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Sailing there
and with no boat
sunflowers
all round the door
stone beehive hut
it too has a name
in old Provencal
but the man is dead.

mid-March 2009
Göbekli Tepe

the stone columns
these pillars with heads
and snakes and foxes on their sides,
their arms are animals,
10,000 years ago assembled in Turkey

I remember Paul Valéry saying
“those who go down into the self
should go armed to the teeth”
and I quoted him in 1961
years before I realized

that to go into the self
was to go into you,
my self is over there
where you are—

you feel it among us even now
a sound, a touch
abrupt,
    a loving mistake.

18 March 2009, NYC: St.Marks
Bird passage
spill over street
they call it light here
but I know an angrier race

*human sight slows things down*

our eyes silence the tumult
and we see at any moment
only a freeze-frame of all that’s happening,
reality is speed

we miss how it moves.

18 March 2009
If it were a fireplace
   cold in summer with dried
   hydrangeas colorless in it and no cat

   quiet artifice of domestic space
   who made this womb
   what child’s supposed to come from it?

   every space points in and none points out
   where is the house of outward
   who lives in the room that speaks?

18 March 2009
What if I found myself on the floor
wondering mildly how I came to be there—
a fit, I suppose, do people still have fits,
or heart attacks, do people still have hearts,
some failure to sustain attention and I fell?
But here I am sitting at my table
telling lies. Can’t trust experience,
can’t trust the senses. Trust language
to bring all things into doubt.

18 March 2009
Things belong to me again
home house
don’t have to listen hard
to hear the rain

just get into the mood of light
blind man then see.

19 March 2009
JOSEPH

said
and said again

There have been crows
   in my wheat
   God bless the crows

The pagans over the hill
   worship a woman on a goat
   God bless the goat

The tax collector steals my coins
   God bless silver and gold

I am a man in a dream
   waiting for someone
       to fall asleep and dream me

I dreamt of a woman
   she dreamt of a child.

19 March 2009
for the feast of St Joseph
NIGHT OF THE CART

Odd cart. Man
in it. Woman pushes.
Close up it is a play
from far off a hill.
A horror. Something
holy. Things
are better when not
seen close but seen
for a long time
held at eye’s length
off there where
the danger starts.
Odd cart. Man
and woman change
places. Roles.
Rules don’t last
either. Who
wants to ride. We
push one another
over the hill. Cliff
close. All play
is sacrament.
The man is a boy
the woman a girl.
All play acts out
a dismemberment.
Every children’s game
is about dismemberment,
exile, war. We learn
who the gods are
we fear and how far
we dare go before
the poem runs out
and leaves us bleeding
beside the broken cart.
The hill watching.

20 May 2009
FOUNTAIN PEN

of youth. I want to write
with dark blue ink
made ten years after my death
I want the blue future
to flow right now from this gold pen
and speak words out loud to the paper
the way people will sound
a hundred years after I die
so they will finally hear
not me, I’m dead,
but what the words were saying
the dialects of time.

20 March 2009
REDWOOD

Or sequoia, why a
day or even hour later
you’re just the shadow
of who I was when I went by

a tree is usually a conversation
but this! it child me
my mind on its knees
before the up of it

the sky seems almost an accident
up there, from it the tree
races down to a meager earth

and it all is tree
silencing me.
Go there yourself, wary, in love,

your heart in your mouth.

20 March 2009
SPRING

The sky explodes with spring
dawn lasts for hours
the colors of it flung across the south

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Spring has sprung
but cold was ready.
In the 20s last night.
One wears a hat.

20.III.09
Mercy waits for Justice
at the side of the road.
Each one love another
perhaps the very same.

Justice comes slowly
in a big car, Mercy
lifts her hands high
a gesture innocent
dramatic: stop o stop.
Justice is tired of all this
caring, wants the car
to get there and be done.

Justice believes in destinations
Mercy believes in now.
The car passes, Mercy
keeps walking alone.

In the gulley below the road
an old man counts his fingers
carefully, one by one
touching each with his fingertip
he knows that he has ten
but can never find more than nine.
He is mildly worried by this
the way the sun shines.

20 March 2009
Answering a question from Alana

bricks are made of birds
are made of sky

the few things I know
the answer to are other things

I stroked a lion once
he looked at me

a big male lion I stroked his mane
he looked at me with woman's eyes

bricks are made of words
to hold them up before our eyes

so we can read the walls
the walls are made of bricks the bricks are made of words

they look all the same
but each is different

a sound in your mouth
listening.

20 March 2009, Hopson
Reflections in water
and the water moves so fast,
spring thaw, our little stream
a thousand times a minute
the reflection of my face
and shoulders dissolves
and must reconstitute itself
in ever-changing water.
Is that why it’s so dizzy
to look into rivers?
Whereas the sea is calming
showing nothing but itself
just the waves and crests
and leaps of it coming in
and my own face stays
hidden safe from itself?

20 March 2009
as if it were there all green and wet
at your toe-caps from the potted palm trees
of Dun Laoghaire to the Bloody Foreland
and your relations thick below the ground

and no one smiles. Walking towards memory
is a long hard slog. The one who gets there
is not the same as the one who started out.
Amazement of arrival. Cock on a dungheap
chanting to the sky. My kind of country.

21 March 2009
Do something with this.
Make it that.
And when that’s done
go over there
with the other children
walking in and out of the columns
talking about το εν.

21 March 2009
So I have to write a review of the world
the phone call instructed me.
What do they think I’ve been doing all these years?
There’s a big red-headed pileated woodpecker
on the slim sapling just outside my window,
the proportions seem all wrong, big bird
on little tree. But he’s beautiful, his black
feathers glossy in the morning sun.
That’s how it has to begin.

21 March 2009
Waking to no heat
and a bird outside.
Just because it vernal
equinoxed yesterday
doesn’t mean it wasn’t
nineteen degrees last night.
And freezing sunlight now.
With a bird. Try
to get the furnace
started up. Be a man
on earth already,
suffer. Like a bird.
LOGIC

Where is the year?
Under a barrel.

Where is the barrel?
Rolling down a river.

To which ocean does that river run?
There is only one.

When it gets there will you still be able to remember?
I have never been there, I do not know, even now I think much must have
been forgotten already.

Why do you say that, how can you be aware of how much is forgotten?
My mind doesn’t have enough images in it to account for all the years I
seem to have been alive.

But as compared to what, somebody else’s brain, how could you know that?
It may be as you say, or suggest, maybe nothing really is lost.

I didn’t say that, I think I said no one can know what he forgets. That’s just
logical.
Then logic must be the science of consoling yourself for everything you
have lost, I should learn it, where do I begin?

21 March 2009