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Make sure of the riddle
if the book decides
to be alive
    too hot
in town to
follow a thought.
Let it go, let it
come to its conclusion
or just keep going.
Not far away
I smell flowers.

29 June 2012
Kingston
MALL

People walk past me
I see their whole
lives in front of them

year after year
how they will become

I hate the arrogance
of my perceiving

Please I tell myself
be easy just love them
love them and don’t know.

29 June 2012
Kingston
Listen to the tenderly
the broken bed spring
outhouse we had to use
harrow rust kitchen
full of flies the squalid
neatness of country life.
Don’t touch anything.
Staying on the farm
like being in a museum
everything alien
interesting dangerous.
Snakes everywhere.
Girls act very odd.
Smell of whitewash
dairy wallpapered
bedrooms milk and cotton.
Who are these people
I also am? Am not.
Keep your distance
little pilgrim. A body
is such an awkward
place to be.

30 June 2012
LE PROF

Glad to make a living choosing cheeses
I orchestrate cultural paradigms, scribble
prescriptions to tell you what to read
I interview your half-conscious responses
debrief after flights of opera of movies
with no narrative nights of thick books.
I call this teaching. Training you how to live
in a whirlwind of signifiers, costly artifacts.
You pay me well enough for these services—
from time to time both of us wonder why.

30 June 2012
For a month morning meant looking at the ocean now back to staring at the trees. Seas of green jagged horizon but subtly moving. The first car comes by is a fishing boat sneaks out of the harbor. No birds yet. Seeds unmolested on the deck. A friend would tell me I’m doing nothing wrong. But what would I say if I dared to ask myself? All creatures know what manner man I am.

30 June 2012
Things in their own time
a tree of thistles
the recuperation from being

from being elsewhere and overwhelmed
from coming home in a dream

no effort just endurance
like travelers whose flight is delayed
indefinitely cancelled annulled
just stand around
thinking about things
sit sleep restless sleep waiting
is a strange word being but not quite
here half somewhere else a waiting
person has no now

and why am I waiting
now I think I’m home?

30 June 2012
A bird begins
the mind
does not relent

the beautiful pens
she gave me use
one after another

each has its own
scripture to inscribe
each one tells

a different part of
the one single
not-a-story at all

the way music breaks off
so you can hear better
what you have just heard

they run sometimes
out of ink no problem
children want to be fed
so they can outside
and play more more
till the last
word has been said.

30 June 2012
Then let the other come and speak
or speak without moving from that place
where knowing is, and sometimes says

something even I can hear, among
the almost mute interpreters
I am. “Speak for yourself”

the Indian princess said
so famously, but what of me
who have no self but listening?

Note: I console myself with this, that listening includes listing—which is both the making of lists and also giving way to inclination, velleity, appetency: desire. “Whoso list to hunt” said Wyatt. A self defines itself by desire?

30 June 2012
L’OISEAU BLEU

(Y and M are walking through the woods.)

Y: Listen to the bluebird!

M: They don’t sing.

Y: This one does.

M: Then it’s not a bluebird.

Y: Just listen to it!

M: I hear it but it’s something else.

Y: You always want it to e something else.

M: It is something else.

Y: But it’s right now, right there, don’t you see it?

M: Where is it?
Y: Over there, on the lowest branch, the apple tree.

M: I don’t see any apples.

Y: It’s not time for them, but it’s an apple tree.

M: I’ll take your word for it.

Y: Thank you! Now you can see the bird.

M: I see something but it isn’t blue.

Y: It is a bluebird, though. It depends on the light whether you can actually see the blue. You can see the red breast though.

M: Why isn’t it a robin?

Y: A robin is a bigger bird.

M: This one looks big to me.

Y: No, it’s small. It’s a bluebird.

M: So you can see the blue?

Y: I saw it when it was landing.
M: But not now?

Y: No, but if you wait you’ll see it fly.

M: I hate waiting.

Y: It’s not really waiting, we’re just standing here.

M: How long do they sit?

Y: He’ll fly any minute now. When it catches the sunlight, you’ll see blue.

M: I don’t hear it though. It’s just sitting there.

Y: You heard it before.

M: I heard something.

Y: That was it.

M: Maybe it was a robin, or some other bird, nearby, but somewhere else. Not here.

Y: You always want it to be somewhere else.

M: So, you always want everything to be here.
Y: And it is, mostly it is, like the bluebird here.

M: Then why are you always wanting to go places, Spain, Scotland, wherever?

Y: When I go there, everywhere is here enough for me.

30 June 2012
Choose a difference.
Empty it. Sparrows on the sidewalk
each one such a different pattern
Design. For instance.
Your shoes, your barely comfortable
expensive shoes. We live here
there is nowhere else.
Culture comes on Sunday
on Tuesday we wrap fish in it.
Culture absorbs whatever we give it
and makes us do it.
Linger by the wall.
Try to be a car for a change.
Or just stand there.
Pretend to be a shadow.

30 June 2012
But I could have said something but who. And even if they did I would not listen to the answer. Because I am stupid on principle like a man in a bathtub trying to see in the soapscum around him traces of all the places he’d been since the last bath, the smell of all the people he had met, been with, argued with, bored and been bored by, made love with, even loved.. Instead of standing at the door at dawn saying come in to the day. No one was yesterday, the water is just water, nothing sticks. They don’t remember you either. Let it all go down the drain. And then see what remains.

30 June 2012