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But are they waiting?

There are tunes

and there are times.

The lover's task

brings them together.

A lover with a task

is called an artist.

Without one a

beast on the prowl.

This not be true

yet on me proved

I never writ.

7 April 2010

LOGIC

Logic is a dust
that sifts from old poetry,
Greek guesswork, Nile memories,
logic is not an operation
it is submission

let the words tell you
what the words mean.

7 April 2010

106.

No real animals are shown in this picture

on this picture of a cup and saucer there is no cup no saucer

the shadow of her body on the sand

is not a shadow the sand is paper

the words the woman walking on Rye Beach

are not a woman and no water's near

you reach out to her in your hungry mind

you get married your children play in the sand

then another word comes along

dressed like a man in a fishing boat

he's looking for both of you then just for you

a wave comes from no sea and wipes it all out.

7 April 2010

107.

So suppose the name is enough

the ink-sac hides the squid

the blue flowers hide the sky

day by day deeper in their own grass

by hot weather only the name will last

a name is a trigger without a gun

a helpless star caught without its night

working elephant with no teak log to lift

but the sun is full on the April squills

right now a name is to take shelter in.

8 April 2010

WHAT THE RIVER SAID

Overturn the evidence
if you really want to see
it wants to lift you
from the ironwork of any bridge
into the crow-spattered cloud
low over little cities

the geology is always trying to come through
biding its time but making you dream—
here we lie gasping all night
our bivalve two-way estuary dreams
the Hudson flows north and south,
what can we do, Egypt in our heads

languages and laps, stale cuneiform
but a 3000 year old goose still vivid
passing on a painted wall—
that's what Egypt tells us first:
language is walking by in front of us,
we are perpendicular to how language goes,

language goes past us, never faces us,
on its way from one mouth to another,
our mother to our child,
our mouths too wet and soft
to hold the meanings long
trying to lisp it as it passes by.

8 April 2010

108.

Everything flashes purest skin

a dome of fire over a water room

we are safe in every other us

Romans knew how to slice the sky

hollow segments where alphabets could flock

or listen to what sense the thunder spoke

then they stopped listening and grew and died

we could stay everlasting children in the house of hear

interpret everything and do nothing

that's the crystal glass beside the living fountain

read deeply till you're wet

there is no future that's all you need to know

what is not here is nowhere

now lie back and close your eyes and read the birds.

9 April 2010

= = = = =

The size of something

is something else.

Are you ready

for the albatross,

it's always up there

an opportunity

you lose by grasping,

something you misunderstand

by understanding.

Take off your shirt

it's seafowl time,

if those aren't wings

what are they,

your skin so white

your eyes so wild?

Blindness is no cure
for having seen too much.

9 April 2010

109.

A day with nothing to say

Is a beautiful day

A sky with room for a sun in it

an ear open to what the trees say

for everything is listening

the way a finger listens quietly to its gold ring

we are lords and ladies of the jungle

sunlight deep in grass

slow enunciation soft-shoe poetry

I shuffle behind you up the stairs

eyes doing what body wants to

as if seeing were somehow different from being

and the act of seeing you remotes you from my touch

and what has touch itself got to do with being

all illusion one sense blunder leading to another

the you of you can't be captured by the senses

they try to reach but fall through what they touch

hurting the beauty they try to perceive

something like that is the body's religion

a deep shy shining Sabbath of the senses.

10 April 2010

OUTSIDE A DESERT MONASTERY

Exhausted well

you bend to drink

I study your shadow

as it folds to bring down

your mouth to the lost

water now suddenly

it is full, the well,

your mouth and even

your shadow fills

your whole body

coming towards mine

to drink from my mouth.

10 April 2010

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We'll probably get there
but by the time we do
the red clay road will be asphalt
and even the trees will be brand new

Nothing waits for us where were
or I am all that's left on earth
of Damascus and the summer rain
the red pigs running all around

And yesterday the little road I knew
from Goshen to Monroe
is six lane highway now
I felt like the earth herself

was pulling a fast one on me
turning everything there was
into a weird joke where all
things are new except me.

11 April 2010

= = = = =

New, old - what do I know
about numbers? I hugged
a mathematician and felt
suddenly sweep through my chest
a glittering tide of strangeness
hot flowers of cold metal,
clock tick, bright antimony.

11 April 2010

= = = = =

Man wearing men's clothing—

I see a lot of that where we live

I think they're trying to prove something

it eludes me I look at the sky

too often it seems a better message

than what people send my monitor

when I look down the men are there again

camouflage tattooed all over their skin.

11 April 2010

POLKA DOTS

So many polka dots waiting for you
were poker-dots once black burn marks
in pale wood from when we sat
around the fire making patterns on slats
hot irons to make art we called it
in the vernacular of anything you do
in this medium looks good doesn't it
like silverpoint drawing or striptease.
One way or another you make your mark
then wonder all your life why
they call this quiet thing you do a dance.

11 April 2010

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Opening the door is somewhere else
before it's there. I stand
on the doorsill watching sea come
lap at my bent toes. A cormorant
flies by low. I am that bird.

I say I am you, cormorant, where
are we flying to now?

But already he's gone, or I'm gone,
screwed into the sky. Might
as well close the door, it's cold in here.

11 April 2010

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Or I'll be able to take care of you.

Fill the pen with honey, light the lamp,

set a cat on the windowsill and hope for the best.

The lady who knows what you really mean

will come strolling down the road in half an hour

you hope the light will be just right just then

she'll be able to read the woodwork on your house

the sober middle-aged paint job on the walls

the lady who knows what you mean has never seen

where you really live, the way you see the moon all the time

but have never been there. Not even once, not even

when you were a little boy and she was all you wanted.

11 April 2010

= = = = =

Ghosts have been showing up
lately in our house. Pale ones
on the right side. They don't threaten,
don't frighten, just surprise.

As if there only message was Notice Me
there is more here than meets the eye.

I appear and disappear to make you doubt
your senses. But not me, not continuity.

11 April 2010

110.

Will we ever catch up with now?

the hardest hour always receding

I have spent so many years pursuing

after the last sweet empty summer

so many Popes ago on island littoral

nothing to do but sea and walk around and want

wanting is such a good academy

where the sages of old sit in a young man's head

drawing with deep soft lines the map of his desires

for my a man's map shall you know him

cartography in these high places

if you would be a king or queen you need a piece of paper

blank as Monday long after Pentecost

when there is nothing left to do but be

then on that paper sketch your kingdom's coasts

and leave it for your life-force to fill in

the little animal who lives inside you

you little animal who lives inside the soul.

12 April 2010