What does enough mean?
A truism like baker’s wheat
how early they have to wake
go down to their ovens that Egypt
of an ordinary place. Bekos,
‘bread.’ Pyramis, a loaf of it.
See his arms long sinewed
taught in the twist of knead,
already the dough glistens,
the loaf sleeps before its day of fire.
The baker breaks for a cigarette—
cobblestones in his alley are wet.
Seems we wait all our lives for bread.

15 July 2009
NEL MEZZO

middle life a self refound
wooded like a mad idea
with wild animals walking around

and no one answered till everything did

from the noise of that great assent
I had to pick out the tiny
silver filaments of refusal
by which sense — that primal
contradiction — has to get made.

*No* is the defining space between.

15 July 2009
All I’ve
got is be alive
the sweet
imperative
bird song in the
beast brain
carries me on
one more one
more and then
never again
the always
and the new
as in the old
days chased
God through
the neurons of
hunter seeker
forager forester
lewd conquistador
look! a new island
in the middle of the mind.

16 July 2009
CAPTURE RATIO

sanity / nescience
a sane body
in a sung mind
the radio strives for us still
against the rational,
even money casts a shadow
and in that murk
lurk sanities of poetry
and touch. The skin
and yes I will
against Capital
strive in unvisited boudoirs
above the earth
angels scoff on the rooves
(old form to shock)
of banques remind you
of a season when
all this global dreck will be
plowed under yet again and
mean wolves prowl
only on four legs
and the forest remembers.

Even money casts a shadow—
find it, that’s all
we’re good for now,
find it and survive it,
survive.

The senses
run away with the world—
how stone must laugh
to hear itself discussed—
poets, freemasons, geologists.
all they have to say
wouldn’t buy a tin whistle
to call your sheepdog back.
If you had a dog
to dog your sheep
or sheep around your rock
or grass around
for them to eat.
Or just a rock to call
your own. You have a rock.
Listen to its laughter: trust the rock.

16 July 2009
The wick on the candle you made
burns down in the soy-beeswax mix
and yields an arch-entered hollow
like a great sea cavern——
Fingals Cave, the Hebrides,
rib bones of the great whale.

16 July 2009
COUNT ALSTRÖMER’S LILIES

(long compact unfold
their mild colors
as if the mountain jungle
still kept inside
a tenser information
close attention could descry)

but the colors have no names
though they work the eye

but the cool breath inside each flower’s
slow-opening razzle-dazze
is no air for a man to breathe.

_Inspecting the inspector_ they are called.
Mauvish sometimes. They come from Peru.

16 July 2009
Then time broke.
And what fell out?
You tell me—
this is where you come in.

I heard the crack
I saw the wound
now you have to tell me

what swarmed out towards us
before the horrid door was healed?
An animal covered with eyes.

16 July 2009
VARIATIONS ON FW

“My foos won’t moos”
he said she said
and the river heard
annoyed at her complaint
“I haste no foot to stond.”

16 July 2009
SUMMER STORM

So then the rain comes.
I spill a trinket
looks like, coffee
onto glass, amber
carnelian maybe—
the stone of all I
loved when I was young.
Maybe if a man in the full
of his life really knew his own
true preferences when very young
before the world distorted him,
them, with their instructions, he,
now, might know who he is.
His task. What I know now
is that carnelian makes me sad,
makes me think of West 4th Street
and dead loves. Thunder too.
What would it be like to sit
here sheltered from the storm
with no memories, no images
to think with, and no words.
Nothing to distract from this.

16 July 2009
When you breathe
who inhaled whom?

Is there an Egypt
inside where
sandstone or syenite
choose the carver’s hand,
reach out and guide it
to find the god bird
hidden in rock?
A lost word?

When you say anything at all
you are the Nile too
and when you don’t
it is West,
it is n-Dwat, the silence after life.

Tell him anything at all
when he asks,
a lie gives life.
He is red sandstone waiting for your hand.

17 July 2009
Road ready vehicle
full of last nights.
Distance is a dust.

A book left open
on a bare table takes
all the light in the room.

It is like an animal there
in the corner just waking.
Nothing can ever be the same.

17 July 2009
These empty lines
anthologize the mind.
Everything you ever thought
waits there for you to think it again.
Like sin. Do me. Do me.
I can make you happy
for a little while. Beauty
is on the other side of something
I can’t touch or smell or see.
It waits for you. It will enfold
you before it embraces me.

17 July 2009
THEODORA

Too many men to be maybe
too few to be fun.
An empress in her own right—
look at your shadow on the wall,
he is your husband.
You will make him wear the crown
and then you’ll turn off the light
and you’ll be you again all alone.

17 July 2009
Things moving in the night.
Say-so. After rain a flutter—
hard rain, now hard calm.
I hear our little river running.
Always something on the move
outside in the dark.
The long legs of listening.

17 July 2009, very late
Every time you dream
is Byzantium.
Powers shattering gold walls
into fleshy shadows.
You touch what you see.
Miracle enough. You wake
and your wrists hurt
from holding so hard.

To sleep is to be outside history
until the dream comes,
that sinister other kind of waking.
Where different years are moving through the sky
and months you never heard of
send their bills for light and wool and coal.

17 July 2009, very late
And what should I do with the sturgeon
Elizabeth send through the mail?
I’ll count the scales or whatever they are—
there’s something fishy about this fish,
halfway between an iron sword and a kid’s cartoon.

17 July 2009, very late
VOTIVE

Let the candle flicker
till the intention
reaches the deity in mind.
Not long. It isn’t
very far inside.

18 July 2009
= = = = =

How to begin
talking to
nobody remembers
to go home.

18.VII.09
SALTON SEA

Little
These phony things
the mind turns authentic
by remembering.

Remember
means to mingle
out there with in here
irretrievably.

Till a thing
seems no more than me recalling it.
And I’m no more than what it lets me see.

18 July 2009
Summer makes me hysterical
too many messengers
a million lives
converging
just when I want to be just me.
Gasp, gulp air, tremble—
is that the only alphabet I wield
to answer all this animal?

_Breath comes before the word and lives after._

18 July 2009