

9-2015

sep2015

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**Rabbit rabbit
they say in Kentucky
start of a new month
but what do we say here?
The silence of every beginning,
fish joyous in the quiet deep.
City people don't know
how to say hello.**

1 September 2015

YACHT

**Sounds like a vulgar
word in the mouth of an islander.
People whose money were family
____. Then to the sea.
I like for that.**

1 September 2015

= = = = =

Who is that strange
woman up there
scorches me with her glance,

hurts the skin but turns
to air inside me,
her word as used

always new?

1 September 2015

= = = = =

**Ah if only freedom started with fall weather
not the Profession that is always beginning again
and never gets there, the weary Doctors,
the patients discharged half-cured.
But start again and know that every chip
in the marble of ignorance comes
close to revealing the Greek statue within.
Deplorable metaphor! Leave that alone,
they are gods just as they are.**

2 September 2015

= = = = =

Where does the blood come from
that runs the rink? Why can't I
decant my own joy and serve it up?
Language is a skeptic beast,
Thrusting too hard or fading too soon.
What I say floods in the sea of words —
we wear our wetsuits to stay dry.

2 September 2015

= = = = =

**A hummingbird
just looked in my window
to tell me I was right
in what I was thinking —
commitment is the answer,
commitment to the rose.**

2 September 2015

= = = = =

**To recruit you to my army
to battle no enemy
but myself — that's
why I want you to be poets.**

3 September 2015

= = = = =

**Heavy truck goes by
roses don't stir —
equanimity might be
right here paradise.**

(

3 September 2015

= = = = =

Only to be hard to be —
licit leaves, illicit flowers?
Certainly they flee
at leisure from the weather.
We all go down.
Make a song of it,
a game between the thighs
as if there were an answer
there or anywhere.

4 September 2015

= = = = =

Nature teases us with novelty
we answer with cruelty.
Yesterday the trap of dead and dying snakes
someone set out to rid nature of,
the anger, of what men (I mean men)
do. Years since I'd seen something
so pointlessly heartlessly cruel.
Among the rocks* where such persons
like to rest and hide. We too
have enemies I suppose. Or
are they just ourselves?

4 September 2015

= = = = =

Carrying wicker baskets on their heads
men and women step down to the Nile
could be any river, could be you, Beth
on Mississippi's neck or Vyt on East,
you never know, the walk so far,
pyramid so high, the mud so rich
appealing. Seldom wear shoes, payment
in onions and winter bread, music
(they call it) provided by the management.
Do the syllables suit the picture, image
of what I thought was mind? Likely not.
I hope the ordinary train is running yet.

4 September 2015

= = = = =

It's hot today
despite it is.
The usual lament
from overheated
meat.

There are circles
in the air
I think are people
walking home
from work

they call it
but nothing happens
nothing changes
as if work too
is just a breeze

sifting through our
agonies, leaving
nothing behind.
Or is it I mean am I
just too hot?

4 September 2015

= = = = =

**Save water from auspicious days —
bottle, preserve it.
Water carries time in it.**

**The alchemist decants time.
Time does all our work for us —
we just have to know
how to wait,
*and what to wait for.***

The signs. The reminds.

5 September 2015

= = = = =

No one times the circuit
of the bird, this blue affair
who used to love us more
by morning anthems of its own

or for years the living sky was dark
with thousands of icterids —
you know those, blackbirds, cowbirds,
grackles going to nest each night

in the marshes by Cruger's island.
No more. We were on ___ way then,
not now. All of them are all that time
writing a script we never learned,

need to now, scroll of sky
and what they mean, and mean
us to recognize as they cry past
or leave my bedroom window quiet today.

5 September 2015

= = = = =

**Go back to bed
and learn a Tarot card
no one has ever seen
and everyone will recognize.**

5.IX.15

= = = = =

There are days when
things are
where you expect
to find them and then not.

Things flow in time
too, not just you.
Angry engines move
placid people around.

Travel exists
as a commodity people
even take pleasure
from going.

So (as was
famously said)
it moves . I resist
as long as it can.

5 September 2015

= = = = =

Hummingbirds fewer.
The long march
has begun.
NachSüden!
A jungle waits
for them abaft.
They leave us
a glass feeder
half-full of *lucent*
sirops color of our lips.

5 September 2015

= = = = =

I am an emergency
and always is.
Help me, ignore me
like a door
to a room where all
kinds of things are stored
you don't need now.
Or ever maybe.
A door screeches
for attention, hands on,
aperture, closure,
being of use. Use me
I cry, at your peril
nobody, least of all
me, know what's inside.

5 September 2015

= = = = =

It makes me
sad to think
sometimes we
will never
sing together.
But what does
time know
of never, forever?
Those are only
notes of our sad
song, see, we were
singing all the while.

5 September 2015

= = = = =

for Steven Holl

And when the work is finally done
the glints of pure blue autumn sky
that pierce and peer and gleam
through dense leaves of trees'
innumerable green, these
very lights will pierce the opaque wall
and bring those magic lights
into the normal dark of the interior —
lights, at last not just light to see by
but light to see, integrally signifying,
that momentary pattern of (say) one
late summer afternoon made eternal.
Glimpse of the weather of heaven.

6 September 2015

HIBISCUS

**Its roses linger
a bower for bees
and transient hummingbirds,
linger pale as mouths,
ours, soft in speech,
this is as far
south as we go.
Old migrant flowers
all of us maybe
finally home.**

6 September 2015

= = = = =

I'm just like Tolstoi!
Only no title of nobility
no thousand acres
no *War and Peace*
no serfs to liberate
except all these words.
Otherwise exactly the same.

6 September 2015

= = = = =

**I'm too strange to be me anymore
there must be some faucet to turn it off,
my appetite is slow, I crave peculiar things,
sensations, textures, the fall of light.
Gaps, that's what I love, gaps. The spaces
between, they sing so loud, sometimes
they are the only words I know how to hear.**

6 September 2015

WHAT THE BUDDHA TAUGHT

**Harm nobody
help everybody
and tame your mind**

**or to put it another
way don't harm
anybody, don't do
anything wrong
and tame your mind**

**or to put it yet another
way don't be poisonous
just be virtuous
and tame your mind**

**or in other words
keep from doing wrong
do what good you can
and tame your mind**

**or as we might say
stop hurting
start helping
but whatever you**

**do, tame your mind.
In other words
tame your mind.
I mean tame your mind.**

6 September 2015

[for the KTC Labor Day party, 7.IX.15]

= = = = =

**Eyebright afterlife
all we see
belongs to we
see it**

**as a proposition,
euphrasia maybe,
one name
good as another.**

**Walking on the parapet,
this bridge, this
river no suicide
decides. The sea instead**

comes up to me.

7 September 2015

LABOR DAY

**Such strange
days we holi-**

**days of our poor
remembering**

**still, honor
Lincoln maybe**

**for one great right
among those mortal wrongs.**

7 September 2015

= = = = =

Until there is a law
permitting me
I suppose outlawry
and woodcraft, free-
masonry and green leaves
will be the fate
of most of us friends,
feel of this society.

、
7 September 2015

= = = = =

**Grumpy holiday mind.
Because they don't
holi- the right days:
Emancipation. Forgiveness.
Love One Another. Stay Home.**

7 September 2015

NOISES AT NIGHT

**Caught between—
or careful enough—
not sleepy in the tubes
that run me. Need me.**

**Wake. The middle night
is kind of rapturous—
a stone fallen from a dog's mouth,
say, or a prince
travelling incognito the subways
of some dark realm's metropolis
— all those cathedrals! —
and in the marketplace
newly-healed lepers sell bananas—
how well dapsona works,
our newish drug: therapy, rigor,
academy, ministry
of transmigration annual report.**

**See, all these things
I don't have to dream about now,
they're all outside me,
images shredded into sentences,
full of peace. That is what
religion does for you,
calm sea, steady hands**

but no sleep. A quick
small noise in my body
(you have one too) like
an animal in the woods,
a small one too, crying
out calmly, innocent
as owls, quiet, then quiet.

These sounds, are they in me,
are they in my house
or are they out
there, beyond. How big
is a body anyway,
these sounds confuse me,
can I even reach
the edges of me?
And if they are in me
what do they become out there
for (as we say) real?
Who hears them?
Isn't it so liberating
to be alone! I keep asking.

The deer don't show themselves.
The things I like to talk about
are not so interesting now.
The river. The rafters. The real.
These noises in the night, though,

they're worth imagining.

But do I even have the authority
to hear them? Should I be sleeping
like vinegar or vines or Samothrace,
all my stones still underground,
not hurting language by hearing?
Oh Mexico, you have broken
so many hearts! My lips too
are wet but it will not rain.

Nobody. But nearby a need.
Trying to tell. So many left,
I cant begin all over again
can I? Can I walk years later
just past your same window
and bother you with what I think
when you are all sole silky inside?
And can I even call it thinking,
hot night and waning moon
and images of unseen things?
Where does the boat come in
to rescue you from my imagination?
Stop reading now, right now,
before the actual animal arrives.

I don't even know what kind
it is or was or will be, its feet
are on the stairs now. Or stars.
Is it in the house or out?

What can sounds tell us of reality
I asked. Uncle Martin wasn't listening
so I told him I loved his gentle daughter
before I even ever had a chance.
She gave me a book though, one
turned into many, made me, some
I had to write myself, but still
they all were hers. Midnight again.
So many words and none speak.

2.
That tells me there is such a thing as time
and it flows around me.
I am a stone.
A stone that makes noises
inside itself that then come out,
come out as voices in the night
who'd believe them?
But you hear them, would hear me
if I recorded what they scream.
Decoded. *I heard her*
crying no one's name,
no one's one true name.
Trees put up with all our liturgies,
drama queens, articulate
anxieties so shrill— but who is
that out there, pretending to be the dark?

Noises at night — what else

have we ever had,
what else have I ever given you?
Those noises I lie there
listening to me in, then rise
to pretend to meet them there,
wherever there is that is not me,
the night is never one of us.

My body won't let me sleep —
maybe I have never slept
and all those raw unconsciousnesses
were somewhere else, some force
borrowing my drowsy notice
to display some other landscape,
people I do not know, hands
I will never touch again. People
not on the moon or glamorous Aldebaran,
just on the other side of town
and there is nothing bigger
than our town, and nobody further away.
Shuttered pool hall, shut-down bus depot,
steam room at the Y cool now,
I would be the last to remember
of course, forgive me, detail
suspiciously absent from this account,
o how I fear an image, how it lingers,
how it occupies the mind.
How it lasts. And now the noises.
The unwilling intercepts.

footsteps running, shadows of words.

**All I mean was sleep
but I always go a page too far—
an aching violin? postcard from Lapland?
I wish there were a language
I didn't know at all,
not even that it was one
or was speaking, just marks
or noises. Maybe my wish
is these noises round me, in me,
the horns of Elfland,
throb of my carotids?**

**The skull makes everything its own,
makes a brain inside to store all this,
the music and the mercy if it is
when silence starts.
Put everything away,
come play with me
it says. Am I tired enough
to be me, or do I have to
listen all night long to my
arrogant imposture of a speaking mind?
The stage is bare now—
I feel the old boards creak beneath my feet.
Time for my epilogue at last:
he steps forward,
the young boy I was, naked,**

with a coat hanger
in hand uplifted,
crying, looking for a coat that fits.

7/8 September 2015
1:02 – 2:09 A.M.

= = = = =

I asked him if any
of his people followed
the Cloud Image religion
practiced further north.

No, he said, quietly.
But I could see on his face
a beautiful puzzlement—
why would anyone wish
to practice another religion
when they had their own,
their Way, their own mistake?

8 September 2015
(dreamt)

WINDOW

**Last night a breeze,
feeble, a wheeze
of breath from old
trees, a dying
kind of breath,
all out, no in
ever again.**

8 September 2015

THE HOT DAY

**Up there the air
seems to want
to form clouds
but too hard, too hot,
pallor passes
into blue, to lose
itself in blue.**

8 September 2015

= = = = =

If there were no clouds
how would we know
to see?

Those images up there
are the original alphabets,
manuscripts, palimpsests
on which the birds
scribble their commentaries.
And if there were
no birds? No we.

8 September 2015

= = = = =

Between the cars
the air is quiet.

In those spaces
it is just as it was

a thousand years ago,
similar insects

similar birds. But
were they really?

Everything changes.
Who knows who those

birds and beasts were?
Another car goes by.

How ignorant we are.

8 September 2015

(thinking of Irby)

Ken, it takes a long time
to say goodbye. Even starting
is not easy. No handkerchief
(my red bandanna, your neatly
folded slightly yellowed cotton)
to pluck out and wave farewell.

No signs. No bells.
Empty fields and cars passing
fast. That's what we all have,
maybe that's all we know.
Fill spaces with learned guesswork,
copy mockingbird tactics to be lyrical.

sing other people's songs.
I have been trying all that, music
is so lonely. Mahler. Even Rossini
at his cheeriest accelerando
is an old jalopy disappearing up a highway
at the close of a cartoon. Maybe.
Maybe the more we know each other
the less there is to say.

That's what tears are for, I suppose,
crystal pure they are, salty, smudging
out the normal face we wear, our
expression. That expresses nothing.
But my tears don't come easy — those
fountains by our age are worn dry
by sorrows innumerable (as we are taught

to call them, though they have numbers too).
Bone dry fountain in my skull,
dry pods from the catalpa trees
alphabetting our parched lawns.

....

And all this is just about me, how I
cant rouse to speak the natural encomium
about how and who you are
after all you were. Just about me—
me is where such sorrow lives.

....

8 September 2015

= = = = =

The parsonage the retreat
the what you need
when you don't need it

the Self, that alabaster figurine
they bought at the fleamarket,
parents, and handed it to you,

voila. I bought a ring there once
gold-plated to wed me
to myself, isn't that what a wedding is,

a thing instead of a marriage?

9 September 2015

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**Natural skepticism
of the stay-at-home explorer,
John Muir of the mezzanine,
Sherpa of sofas.
Don't expect much altitude from moi.**

9 September 2015

= = = = =

What would it mean
if it had meaning?
Chessman toppled over—
bishop, queen?—
rolls from square to square
till stopped by one upright—
even a pawn. See,
we belong to the weather.

9 September 2015

= = = = =

Can't sleep can't wake
it's trying to tell me
the pain of being quiet
is eased by silence—
something like that.
A light that forgets
to go out, that can be
worse than darkness
it said. No mountains.
No birds. Just one
flickering in the sky.

9 September 2015

ESSIMUS BELIEVING THE SKY

He had once been
someone else already
now prone to be you
if you give him a chance.

Who could he be
otherwise? Essimus
is from the same country,
eyes like yours, refuses
to go to the same
church that you too reject.

The likenesses are uncanny
people say. But people
will say anything. And all
resemblances are weird.

Essimus — the name
sounds a little like pessimist
or like Latin *edimus*,
let's eat. But means
I'm not sure. Might
have *esse* in it, 'to be.'
Or *mus* might mean must
or Latin again, this
time meaning 'mouse.'

Over Essimus's head
a crow cries once, twice,
as if to tell me
the real meaning of the name
but I don't understand.
But Essimus is timid
and at the crow's call
he runs and hides.
Now we have to guess
where an Essimus would hide.

10 September 2015

= = = = =

I'll tell the story again
a different way. One
where you love me instead.
The huge power of ignorance,
Kansas, Nebraska. The blond
middle of everything.
Already yellow leaves
are falling, but even so
people still believe you.

Or me. This way
the story has softer hands
and less resistance.
The elevator door opens
we see the whole thing,
closes again. Why do they
(angels) display such
movie out-takes to us?
Why do they wipe them away?
Or is that what we do.
real work of our minds to forget?

10 September 2015

= = = = =

Storm approaches,
wind leads the way.
I love the things you say
not just to me—
I'm only part of your city,
could we exist
without each other?
Apples are ripening
right over the hill,
generous afterthoughts
of those sweet white
April blossoms back then.
The passage is wide open,
it is right for pantheists
to be a little bit afraid.
And the sun is gone too.

10 September 2015

= = = = =

A horsecart draws the dead
three centuries past, the plague
the strange thing
thinks on a cool late summer morning
hibiscus still in blossom
but most of its former customers
the hummingbirds done south.
Already. The thing about time.
History. How things smelled,
houses in war, eager diseases.
The smell of time. Beauty
of flower full of remember.

11 September 2015

A DAY ALLOWED

**to be here, I don't have to
be somewhere else, just here
this temple to Demeter
this lime tree,
Persephone.**

**We are measured
by what we remember
or the way
things met in books
welcome us with outrageous
presence
when we finally,
chancefully, meet them
again for the first time
in real life,
the Dogana,
the Black Sea,
Iron Gates,
the profile of a dear friend
with Everest on the horizon
when all the elsewhere
fold into here.**

2.

**Where I am allowed
to wake**

in a simple world
of breakfasts,
artichokes, old men drinking
coffee — how much cream they add!—
slow elevators, hip-hop
from passing convertibles.
Round Top on this horizon,
all the nice now.

I know nothing
about this place, nada,
just the place
itself all alone.

3.
What am I after here
with all these pointless specifics?
Maybe specifics
are the only things we really
have to say.

4.
Something about a tree,
a poem, a knee,
all my life.

I wear my skin for you.
I am a priest of something I'm not sure—
that's what I'm after,
to perform the cultic rites

with all the scruples at my command
and let no day pass
without a Mass

but don't pin me down,
priests are not about theology,
don't ask me Who or Whom,
a priest is about praise,

little words and cups of blood or wine
and offering itself to itself
all the time, every blessed day—

what else is there to give?
What else to give it to?

5.
Verbal solution to verbal puzzle
but the heart is pure,

Persephone loves me
even when her name is Jesus,

I am one of the shades she rules,
she is the Sky Father brings me home

Or she is the pundit who tells me why.
And why is the doorway of how.

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12 September 2015

= = = = =

These things say me.
But soon the ink
will let things sleep.

Cars are resting in the sun.
Soon they'll bring me the paper
and tell me who I am.

12 September 2015

= = = = =

Sit still. See
what taste silence
leaves in the mouth.
Nothing has to be
explained, nothing
inferred. Delius
on the radio. Or
is that too talking too?

12 September 2015

= = = = =

Bring more peaches
I haven't had even one
all summer and now
it's September.
What kind of haiku
do you people run,
my lips dry, no
sweet dribble on my chin?

12 September 2015

OBLIGATIONS

1.

Somehow being ready for the next thing
I don't think you're all that interested
in the specifics of my desire-system
that array of infamous intentions
the French call *dispositif de l'âme*.
Or if they don't, they should.

2.

Miracle-wise I'm better off in Vienna
from underground in the Capuchin Crypt
alone with the dead empress, to high
boxcar in the sky on the Giant Wheel
over the leafy Prater, the three realms
Dumézil tells us of: Zeus up there,
Poseidon all around us, and Hades
the unseen below all that exists.
And when he says Hades he means Persephone.
Or if he doesn't, he certainly should.

3.

Catching up with the Mexican poets
counts. They matter
to a new language, something growing
between us. They remind us
things have gender too. It's we
who should be free of masculine and feminine.
leave such things to the moon and the sky.
They remind us we are only voices in the night
and somebody else owns the night.
And if they don't, they should.

12 September 2015

NOWS

1.

**Being near enough
losing the calendar
but saving the day.**

2.

**this cuneiform morning
my hand gouging the sky
to make it words**

3.

**to be now is a dicey business
with memory always serving up
weird cocktails of what never was
or was it and now you have to decide
or think you do and there goes now.**

4.

**Now is a cow.
Milk her**

for all my needs.

**Drink fresh
ferment healthy
harden to cheese.**

**This milk of now
is all you need,
come lean against my cow**

**feel her warm breath.
A cow is now.
A cow allows.**

13 September 2015

= = = = =

Deep in the roots
but the root-tips
lead to the Other Side,
the invisible kingdom of the very small
where all the music is,
and lives, and seethes upward
into the hollow of our ears,
those *porches* of the soul
where we sit or stand
waiting for the door to open

14 September 2015

= = = = =

Exact as could be
a kind of mirror
listen to me
I am loose in the forest
only the fountain
knows my face,
never says who I am.
Only its own name
steadily, quietly pronouncing
aqua, aqua
while the autumn leaves sift
early down, a punctuation.

14 September 2015

= = = = =

Mess is measurement
chipmunks romp
mulot is field mouse?
hard to believe
language when it chirps from a tree,
right there, above
the neglected hummingbirdfeeder
(one word good Germanic), all
the migrations underway,
the *urge to the south*
takes over beasts with quick
metabolisms, to the south
or to sleep, hibernation,
that other Yucatan
where art sleeps too
and stones learn how to speak

15 September 2015

Measurement of stars
begins by the yard —
we have to know how
many armlengths to Alcyone
is that who I mean
or Alpha Centauri, closest
of all the candles
in what they claim is the sky.
But we know better.
The lights are all there are.

15 September 2015

= = = = =

Points of toast
from another century
not that long ago

to dip or mingle
with creamed something
chicken a la king they

used to call it
or tuna at MoMA
remember

Ernst and Walkowitz
words in the members lounge
slim slices of pimento

winter sunlight terrace
faint taste of garlic
Matisse is still alive.

15 September 2015

= = = = =

I have not even named the day
and here I am permitted to speak
my blindfold removed, the sacred
duct tape peeled off my lips ouch
it is no small thing to have words
in the mouth and spit them out
to decorate the sidewalk the way
gum leaves dark leaf shapes behind,
we walk all over art and never
know it, Frank Stella knows it, his
head in the aluminum clouds
that one day will rescue our cheap earth.

15 September 2015

S T E L L A

When I met a poet named Stella, not Swift comes to mind but the long trailing roots — mycelia? — of words. How stella is an L reflex of the sacred L/R variation that pervades so many languages and the relationships between their speakers — *So solly*, we hear the Japanese say, and they hear us playing *besu-boru* in the World Series. L and R, stella and star. Stella means star. It is the same word, or flowers from the same root. Latin, of the Italo-Celtic branch of the (imaginary) Indo-European tree, Latin has Stella. But Greek, right across the Adriatic, has Aster. star. Forget the vowels for a moment. aSTeR, STaR, STeLLa. But those roots spread wide— in India we find the goddess *Stara, the Star, the Girl of Compassion, Kindness, Playfulness, Help in Need : her name has shortened to Tara, invoked and honored by Buddhists all over the world. And in Persia she gave her name to the secretly Jewish queen Esther, eSTheR, the Hebrew way of hearing the star goddess, the deity whom other Near Eastern peoples worshipped as Ishtar or Astarte. Always a star. Stella means star. All we know directly of a star is the light it gives. A star gives light. Or as far as we can tell, a star is what it gives.

15 September 2015

= = = = =

A different (new?)
physical space
just opened in my head.

With no thought in it,
no pain, no image in it
but from the outside

it seemed (felt?) big
as a white moving van
lurching to a stop sign.

So here I am on the other side
of myself again, a clueless
ranger in my own woods.

16 September 2015

= = = = =

**When you speak about
(or to?) sensations
everything is at risk.**

**Blue eyes, brown eyes,
makes no difference,
strangers are all strange.**

**One rose catches the rising sun
one rose stands near a little wooden bridge
wind pressing in her petals.**

**Help. Memory is mutiny.
How it feels. How it means.
Terror of description.**

**Something feels different
now — let it go at that.
Resemblance is fatal.**

Metaphor is a mortal sin.

16 September 2015

= = = = =

Symbolism or mechanism?
Or is there a difference—

don't pray the rosary
while eating onions—

is superstition really
an *overstanding*

a seeing the truth of things,
all the interrelations of things

from high above
so we can see the links

the causeless causes,
onions leaching

our syllables from the sky?

17 September 2015

= = = = =

**Humidity
walks under the door
around the windowframe
down the chimney.
Water finds us
when it can.
We are swimmers
in that god's house,
the air is full of her
and when she finds us
she comes home.**

17 September 2015

= = = = =

he has seen the Spider

Cool breeze green trees
leisure hour
time to think
birthday coming
of a dead friend.

17 September 2015

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= = = = =

**Crow call
is all.**

17.IX.15

= = = = =

**Who is small enough
to slip through the keyhole**

**into the heart
the brain and all
the other weathers
we keep inside?**

**Who in the world
is small enough to be me?**

17 September 2015

= = = = =

Evasion was bishop
I was his absent priest.
Congregations don't need me
I reasoned, I only stand
in their way when they look to God.
There is no God, the bishop said,
but there is looking. And seeking
and these things are good for the soul.
There is no soul, I answered,
just people talking
to one another. He smiled:
Or keeping still.

17 September 2015

= = = = =

Knowing the alternative
dream vision: local river
runs through the heart
between the knees
the terrible music of far away
almost drowned out by conscious flow
o be me river again. where faltering swifts
stagger after insects as if the air itself
were full of obstacles
as only I am,
in misprision of grammar
custodian of someone else's language
I stand at the crossroads
and pretend to be a sign.
But I am a gallows uplifted
from which no villain sways.
The night is innocent—
only sound offends,
all sound is anger
that hate that hisses through the air.
No one on my gibbet,
no one in the pukpit,
the night leaves us one and all
alone with our remorse.

17/18 September 2015

= = = = =

**Any book you buy out of piety
is a mere gospel
of an utterly different religion.
A hand reaches out
from a page. Truth
comes and comes again.**

17/18 September 2015

= = = =

The sleek alternatives
mitten slipped off
the snow is so old
today Wyoming when
will my winter come?

It is skin at best,
at worst a moisture
between persons — language
is like that, society
or war,
 trembling
of the veil, noises even
from another room
in an empty house

Scotland over the horizon
a childish song
brings me home

where I have never been.
Autumn answers me
this week, my own time,
we live in weather,

**I make too much of it
but what else does a child know
but sky and what comes
out of it and falls and stays?**

**Taste of imperfection, feel
of someone else's clothes.
A voice call you,
a voice you almost recognize.**

18 September 2015

= = = = =

1.

The sky dried up
and blew away.
Then what did he do?
Closed eyes, closed ears
thought about grains
of earth sifting through
fingers, marble dust,
tile floors. tall clocks,
balconies, mosaics, domes.
Domes are good to think.
Especially when the sky
has gone home and left you,
him, alone. But always
there is a street, it goes
somewhere, bison made it
ancient passage through woods
and we followed. He did.
And that's where he si,
where the sad river
runs, road goes, end
of history kind of feeling,
eyes still closed.

2.

This little bit
is all there is.
Maybe the sky was
still there when he
decided to close his eyes.
Maybe it still is.
Which comes first,
the closing or the going
away? It is hard
for us, him, to remember.
He could open
his eyes right now
and decide
the order and nature
of each thing
that happens to us, to him.
But what if he's wrong?

18 September 2015

= = = = =

I want to write about the sky
because when you're looking
looking closely at the sky
you can't be responsible
for anything else. Can't do wrong
or right. Abide. Watch
the sky: it will tell you everything.
At least everything you can understand.

18 September 2015

MERCURY RETROGRADE

**A little exulting to be done
among the ferns.**

Moist shade, hot day'd.

.

**Can I forgive my hands
for what they have touched.
And not touched. Forgive**

the sky for being blue?

18 September 2015

= = = = =

Slave of the physical
all day long
at cool of evening
spirit consult.
Iced coffee on the terrace.
These thinglinesses
are spirit too, the quiet
breath of being
whoever you are.

18 September 2015

= = = = =

Soon they'll come out of the woods
shooting at me. I am not a deer
but they think I am. I talk too much
to be a man. Men talk with guns,
Sometimes I see them stir in the trees,
leaves lifted by no wind and then let fall.
I know they're coming. Life after life
this happens, before I was or will be.

18 September 2015

= = = = =

No solution.

The old get older.

**They wander around
aimlessly, do
no work. They eat.**

**They are the zombies
we read and see about
and dread. They suck
our money, our life blood,
foul our parks and living rooms
with their sad presences.
They have lost all their
skills, beauty, relevance.
They keep only their sense
of preposterous entitlement.
Easily grieved, never pleased.**

**We pay to keep them
out of sight in nursing homes
but they are everywhere,
they smell dry and sour,
they have loud voices
but their speech means nothing.**

Next week I will be eighty
so soon enough I will be
one of them. The horror.
You will see me
as them, loathe me
because I have turned into
what every single
one of you will become.
No solution. The living
dead. Once the old
had some experience to share.
Now I wonder. Everything
has been shared already.
I have given you all I ever knew
and then some. Forgive me.
Forgive me
for what we will all become.

18 / 19 September 2015

= = = = =

I don't understand heat and cold
birds chipping in the trees yes
or squirrels chiding. These
sort of make sense.

But what my skin encounters
eludes me. I mean the big
skin, not those little parts, eyes,
ears, lips, so specialized—
zones of harmonic difference.

Where did that come from,
the faraway land of proprioception,
moon maidens. princes of Saturn?

19 September 2015

= = = = =

Leave glasses on the porch
in case ghosts want to read.
All the words are in the lenses
already, spirit and matter,
pro and con. A lens is a trigger
that lets the light decide.
Declare. I call it morning
but who knows what time really
means with all its seeming,—
the light might be a lens too
but who would dare to look through it?

19 September 2015

= = = = =

I smell the shampoo
of the girl next door
showering right now.
How intimate
a quiet morning is,
soft air telling
all our secrets.
Or not all — only
the ones we put on
or wash away.
The real secrets hide deep
like tomorrow's
hours in my kitchen clock.

19 September 2015

= = = = =

**A transparent parasol,
illusion of protection—
is that what education is?**

19.IX.15

= = = = =

I can't count what counts, or only
the way Franz Kamin described
Jackson Mac Low when he,
Franz, tried to teach him,
Jackson, how to play the piano:
he counts, but not in numbers.
We should be better with pronouns
in English though we're better
a little than French. We should be better
at saying what we feel. Is zero
even a number? Can silence speak?

19 September 2015

= = = = =

Everything changes.
Everything is a faucet
that won't turn off.
I like to think a woman
is doing it, gently
taking a quick shower
in another dimension
of space-time, a moment
that lasts our eternity.
Over there she is exhausted
from her dreams,
cities and satins
stranger than hers.
The shower refreshes,
soon she'll be about
the business of her day.
But we go on forever
in the unending flow.

20 September 2015

FREUD

**I wake up wanting
to hear Freud's actual voice.**

Don't ask why.

**I'd been dreaming that right here,
across the river,
in Saugerties Freud had
given as a lecture his *Beyond
the Pleasure Principle*.
Death, that is, his *Thanatos*,**

**did he discover death
in these homely woods of ours
waiting? Waiting for me?**

**So that's why the dream,
my birthday coming,
older and older, hearer
and nearer?**

**But beyond
pleasure there is something
else besides death. Beyond
the Death Principle is
equanimity — once possessed,**

what could take it away?

**It sails into death
and out the other side.**

**And I did (thanks to You
Tube) hear his voice,
speaking English
in his English garden
I visited once
when he was far from home.**

20 September 2015

= = = = =

**Blue glass bud vase
on the window ledge
dry, empty,
but holds the whole sky.**

20 September 2015

= = = = =

I don't know who they were
they were so strong
something I'd later learn
to call beauty or desire
cloaked them, I could barely
look, barely see their faces,
just their red lips, moving,
words, smoke, laughter.
Three women at a table
in the corner of the kitchen.
It could never be my house
again, it belonged
to their strangeness,
wrongness, beauty.
I am shunted by their reality
to the margins of the world
seeking the time when
my turn too would come.

20 September 2015

ASTRONOMIA

But for all that
they were swiftly recovering—
stars are like that
snug in the huge convertible
of a nearby galaxy
they hurry their light past us
their minds on something else—
a star is always thinking elsewhere
that's how we know.
That's how they light.

20 September 2015

= = = = =

Could it be possible
the simple way
smiled understanding
once we lived in the mountains

one whole summer
and a snake!
Waterholes, stirrups,
cowcatchers

everything old.
Whiffletree!
Cauliflowers and dung
to feed the furrows,

manure, meanings.
Hard being young
in a thingly world
all the names

to memorize,
Hoe handle,
.22 shells at
beerbottle wall.

**Save me.
I need to be again
by the sea.
And it needs me.**

20 September 2015

= = = = =

Hedge thorn
glad boundaries
to live
by obstacle
imposed
or conquered
over shadow Time
the leaves
look through.

21 September 2015

= = = = =

All round the property
the sense of property.
Look, don't touch.
Sundial in the rain.
Garden globe
reflecting no one
on every side.

21 September 2015

= = = = =

**If simple as
heart stop beating
there should be
an app for that.**

21.IX.15

LLANTO

**Pause the flow
listen to Mozart
backwards till
The Middle Ages
comeback again
that never ended,
girls on palfreys
wolves at the gate.
We're still just on
the perimeter of
Something Else
that never comes.**

21 September 2015

THE KING

**sent out men
to chase the sunlight
off his lawn.**

**Sent women to sew
a silk and satin queen
for him to wed
while bishops wept,
a new kind
of human he wanted—**

**is that so much
for a king to ask,
new man new woman
and a child
born just from shadows
cast by quiet trees?**

**Enough prodding,
poking, enough of war.
The sun at midnight
gleams on his throne**

**and by its light
all creatures see.**

21 September 2015

= = = = =

**Trees hurtling by—
not a good sign.
I can't be in my house,
must be on the road**

**where trees rush past
and turn into Town.
Town is an uneasy thing,
so much and so many
all together, you can never
feel at home in Town
though trees are still here,
quiet now, laughing at me
in their ancient way.**

**21 September 2015
Red Hook**

= = = = =

So if it were only me
not the firemen at the station
and the candystripers in long-term care
the whistling produce man at the IGA—
but it really is everyone
and these meager worn-down words
have to be supper for them all
and they'll have to dream
empty dreams tonight.
O the responsibility of not keeping still.

21 September 2015

= = = = =

Waiting for the best time to change
say something different.
Expansion of oil over surfaces.
Faces of swimmers oily with moonlight.
Pool. Chains. Chairs. Carbon.
We're getting there. Any minute
your friend will get here you'd think.
And then you'll see how difference tastes.

21 September 2015

= = = = =

Spanish actions —
those minute advances
over territorial borders
by which language grows.

And yes, I am a patriot
or more truly a matriot
of language, my only
country. Come live

with me where language
can, and come again,
and live a little longer
than any one can.

22 September 2015

= = = = =

Spill the story
I need o hear it
from your pelvis
broken zipper
endless war

but not every break
is bone, fill me,
I am nothing
but openness
enduring absence

a little like you.

22 September 2015

NIGHT THOUGHTS

An animal an anger
immune system compromised
we all have wombs
we don't all know it

*

you woke hungry
and are me
go downstairs where
the lesbian shadows
jeer at your leers
your plans for dawn

*

breakfast is far away
everything you eat
is an animal
who eats you right back

*

waking hungry though is better than dream
the way dream is better than chemistry
which unhinges the sky
while you're being spelled out
by somebody's sperm
millions of years!
mitochondria of our mothers
makes us all Jewish
and it's Yom Kippur
I'm hungry I'm hungry

*

so much religion
is about not eating
how weird, the wonder
of all our notes

*

certain words I've said too many times
you know who I mean
skate key lost, broken porch step
we run away from each other a lot

*

it's terrible to be together
coffee can and flu shot
no I mean the scorpion tattoo
danger in the tail
death by touch alone

*

I'm not allowed to write
to you in particular—
you would understand
and then I wouldn't be me anymore
just some mere information,
a shoelace on a beach,
or a blue rubber flipflop
left in a Swedish café.

*

slip into the story
like a stupid old tee shirt
can't read the words on it
holes show the nipples though
it never really ends

*

everything knows too much!
even my body
knows more than I do
how dare there be hunger
or thirst, justice or sleep

*

aspirin crushed in your molars
you consider swallowing something else
to take the taste away
but where is away anyhow
and it hurts too much to heal

*

torso means twist
the stewardess's lips
console the clouds outside
I hate flying
because it always goes
elsewhere
whereas I am here

*

that's what sleep does
it spills
the story and you out of it
you're hungry you want
a hand to your mouth
but not to bite
yiu think there is a way
of eating the dark.

22/23 September 2015

= = = = =

**What is this business of telling the truth
this daytime religion?**

**In sdream there were four of them
identical in form
varying in behavior.**

**Only the upper body present
and only one of them behaved
at all —- the others mute, attentive.**

**The one who spoke declared
the ordinary lunacy of poetry
friendship logic gossip.**

**Rhen we were all silent together,
no truth anywhere for miles.**

23 September 2015

= = = = =

Recover the strange
house when I wrote such things
the bud vase the hydrangea
the bad bone.

Then hear
the silence I was hearing then,
the liberty all round the house,
only this one little lightbulb on

and it knew enough to show me
what I was thinking
or what thought me
at such an hour
when the foxes are asleep.

23 September 2015

= = = = =

Everyone's going
to be late for work
because there are roses
still on the bush.
Or because a thin
veil of cloud still
lets through the blue.
Or the roads are clear,
too clear,
like cunning salesmen
using (abusing)
the rational mind.

23 September 2015

= = = = =

Deer day again
quadruped animal of me

they used the same word
for a horse when a horse
showed up,

came on a ship
and people rode on its back
Nobody rides on a deer—
so who am I?

24 September 2015

= = = = =

**(How to be wrong:
learn a fancy word every day
and use it often
so people know
you're an uneducated babu.)**

24.IX.15

= = = = =

**The beautiful autumn day
turns out to be have Sun in it,
cool trees, blue breeze.
Cars pass, middle distance,
don't stop.**

24 September 2015

= = = = =

All the edges
come together
from variety
a sphere is formed.
Seeds inside it
rattle even when
the globe is still.
There must be a wind
inside, then.
There must be something
inside makes us move.

25 September 2015

FLOWER ARRANGEMENT

**The flowers blaze
with darkness —
green petals, green leaves
here and there a purple
blossom like a beastly
face looks out
ready to fly, cry,
flee from the congeries
in which we live.
We are mysterious flowers
from a jungle we entirely forgot.**

25 September 2015

= = = = =

In plain sight of the encyclopedia
I walked a curious shadow
on a slender line of leash
as another man might
walk a dog. The shadow
frisked a little on its silent way,
licked the calves of a passing girl
who looked at me funny-like
but didn't know what to say.
What *do* you say to
a man with a shadow on the ____
nothing is predictable anymore—
look it up if you don't believe me.

25 September 2015

= = = = =

Being early enough to be ordinary
—wind in the trees —
catching a glimpse of her
roaming the park,
the white deer of Barrytown
still a fawn almost
—is that a sacred tree
alone in the far meadow
or is every? —
when land has been owned so long
it tends to break free,
belong to everyone.
(He scribbled in moonlight
hoped he could read by day)
yes we are at the mercy of inscription
the Thing from Egypt
found the American girl
—things scribble messages in us
our limbs try to read.
Karma just means doing something
and something done always bears result.

**Things find us,
but the white fawn runs away.**

26 September 2015

= = = = =

**Tocsin. Nobody knows
what noise means.
I don't want to think
about this. I want
____ thing to think me.
Mississippi. Something
I have barely seen.
The terrible way
water looks like water.
Hudson. Humber
O moon you old lighthouse,
you still know how to mean.**

26 September 2015

= = = = =

**If I were a cloud
would you be my sky?
Don't mean to be pushy
but I've got to be somewhere.
And you're the only there there is.**

26 September 2015

= = = = =

Pur dicesti boca boca bella
on my mind for days,
why, MacCormack singing it —

boca, boca bella

stare at the pretty mouth
until you hear it speak.

Sing. You never know until.

26 September 2015

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It seems such a long time
since this month began—
a decade of my life
has ended and begun,
births and mortalities,
words shed like tears
over the unavailing,
the rocky road towards
a doubtful place all
shadows and rumors.
Steadily we talk ourselves
forward, if that is the actual
direction, the moving,
and all the while the beauty,
the wind in the trees.

26 September 2015

AUTUMN DAY

What

**should someone like you
be doing on a day like this?
Autumning. Sundaying
with Emily in green leaves
so bitter if you chew them.**

**Don't chew them.
Let the day pass
with love and learning
like all the rest.
And forgetting —
don't forget forgetting.**

27 September 2015

= = = = =

The stuff inside
that make the muscles work.
And inside them
another well-spring surely,
a quiet crystal
such as in my grandfather's time
men teased with a cat's
whisker to make the distance speak,
just learn to hear that now,
no earphone, no cat,
just purest listening.

27 September 2015

HOW OLD ARE YOU?

Old enough to know better.

Say that in numbers.

I can't count that far or so slow.

Should I guess for you?

Go ahead, they're your fingers.

I'd say you were 101.

Sounds like a class in Psychology.

Maybe you need one.

You surely do —

Why do you say that?

Oh I guess just to annoy you.

Why would you want to do that?

Because any question, by its nature, is aggression.

I never thought of that— and aren't there exceptions?

Evidently not.

27 September 2015

= = = = =

**Spendthrift joggers
using it all up,
her ponytail flying backwards
dog easy at her heels.**

27 September 2015

= = = = =

**This thing with the moon
tonight, who did it,
and why does that red
remainder up there
accuse me as it does?
I looked up through trees
and felt guilty — this
is somehow my fault.
All of me's fault. What
have I done to the moon?**

27 September 2015

= = = = =

Daring the moon to come back
white man in the sky
how we doubt

details devils us.

The broad picture should be a placid
unsmiling nineteenth century gentleman
like H. James in Sargent's portrait
all the agony inside,

a pale brow
moon uneclipsed over some trees.

28 September 2015

= = = = =

**Can that really be
the end of anything?
I have asked my last question —
or have I?**

28.IX.15

= = = = =

**If I were at the middle of something
what a thing it would be!
All middle and no roses,
cheese and no crackers,
cathedrals sans a single priest.**

28 September 2015

= = = = =

Can a headache
have a hero?
Lead the pain
across the brow
and out onto the soon
afternoon air
where breezes cure it,
dispersing the *word*
that hurts inot
the going away
that is heaven?

28 September 2015

= = = = =

**No one comes, no one goes.
There is a subway running,
hot air billows up
through ventilation shafts.
I would call this a dream
if I were sleeping.**

28.IX.15

DREAM 2:38 AM

I drink some water and rush to the post office. It is just 5:00 PM — two of the windows close as I run in, one is still open. The man kindly brings my mail.

He puts it down on the steel counter and lights incense or something. There is a weird smell, and suddenly I am very glad to have come to the mid-point of this ocean, where I know no one and no one knows me.

The mailman is going through my letters, opening some and discarding some and stacking others neatly. After a while he gives me that stack.

I leave, not certain I have everything I should have. I hear strange noises and wake in a silent house.

28/29 September 2015

= = = = =

**Meeting myself
after a long time away.
What manner of word
have I spoken?
And to whom?**

28/29 sept 2015

= = = = =

**Sometimes it's too quiet.
The interior of the body
roars. Trains go by
inside me. A cloud
bursts as I breathe.
All of these noises
come from me.
Is this true
for the world too?**

28/29 September 2015

= = = = =

A very long week iy was
and Chicago further away.
Television was no good
as usual, everything
looked the same, Car ads
and not one of them took
me anywhere. Even
Friday seemed by Monday
impossibly long ago.
Why do all those people
have the same faces?
The ships have so sails at all
why are they skipping along
on that dull grey sea?
Forgive me, ocean, it's not
your fault, it's the light,
the sky, my eyes. Not much
actually works. Only time,
death's faithful sheepdog,
nipping at our heels. Onward,
we cry, cheeks messy with tears.

29 September 2015

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I am the little boy
with the chemistry set in the cellar
I am watching the 1950
World Series on a pop-up
mirror TV in the library
of Brooklyn Prep (now
Medgar Evers College).
What else am I?
Am I lying in a small monk's cell
no books, white walls,
toilet handy, cellphone
on the floor beside
my narrow bed? I think
the past is the future again.

29 September 2015

TO THE ROSE OF SHARON BY THEPORCH

Pale flowers,
please be here
still pink in October
when I need you.
Your hummingbirds have all gone
south I suppose
but I still love you.
Only a few more days
please. See,
it's warm today, muggy,
you like that,
maybe there'll even be
some rain. Let's
stick it out together—
color is forever.

29 September 2015

= = = = =

for Laura Battle

Drafting (rafting)
into the distance
to make the moment
longer (linger)
I call on Laura
for her walnut ink.
And me too, I
am pigment mostly
maybe useful
if you are a wall
or canvas though
not if not. I color
things that happen
near me, but things
to me I mute with one
neutral tone of grey
called Irish Silence
leaned it from my mother
tears unremarked
in such pale eyes.
But I started this to praise
how great trees give
ink. I had one once

a storm blew down,
its green pebbly golfballs
scattered on the lawn,
still have some of them
dried out now, still potent
with that inmost dye,
the very stuff Sir
Richard Francis Burton
used to dark his skin with
when he crept into
forbidden Mecca—
it lasted for months.
I'll call you later,
Laura, I need
some ink that lasts
longer than the meager
meanings in my head
I think I'm thinking
when I write thigs down.

30 September 2015

= = = = =

Prayers softer than hours
available others.
How long can one word
last between friends?
Illness tends to remember
us but we not it—
doesn't even sound like English
that's why it's a song
or at least a sorrow—
here, play it on your lute,
I haven't strung mine
in four hundred years.

30 September 2015

= = = = =

**Something spoken
something held back.**

**Language is a court of law
and we without a lawyer.**

**We plead our case
and are reckoned guilty**

**every one. The words
are not deceived.**

**They know what
we really mean.**

**The judges frown
in their unbroken sleep.**

30 September 2015

[Charlotte found his text from febB2012]

WAITING IN THE TIME

Waiting is various isn't it or not
depending on a woman or the soul

quiet eighth floor salon where furs are sold
counting from Babylon the great outward

how many towns before the sea's
sleek sumptuous vocabulary

words are the edges of experience
dogfight over the moon nouns are tatters

I have done this to my mind for your sake
gutted envelope with the priest's address

no story here only a lock of hair
who had me when I was me
give yourself to someone one whole day
young women go away come back as young women

feast of Pentecost the red-silk feast of waiting
everything is waiting didn't you know

every line is an open door

myths are the mycelia of mind
go on forever every neuron more intricate
a net to catch thee in

send thee sprawling on my satin equinox
always a leaf left somewhere on the tree

you understand each minute but the hour's lost
amounting to an upstream plod

a hidden source

can't wait for waiting takes too long

there were no edges on the apple he gave her

by the time we got there it was gone

a child wakes up eager for his toys

deep secrets of human poetry

if an animal comes in the light goes out

no structure here a tune of follicles

even I a gap for some you to plummet

make all verbs transitive and then be me

waiting is made of nine parts soul

the klezmer band is sleeping in the park

shadow moves in sunny woods

broken fixture in the hallway risk

dominating cardinal bird insistent
space is space and never nay me

or noonday riot of the finches
each hour shriveleth the rest
Sarpedon a fixture of exchange

people who study money are part of the problem
they're just impoverished plutocrats at heart
they valorize the weapon of the enemy
old gold coins and chains and quiet fingertips

the world has no back to turn on you
a formless mass like fresh curd forming

I will be any shape you require
I will enter every door
I will wait outside your every window

I will be fire in your winter

I will be rain when you sow your seed

I will be night to snatch your day away

I will be shaman to concoct your dream
and you will live me ever after

not afraid of making up the truth
language by its nature is just about you

you are the part of language that knows how to answer
too many rabbits and not enough islands
with eyes neither open nor shut

two trees from one root shape a V

this is the secret index the alchemy of alchemy

light chiseled down to a hidden point
do you think light wounds the earth

you know the answer always does
bird on the roof in the house of Atreus

I woke up and was Orestes soon
peddling my story to the papers
for there were readers on the earth in those days

dense foliage around the little fountain
from these stones the great Danube flows

pray to the river to take me away
for every man wounds his mother

then I was black in Lindenwood
and never told my parents who I am
still trying to be worth the birth they gave me

fontanelles and forceps and a cry at noon
so much suffering to make one of us.

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5 February 2012 / rev'd 30 September 2015

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