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The existential obvious
seizes the sparrow
from out of the sky, seduces him
to all this scattered seed.
Survive. Survive. Last
beyond your life.

17 November 2010

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Suppose we did not eat.

Suppose we lived only as long

as the fuel born within us

lasted. Then we fell.

This is existentialism.

To recognize what it costs to be.

The sin of being.

17 November 2010

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Cancel the sun he said, the wind
is light enough he said, the wave
understands the sea or is
the understanding by water of itself
he said, there is no animal in me
no fish in the sea he said, it all
imagines itself something else
he said and that something else is me.

17 November 2010

MOSES

Moses asked What have you done
with the words? I hid them in the stone
G-d said, you must find them there—
every stone you ever see or sit on
or sprawl on with your girlfriend
that stone contains the whole message
I have sent down to you, the meaning
springs into life from the contact
with you, with your skin, with you
and all. When you touch that stone
you are listening to me. And Moses wept.

17 November 2010

listening to Bruch's oratorio

INTERVIEW WITH THE ANGEL OF POETRY

I wonder will anybody read the heartfelt, hardworked sentences I write down?

--None of your business. Your business is the writing. Not the reading, not the counting an audience, and certainly not the wondering. Enough that you write it, inscribe it into the soft wax of the world.

Wax?

--It becomes air, atmosphere. Shape the air, and once shaped, even for the moment of saying and of writing down, once shaped it stays there. here. always. Take and alter Pilate's maxim: Quod scripsi, scriptum. What I wrote, it is written. That's all you need to remember.

18 November 2010

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The clouds move, the blue
heats up. Day shapes
into worktide. Jesus
is born in Nazareth
again, in Bethlehem
in dream, dies in Latin,
dies in Greek. Daylight
is the first lie.

We pray to the Sun
that She take away
the shapes we see in sleep,
the awful chasm
that is ourselves
when we close our eyes.

18 November 2010

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What is happening to my maps?
Mildew makes new countries with its green
so I don't believe a word of what I see,
No street no city no lake. And the ocean
is pure illusion, a blue abstraction,
honey, we could walk right over to France.
Believe me, I learned language just to tell you this.

18 November 2010

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I am a pinnacle of sorts
really just a bluejay feather.
They tried to sell me doubt
but I bought a canvas
strap for my knee, some pottery
cups and one I drank from
till I became the view
from a mountain with no magpie.
G'day, sir! It is a lovely picture
but it's hanging crooked on the wall.

18 November 2010, Hudson

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Can there be an opposite to all this
 that lets the glimmer through the bakelite
 as we never used to be clever enough to say
 back when phones were all about talking
 we never used to say anything much
 wine came in glass bottles the subways
 had names not numbers, had alphabets
 spelled underground kabbalahs
 the GG to Greenpoint, the F
 to god knows where. I deplore
 nostalgia, a pain like every other
 and like no other. A pain in the yes,
 a sob in the satisfaction, a mildew
 on money. Be now, I told her,
 be a citizen of tomorrow as GE
 used to say or somebody like that,
 huge and corporate and smart
 when light bulbs still emitted heat
 and radios could keep your postum warm,
 shut up about such out of business things
 or golden youth will take you for a perisher
 as the French used to say a *p.p.h.*
 a won't-make-it-through-the-winter

[*passera pas l'hiver*]

and why would you bother since Spring is made
of a million greenish celebrations
you too have seen a million times before.
So forget about it, as per Brooklyn anthem,
nothing was as you remember it
and nothing is what it seems now to be,
the past is a lie you tell yourself,
the present is a lie other people tell you—
you don't need a screwdriver to fix that.

18/19 November 2010

RECESSIONAL

But what have I learned?

The old songs come in handy
situations change. Cold wind
through clapboard, the poor
at one another's throats, bankers
laugh—it could still be ninety years ago.

Where's my tricycle? my zeppelin
shaped of hammered tin? Mexico, my love,
it's all in Juarez with the blood oranges.

Flat-bottomed clouds over big-breasted hills
—that's all we have left. I imagine
they call it a criterion, and fight about that too.

19 November 2010

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Cold datura blossoms. Blue energy.
When you chip the mind open a little
you gather raptures from the sky
as you go slow. That's the ticket.
The Wizard of Of, who links
all words together in Spanish poems
translated for us, breast of the pebbles
make love to the hips of the soles of the feet
of the traveler of the road of the moon.
Anything can belong to anything else
but dear love do not belong to me. Me,
I'm a low-hanging cloud one day in Donegal.

19 November 2010

PEACH PITS FOR OUR MASTERS

They are hard and hard to carve.
When we get the stupid story on them
they shove them in their pockets and
so much for our latest Iliad our Sistine
Chapel our Hammerklavier. And yet
each prussic acid smelling slimy pit
we cherish from its sweet but useless
(time wastes it) fruit and squirrel away
until it's dry and yields reluctant
to our whittling burin and our fierce will.
Or whatever it is that keeps us day after
day bent over the hard stuff—it isn't even
wood—until it takes the shape we mean.
And even then we don't know what *it* does.

19 November 2010

CIRCLING THE WAGONS

Pigeons protect the sky
from upstart real estate,
their down draff spatter
rebukes clean money
mosaic sidewalks watches
the lock we strap on us
wrist by wrist to handle time
stop it in its tracks it never
works or tell it when to come
and when to go I can't
get started is the point here
all the bridges to Brooklyn
fell down a lifetime ago mine
there is no back to go to
no river and no island a dream
of pals coming to the door
what are those bundles
clutched to their chests
is it Christmas already and they
are children in sweaty clothes
and we have still not started
blue flame under kettle
a deer walked calm across the street
she knows where water runs
the fluent mineral we all need
drought or flood why can't
I ever get it right?

20 November 2010

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Unyielding Sabbath I'd love to kiss you
a deep kiss and no more, to wedding,
no fondling, just that kiss: a silent paragraph
we speak into each other's mouth.

20 November 2010

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Artichokes unfold their scales
so many keys for that one lock
and each one opens a different bride
waiting there in darkness for your touch.
All senses are the same—that is the secret.
Eating a sandwich is walking through a
gate is hearing a waterfall as daylight fades
and a train goes past, you look up
and taste a flock of crows in the sky.

20 November 2010

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New words in old pens—
it's not enough to love yourself
you have to give yourself away—

a postcard I wrote this morning
as I passed through Sonada,
Darjeeling District, West Bengal
on my way to the sidewalk
to pick up the Times. Intricately folded
clouds, sunrise, all kinds of
animals like that.

20 November 2010

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Nothing is needed. Just say it
and it will be there. Sabbath
for the sake of man, gloomy glisten
over painted windows, all light
is a seduction, every book
is instantly old. Only in darkness
can the Sabbath come. Murmur
of Christians making clumsy love
outside our building, in streets
with horns and salsa, it's a game,
darling—if you win, you're God.

20 November 2010

[A DREAM TEXT]

Sleep turns into waking
without turning a corner
the street peters out
into a road. No women
now, women live only
where there are streets.
Or if there are women
they are in these woods
invisible, palpable. I hear
them in my inner ear
like remembering a tune.

21 November 2010

[The lines in sans serif were dreamed as such just into waking.]

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Curved song
air apple
to share with friends
divide into
so many portions

but share
is the iron plowshare
that cuts the earth

dark prospect
on which we feed.

You feed, the angel said,
our breed is other
ness alone.

21 November 2010

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False meditative ekstasis
find a way around the end of it
sparkle dawnlight on fake ocean—

these are your eyes, nothing more,
the window screen wisely shimmers
like smoke in pale wind

on green leaf left on bare lilac
right at roadside unvexed
a car makes wind a leaf holds.

How could anything be false?

21 November 2010

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Handkershiver. Welcome hat. Spurulent fectose serfys spill the seeds of moorland sojourners. I billed this whose? So leav on it like a maxter, speaking gymnotes for Jesus. In whose nome all will bow.

Oncet we ole believed. And nun? Ameriprise bells cats, drafts cars, while Europeoise swoons dark men into wide armries to fight on the Plaints of Electwhere. Unlist todie! Ozbetistan and Talkradium and you'll come legless whom the bhoys will kiggle at and the girls pity with scurn. Just groin pains you sulffered but nowt like new.

So much miserty in every newspeeper, you cam't turn on the teev without hurt or leprust. Sod much pain! Sad much textum! Sor most igrance and and noon still to teach.

21 November 2010