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a while since seen—
what will it mean today
a travel?
   Scout
scraping skin off on oaks
sneaking glimpses
of to go.
   Simple train.
A track is so go-ish
and you’re gone,
servant of the moon.

And there you were
on her bright landing strip
when you woke out,
a little stifling —no atmosphere—
but lots of fun.

Because back in the days
before oxygen
— the built-in politics of living systems
like ours, all parliament and fight—
we could have handled mindfully
all such wanton destinations.
But now you’re on your own,
bright girl in a no town.
Sometimes I wonder what you see in me.

17 January 2009
What time is it another place
give me matter—a rhomboid feeling
then a cylinder hat for the man you think
hasn’t spoken for thirty years
stands in the corner but soup vanishes
nearby him so you suppose at last
be must be alive. But who isn’t?
Then you remember the answer and weep.

17 January 2009
THE WAY

Could I find my way home
past St Mary’s Seminary
where the blue flagon of air
pours out for the whole city.

Evident angels. I need
to know where love is
coming from and how it fell
among us, in love

with itself in such a way
that we can lift it gently
from the fur of nursing
mother cats and raise it
to the far-off moon.
Or is it closer than we think,
just at the end of the song,
under the lip of a lily?

17 January 2009
Looking through winter at the cemetery
gives me an idea. A fence around the dead.
We are different, somehow, people.
But we don’t understand how.
Study the difference – the most obvious
evidence is love. That one can say and
mean it I love Mahler or I love Point Reyes
when the fog comes in and the seals bark.

17 January 2009
You left me by the side of the road—
but it’s my side

and my road
and everyone who goes it has to deal with me

or be me, even, as I were content at last
with being,

leaving to others all the
fretting to become.

17 January 2009
[heard in/around sleep]
Cast me — or glib
to be another—
wet around the neck and hard to hold

crimson clef upon your tender staff,
milk me music, Magdalene,
the white lines and black spaces
are on the mirror’s other flank

by which One stands who watches us
in the terrible silence of pure witnessing.

17 January 2009
Remembering things that are about to be
snow limns every tree
as if that’s the answer to something.
And it’s up to me to make it be.

18 January 2009
Arabic, in your underwear
learn to repeat. Speak
loud as the honeybee
talking to the flowers next summer—
snow has such a quiet now voice
trains you to listen,

    a god’s undress

*there is no sleep in heaven*
that is for us the hell of it:
non-intermittent consciousness.
Bees again, ceaseless prattle of their wings
we veer into music.
Talk to me until your bones fall off
and then we’ll see what sky we’re made of.

18 January 2009
I don’t know – does someone fall off
when the horse stops prancing, the steam
calliope falls silent, the carousel stops?

We are whirled about
to keep us from sleep—
*change is the same as thinking*

mind wakes itself by moving
stays away by sitting still.

Sweet wooden horse of poetry
a painted ruby on your harness
a painted gleam in your painted eye—

18 January 2009
THEOLOGY

Leave the weave—
two round men falling out of the air
into where?

Where air’s not, ink sinks
deep in fiber – a word
stifled into print –
choking on color.

The horror of circles is
circles always rhyme.
The nose of the plane
nuzzled under my arm,
its fuselage your body was

and I kept you warm
in the terrible cold sky –
isn’t that a little like
responsibility, or Freud, or St Francis
Hospital frowning at the river.

Who will catch the men who flee
one is Isaac one is Ishmael
far far the desert will trim them
till only bone is speaking –
run away before they start to speak.

All I’ve been running from all my life
is Abraham. I want an eye for no-eye
a tower that gets there,
a voice that knows how to disobey.

I want the unprompted heart,
the blue sacrifice
where every I gives himself to every you
unasked for, barely welcomed
but time itself is dance enough.

19 January 2009
Leave the people out.
Think
the way a desert means.

19109
January dawn the loveliest
shift of flesh light through bare trees

Everything coming towards you now
the plowman from the stars
wakes you with his coulter’s scrape

We are blades to each other
we cut the mistakes away.

*

(Of course girls and cut and blood are obvious. Pathologies are obvious.
Everything tells. But when the stars bleed, and the horizon itself becomes a
knife, and when men do it too, the dreamer is clearly on the verge of
waking.)

*

He wears a phallus for a heart.
He walks by dreaming.
He says by leaving.
You knew him then, the same one
again. Because there is only one.
That is why she ran from Abraham.

Never far enough. Never desert enough.
The spring that opened in the rock
was remembering him,
the water was his water—
howling with anger she bent to drink.

Please, please, my soul my only harp
keep exile Hagar from the hag of God.

19 January 2009
SANCTITY

Men get older milder then Mary
Egypt as an option a blur over the river
frozen the day before yesterday now hard
be a call from the dark be a tree
among deserts that is all I can ask

how lonely you are.

19 January 2009
THE INAUGURATION OF BARACK OBAMA

The chain
loosed a century ago
finally falls

its weight falls off us all.

20 January 2009
I missed things and forgot things
but things were still there.
A property of them
to be at hand.

But which hand? Where
did I leave you last night,
Musetta’s little rabbit fur muff,
the thorn from Christ’s crown?

20 January 2009
TULIPS

We did need those flowers
to keep the winter safe,
flowers on the table—

enough said. Now see it.


20 January 2009