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Strife in the library, skeletons  
erasing each other's chalk

before the bell rings and we have to be.

13 September 2010

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Nothing understood  
the rose of Sharon  
flowered steadily  
all August and September  
despite heat and cold—  
I guess all a flower  
really knows is color.  
Which puts it  
one step beyond me.

13 September 2010

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Careful trunks  
full of supposes.  
What beast could  
or carry so slight  
a burden  
                    the air  
on its back  
is heavier than this  
and the sky presses down.

13 September 2010

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I have a friend who packs so neat  
his clothes that it oppresses me—  
I want to send a black bear  
to fossick in his snug valise—  
those neatly folded ratty shirts,  
those Liberty of London silken squares—  
who are these neatniks  
with their needy ways?  
I am a lawn in need of fallen leaves,  
I sing from scatter.

13 September 2010

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Dead leaves turning  
into coins again,  
fairies nearby  
must be at play—

or praying is it,  
I never know, seems  
like prayer to me  
to shift things

into other things  
and out again  
and never stalling,  
prayer means

keep going  
till the whole morning  
quivers with seeming  
till what I see

is more than I am.

13 September 2010

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Geese yelping overhead  
or girls next door—  
I'll never know  
now silence soothes  
and how.

13 September 2010



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Nobody loves like that no more—  
he wants music to go like that,  
her tongue quivering in his mouth  
faster than he knew how to be.

13 September 2010

## KLEOPATRES CHRYSOPOIIA

Be the old remember from before  
clear the channel so the golden  
barge of the Empress comes through  
rubbing gently on the wharves  
untinged by pondweed and meek scum.  
A silken canopy shields her from the sun  
but no man can say what color that silk is.  
So in the dorsal stream she floats—  
it's always uphill when you move through water—  
with all due effort of the integers all round her  
beautiful muscular ideas who haul her  
bankwise to the place of knowing—  
for facts are not fixed in mind but course  
through mind as she does on this storied morning  
when everything around us talks endlessly  
and all we ever have to do is listen  
but at the waking of the moon  
what man can hear? So they  
who float apart are carried soft  
into the principles of knowledge by  
our striving! Strongarm aesthetics!  
Lost in the rapture of word  
all meaning forgot.

14 September 2010

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The colloquial is local  
the formal far.  
That's one way to comb your hair.

Another is to breathe sunlight in  
in winter, on a high terrace, the city  
bluish grey all round you  
and no disease dare dare.

Eyes closed face the sun  
you are a park in the city—  
you share your fantasy with millions  
and call it home.  
But what would you see if you really closed your eyes?

14 September 2010

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Flat forms in space—  
I was the king of shadows  
through the thick of time

I taught greasy string  
to breathe back at the witches,  
warm milk set out by night

to feed the fairies on my doorstep  
maybe pleases them by pure intention—  
make people happy is the only law.

And everything alive is people  
whether you can see them or not.  
Help without hope. Please without fear.

14 September 2010

## **MEXICO**

The cost of someone  
is less than the cross  
they nail him to.

Calvary moves around  
from year to year  
and changes names

The blood is the same.

14 September 2010

## TO THE CHRISTIANS

“When you give a glass  
of water to a beggar  
you give it to me,

when you execute  
a murderer, slay  
an enemy in battle

you’re killing me.”  
That is what  
the Incarnation means,

the God took human  
nature on, became it,  
took its vulnerability

for His own, the long  
beauty of our feebleness  
touched Him till we killed.

14 September 2010

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Sometimes meek angst  
is ready to declare.  
Then from the scubbed moon face  
a drift of dark comes down  
as shapely shadow. This  
instructs us. Chic horror.  
Glamor of the trembling breast.  
Hand. From cheap guitars  
so many fingers fall.  
Webbed in wonder as we are  
we have barely wit to groan.  
Silent workmen from way down South  
install intelligent neon lights  
till we are wrapped round with words,  
blue messages too fast to persuade—  
pure instruction with no substantial form!  
Fierce kiss of colors, hollow as a hand.

15 September 2010R

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In trees one  
keyhole of light  
the sun finds  
finds the eye.  
Blink back  
to find night.

15 September 2010



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Nothing happening. Anxiety  
too big and too little  
to make much sense  
of itself or that other one  
over there—the day, waiting.

15 September 2010

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Sometimes it takes the pen  
a while to remember how to write.  
I must be patient then,  
the words slow siphoned down my arm.  
Who is writing whom?  
Don't the words at times  
seem to rise up from the paper  
and the pen hurries to keep up?  
Seeming. I confess at last: seeming is being.

15 September 2010

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Who were those women who  
in my childhood taught me  
what other women were like?

Actresses in black dresses  
with mean lines to hiss—I loved  
the sleek of their control,

women who knew the score.

15 September 2010

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## DORAS CUMBLIN ERYTAXIS

it said over the door of the inn  
so I paused my footstep on the sill  
and bated. Who endures so glib  
the messiness of human speak?  
Sober in a drunken art, could this  
be a plowman or a father?  
A feather? **Weather waits**  
**for every man alive but women**  
**make their own—THE PROPRIETOR.**  
I looked up to wave at him in the sky.

16 September 2010

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How can it be long,  
song, when  
days grow shorter?

True, a blind man might not  
notice what you sing  
or fail to,  
                    silence

is punishment  
drives you on  
to begin for the first time.

16 September 2010

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Scintillate or round about  
an answer is always political  
a candle always darker than its flame

remember that, body,  
when your dumb muscles  
start to speak

don't look at yourself in some mirror and say  
how can this lump of shit mean anything  
or have anything beautiful to say?

16 September 2010

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Come back to ordinary memory—  
the bell is ringing already in your blood,  
school will never stop beginning.  
That's not a mule deer down by the trees,  
it's just a dumb old big old dog.

16 September 2010