought
in the long Washigton summers
when language sweats and air
conditioning has not been invented.

So learn the sequences of time,
the grid of history and mop your brow.
A little breeze stirs the organdy—
hot as it is it still is moving.
Marry me he whispers to the rosebush
only a wife will keep the war away.

25 March 2015

= = = = =

The seductive resultant
or what weather leaves—
oak tree's womb
and dead man's come
sprout the springtime
no one heeds, Water
is our root, any thicker
thing gives bad dreams.
All about numbers, white
civic domes, wrong names.
A horse is said to be lathered,
a man exhausted. We all
do the Lady's work. Oak gall,
limbic system, sympathetic
ink. Many of these words
are also wrong. Help me
to know witchcraft as it comes,
teach me the spells that make
all things exactly what they are.

25 March 2015

THREE SOLEMN ETUDES

Say it once.
If you say it twice
it isn't really said at all.

*

Picture the weary dragon
shuffling around
breathing his fire back in.
Trees shiver with relief.
The girls to be sacrificed
scamper home. It's over.
Peace between man and myth.

*

The Sanhedrin as usual
couldnt decide. One spoke:
religion is not about hair and hats
but putting G-d in the heart
and keeping G-d there. Others
agreed, But one demurred:
we need hair too—which of us
has a heart big enough to hold G-d in?

25 March 2015

=====

Though I'm usually good at titles
I still call myself me. Is this
humility or just not really trying?
If I thought about it, thought it out,
I could be Tall oak tree on your lawn.

25 March 2015

=====

Careful casting
the head of as they say
Cæsar but which one

so careful the thingly
how loose the name

There are so many rulers
does it matter?
Slaves bent laboring
and soldiers died—

but we all elect them now
whereas of old
they trusted the choosing
to drunken legionnaires.

26 March 2015

=====

Counting eleven
by twelves
mist thick in the trees
thinner on the road
as if. I don't know
as if what. Things
connect with things
things know their place.
Until lava rolls
or storm wind comes,
sea rise, landslide fall.
Me, I'm afraid of everything.

26 March 2015

=====

Find a way
to tolerate the distance—
a glass of smoke
a woman from some island
sitting soft on concrete
looking up at me. How wise
the body is! Once
I read a book, it was an arrow
went through my heart
but left it beating, better.

26 March 2015

=====

I couldn't see what it said
her fuchsia scarf on my bare knees
saw Donegal in summering only
gorse lanes around Falcarraigh
walk to town and soon same home.

The television set took care of me
it was always like that, the mud
season between snow and flower
one has a taste for all such things,
liminal, midnight, side effects,

because nobody really could think
what you were saying, beauty of it
that the sound summed up the sense
and hummed it back — O word , please matter!
— but light went out, screen lit up

and there was Tami Mauriello in the basement
lame ercules said too god-damned careless on TV
and the fight was over *but I remembered*
that's what I mean when I see

do you really want all that back
subway gardenias and pole-dancing
of course not, it's the drug speaking
that we call oxygen — neutral,

flag of Barbados, Neptune's fork—
some things we can
but dare not live without.

Lie about. Nothing holds
these things together
but *heart* which is the secret
name of music anything is.
To hear is to hold. Hold me
on the phone, the teasing Skype
that says Don't touch. Tell me
whatever, the point is listening,
the set is off but seeing is still on.

It's all a rhapsody, he reasoned,
a gush of pure hearing rinsing clean
a world bent on meaning — meaning
is money, prose is profit — glass
shatters when you think of it, careful
where you sit or steps, even silence
doesn't stop the singing, do you.

27 March 2015

=====

Get through another day
without being bad
whatever that means at
this time of year,
a signal slipped past,
a word taken all too
literally, call the police—
we still need truth no matter who,
the orchestration of divine idea
left to minimalists at harpsichords
I want nmy mama, I want the shimmer
without gross unloaded weight,
the midnight freight hoots down my valley,
yes, you, queen river with your bifid stream—
Dutch as angleworm and alewife
and will spring never come? Crocus
spotted by a neighbor lawn, Christ,
it's Palm Sunday and not snowing—
call that a summer if you dare,
some balding high school prof
is always counting numbers or something
the more you write the more your hair falls out—
how big the world is is my only hope.

27 March 2015

=====

**Travel killed Balzac.
Safe at home he could have
gone on forever writing. But no —
he had to go get married.
To Berdichev of all places. No,
marry the girl next door or the next
woman who comes to the door.
Marriage strengthens but weddings kill.
Abide, and thrive!**

27 March 2015

=====

**I want a tower
not too tall,
like Yeats's in Ballylee —
steep stone steps up
to where I would be
if I lived in a tower
never come down.**

27 March 2015

=====

**Mostly water
we and it.
The rest of us
is other mystery
and it.**

***The crystals.*
Wet and dry, the slow
understanding
we are.**

28 March 2015

=====

**Some light has longer arms.
Women in the dusky fields
one more thing to analyze,
exudates of work, what's lost
as they bend to cull,
the ancient way — the labor.**

**Men painters painted them
gleaners, gatherers,
all sculotural in the middle
distance, romantic, women
working while ... what is
this painting stuff, this poetry?**

28 March 2015

=====

**Abandoning caution
I opened my mouth—
big mistake.
Language as suicide.
Silence makes sense
even of Auschwitz maybe.**

28 March 2015

=====

**Nervous nattering
and I'm alone —
hermit, hermetic.
O my Sabbath last all week.**

28 March 2015

=====

**Yes of course it happens the snow
and everything else no accounting for fate
light keeps on smiling desire is a door
they all come in. Breakfast knows you.
Then the curtains start to shimmer
wind is most of the news from the south
how long before green and easy answers?**

28 March 2015

=====

**Sadness of Saturday
joggers leaping past
my window in March snow.**

**2.
They work all week in money
they come upstate to weekend homes
and run opur roads on weekend mornings
noisy men seeming to enjoy.**

28 March 2015

HOME FIELD ADVANTAGE

Someone comes through the door
but I know who you are
we are going to be an argument
about the sun and the moon
or the clouds over Narrowsburg
and whether there really was a year
called 1947 and the dog died.

Experience teaches it said over the archway
but who does the learning underneath?
Is it legitimate to go on forever?
Questions like these illuminate our spat.
It is always about people, no matter
how many references to reality or Ibn Arabi,
just about people. And who do you think you are?

29 March 2015

=====

**I'm tired of believers,
especially that one in the mirror
waiting for miracles.
Someday he wants to kneel down
on the marble step and believe the stone.
But the glass is snickering quietly.**

29 March 2015

SUNSHINE

**Rapturous evidence of the real,
jogger on an empty road.**

29.iii.15

PROBLEM

If one car travelling east at 68 mph and a second car northwest at 57 mph arrive at an intersection at the same time which of the drivers will have been listening for 10 minutes to Elgar's *From the South*, on internet radio, with all the windows open?

29 March 2015

BUT

**Math means measure
mathom means treasure.**

29.III.15

=====

**I am the Old English word for nightingale
but don't deserve it. The closest I can come
is the Old High German for Roman fountain in the forest
or on some days the Armenian word for holy
that sounds like an old man drinking soup
(lamb bones and mustard greens in milk).**

29 March 2015

VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE

**Never remember never forget
let it all take care of itself
like food on an endless buffet
take what you need or leave it.
Be free of what they think of you.**

29 March 2015

=====

**O for a day of mere velleities
logs burnt down to smoldering quietly
spring freshets eased. Philosophy
is made of such as these. A piece of bread
or we could be secular and call it toast,
no one would be embarrassed then
by hints of theology and tabernacle.
Just toast. Gluten-free. No butter.**

29 March 2015

= = = = =

**They love me only half the day
until the butterflies come out and then
all thought of me disperses on sulfur wings
the way an open door forgets its house.**

29 March 2015

=====

**The Commander of the Unfaithful
has sailed off into Nothingness.
I wish I could get to see his face
when he gets to see what Nothing's like.**

**29 March 2015
*as if in mem. of C.Hitchens***

כִּלִּי

**I can no longer see
the little marks the Massoretes
made beneath the consonants.
You'll have to be my vowels now—
pronounce me!**

29 March 2015

PALM SUNDAY

**Why did they wave leaves, wave fronds?
What is some green thing to a Glory Man?
When we got them in the springtime church
the leaves were dry and yellow and split in strips
we took these home and made our crosses
stuck oin mirrors or hutches to last the year
like Irishmen worshipping Saint Bri'id
without exactly knowing it. Why palms?
From desert the joy of leaf in show of air
to sign aloud what we don't know how to say?
Someone or something more than human
has come into our city. Even the leaves
and trees and bushes learn to speak**

.

29 March 2015

=====

**If you're planning on dying
anytime soon better start
learning Russian now.
Or Polish, any Slavic language
will work as well, but maybe
more books in Russian,
I don't know, wait, this
doesn't match the register
of this story. What story,
I didn't know there was one
or is one. And no, I'm not,
planning on dying I mean,
what has that got to do with
Russian? It's a hard language
to learn, that's all. Why not
Japanese or Korean or Thai?
As you say, why not indeed.**

29 March 2015

=====

**Walking to the middle of the night
holding a lily exposing its meaning
petal by petal to the waxing moon—
you call that sort of thing wonderful?**

**I do, and when you get there I get there,
it's like the silence in heaven we read
about in the Bible, you must remember that,
suddenly a real taste in your mouth**

**after all those words? Pay attention to me
the lily says, I have been waiting
inside myself my whole life long
for this moment. Or you. Or the moon.**

29/30 March 2015

=====

**Not many remember
how close we are to the sea.**

**It comes to us, sidles through the forest,
corrodes the iron rails beneath the trains.**

**It mothered us and hungers for us still,
wants to feel our salt suck up her own,**

**the red we make out of all her green.
When the moon is high you feel her ride.**

29/30 March 2015

=====

**You never want
to be on my side,
interesting—**

**I always have to watch
you over there, across
the room, and sometimes**

**you make signs
or movements
I know how to read**

**and then I lose you
into smoke and
laughing crowd.**

**But I can wait,
get used to this.
You're worth it**

even if you're not too sure.

29/30 March 2015

=====

**Everybody just had a baby
she said, implying I'm not sure what
maybe cancel trip to Europe or don't
expect many dinner invitations—
OK by me. My deipnophobia
is out of control. The landscape
seems full of noisy domesticity,
you need a visa to visit the bathroom
and everybody says omigod all the time.**

30 March 2015

= = = = =

**Outraged Lilliputians
nip at my heels
because I stink of the sea
piracy the isles
of elsewhere.
I scare them to life.
Hearing them howl
makes me feel
much better about
myself and everything.**

30 March 2015
Call this "The Delusionist"

=====

**Spring snow
won't last
does matter
wakes the world
white again
nobody listening.**

30 March 2015

EVERYTHING IS PRECIOUS

**Everythis—
this light snow now
may be the last
snow of winter, last
snow of your life.**

30 March 2015

=====

**Suddenly looking at my
notebooks lined up against the wall
I realized that if I wrote even one
more poem something would
happen to the world. Maybe
even something good.
Anyhow this is it.**

30 March 2015

=====

**I could be
this minute dead,
toys in the sandbox
left behind**

**for you to put
away or give
to someone, little
red shovel
I dig earth with,
little tin pail
I fill with words
until there were no more.**

31 March 2015
(dreamt as such)

=====

**Even the silences were gone
packed like sugar cubes
on the steep air
or like glazed tesserae
(tiles) from a Greek
mosaic showing God
or gods in golden heaven
their faces so like ours
we might almost be.**

31 March 2015

= = = = =

**Not morbidities
but liberties,
things taken
to their conclusion
at rest now
like trees
uncountably
many in dense
woods also once
elsewhere arising.**

31 March 2015

=====

**A kind of laughter
filtering through cloud —
Holy Week upon us
and all that to happen
all over again.
All we do is put the silence in.**

31 March 2015

=====

**As they grow older
the vision clears
the breed of clouds
you only see in spring
hunkers over the bare
treetops waiting for sun**

to engross them with green.

31 March 2015

SPECIMENS OF CHRISTIAN ART

**Before a triptych
Virgin in the middle
John at the left, right
panel blank,
a blaze of light,
the future
which is what we really
know of God.**

31 March 2015

=====

**Always someone waiting.
And the bed is too,
endless miracle of waking,
of sleeping, it takes
your breath away
to think of it at all
a moment then gives
so much more back.**

31 March 2015

=====

**I wanted to tell you
a sentence that would
hold its hands
around your hips
and would be my hands.
Item by item
we recede
into the immense warehouse
where the mind
recruits its obsessions,
lunar lawn furniture,
maidens blue as glass.**

31 March 2015