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Wandering near enough to the answer  
you hear birds singing in the shadow woods  
thrushes you think, no, thrashers you think  
but they are solitaires, aren't they, so  
why now this whole flock of song?

There must be difference. There must be skin  
under all your clothes. A song  
is something that feels, reacts to change,  
weather, touch, it exhibits the property  
biology calls irritability, means  
reacts to stimuli. Means alive.  
I am after all a callous lover—  
if you can't feel me it must be your fault.

19 December 2010

= = = = =

It doesn't have to be any special size  
it is a book. It holds the mind  
captive for a while and leaves a scar behind  
you're often proud to wear, it wrinkles  
the smooth infancy of thought.  
Readers must all be masochists  
but poetry on the other hand comes  
bookless through the harmless air,  
stings a little going in but leaves  
calm luminous waters lucid after.  
A perplexity how that gentle think  
can bear a whole live bird and let it call.

19 December 2010

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The Marquis de Sod  
lies buried here  
beneath a rough-hewn stone  
granite from Vermont  
most likely with no  
name on it and here  
he lies undone  
a famous putrefact, rebel,  
reveler, criminal, obese.  
His vilest sin was to stop.  
See what comes of letting go?

19 December 2010

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I'll count myself once  
and count you twice  
there's yellow silk in your hair  
and you come from the sea  
the ocean's always present  
in our conversation,  
no wonder wherever I go  
with you I'm always home.

19 December 2010

SLATE. SHALE. ARDOISE.

A white mark on a greyblack stone  
later a pink stroke or a blue  
to show you the shape of the cosmos  
as I read it with my Only Body Now.

Three color-like traits are enough to tell  
when people are smart you've got to be simple

ample. Ocean is other,  
Mercuric oxide earlier,

the dream

Chuang-tse never dreamt

is left for you—

be a good schoolchild  
Write That Dream  
down on your slate—

here is the stone

and here's some chalk

and here's a kiss on your sacred wrist.

And when you're done we'll lick it clean  
and swallow taste everything you know

and then some. Spirits and photography,  
memory and hope,

grow up in a single instant,  
you have become.

Power of color. Third power of stone.

20 December 2010

## CHRISTMAS MANIFESTO

The earliest Christian prayer:

φως αυγει, the Light increases,

He is our Solstice, He is the light of the world.

Now think of prisms

segregating daylight—

doesn't it seem that the band of blue

stretched across the white paper

is truer than the naked light itself,

the child more than the mother?

Christ was the light of the world

but what color did he become

or leave behind Him to be with us?

He had no father. Only mother

and her son. A color.

Or we are the father

of what we must become.

Christians, be Mary,

give birth to light.

Pagans, be the shattered

light itself and love



all that it colors  
and all that it shows.

Colored lights on Christmas trees:  
in heathen speech His gospel told.

20 December 2010

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Crows know what we're thinking.

We know what they're calling.

Make both of these sentences true.

20.XII.10

*sTong.ra*

Empty fence  
fence around an empty field  
field with no floor

an empty room  
inside no house

there are winds  
and there are shapes

we live by contours  
we love by shadows still  
the body is the shadow of a will

But love these shells  
the beautiful outlines we flaunt  
around our lame meat

The body is hollow and all the dark  
that bleeds and surgeons work upon  
is afterthought and guesswork and despair  
for we are none of that,  
imaginary organs in a thicket of nerves  
never lose the lissome of your will.

21 December 2010

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Catchphrase intermittent  
Salisbury Turnpike salsify  
what's a market  
rich towns have farmers' markets  
poor towns have supermarkets  
I am a vegetarian now  
I have forgotten blood.

Meat was a book I used to read.

Eat what little whom I can,  
they all have names  
they all have faces

or a Romeo aloft—  
people fall in love  
for motives their imagery betrays.

See, now I've spilled some  
ink over Christmas  
to make the kind of love  
saying what never has to be said.

First lamp of architecture:  
need-free exuberance of thrust.

Was Ruskin a Christian?

A Christian is not someone who believes in Christ

a Christian is someone Christ redeemed,

lives in a world shaped by the grace of that pain.

21 December 2010

## MADRUGADA

Knowing ore is about the need to know  
or take or touch or be absolute  
a new arranger with bakelite spoon  
vintage commercials unsheathed in sleep  
destabilize the human ordinary link  
because too many oranges in Juarez  
all that sweetness piled up on carts  
to block out the barren hill no eagles  
we tell you lies because we understand  
a leaf off an ordinary tree will cover it  
things have come to pay their dues  
battleship grey or are they Christians  
pretty scatter rugs tossed around the sky  
like blue October destitute of logic  
but with shapely legs dawn of a touch  
we knew us like gardens with no speaking  
try to listen and be hard a Goethe moment  
arrives in local sciences when they dare  
look up from their grant applications  
to see the world in which the world  
keeps happening dawn of thinking  
no lucid signs just guesses in the woods  
things join us at the hip and laugh at love  
prophecy is a fox in the shadows a mesa  
breaks the blue sky the stones at midnight

scoot along the sand truckstop monologue  
broke the night in Needles broke the border  
no one needs you in the sky be here  
on the contrary an eagle over a frontier  
what does anybody understand of where they are  
what more can a hammer do but fall  
strike the water pound silver nails into the stream  
the sky's a very special kind of skin.

22 December 2010

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You meet someone and it all changes  
now you are left alone to think  
the shape of a lip tells more than the word it says.

22.XII.10



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After play the sky  
tastes like you  
I touch your fence  
I'm bad at boundaries  
at every moment  
the Djinn stand before you  
at every moment  
you have three wishes.  
Only first I need to know  
why they call this absence blue.

22 December 2010

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Persimmon parchment with blue letters on it  
probably oxidized silver stately alphabet  
but can you read it? it is a gospel  
for an unknown god, all the commandments  
are precisely the same as our own desires  
you join this religion by being born  
baptism is your first breath.

22 December 2010

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Spend the day learning  
about snails of the British Isles.  
Do not eat them.  
Read a novel featuring snails.  
Breathe the internet.

22.XII.10

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There used to be a time  
when I had time for time

but no space for space  
now I have a little space

and no time at all.  
Like all Germans

Einstein was a betting man  
and gambled my life away.

22 December 2010