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Autumn mauve American hibiscus
called Rose of Sharon
early import from some Orient
imagined where roses blow all summer
green skies on blue domed cities where
all the merchandise is dreams of dreams

or some mute puritan bible place
where anything to grow at all
needed scriptural authority—
living myths at roadside blossom
and they do not bite they do not kill.

19 September 2009

= = = = =

Short breaths lianas clambering around
here old creeper
strangled – two inch thick cable on it –
a still green tree –
tragedy is always in the middle of itself,
a forest ranger sleeping on his tower
already the birds are fleeing

smoke rise. Indians talking to the sky.
Is that me who listens?
What right have I to hear?

And the blind man confesses
I have no right to see.

Tragedy. When the animals sing
and we think they're talking.
When the animals talk
and we think we're asleep.

In the Audubon place an upland meadow
empty but us.

I spoke to the vine
it answered me Everything
is adequate but everything is too much

Usually blood is seen

this time of story

but the moon said nothing

and the meadow bright

Where was the conflict?

is time our only enemy?

was autumn one long answer?

19 September 2009

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New painted fence
shadow of a leaf
sticks to the wall

19.IX.09

= = = = =

There pretend to be trees
and there pretends to be a sun.
Es gibt Zeit, says Heidegger,
time is there too, something
we had to ourselves—
scoop it in our palms from the strange pool.
Call it the Roman fountain.
Snail trail. Spunk spent on a basil leaf.
Egypt is bare bone. The Nile is spine.

19 September 2009

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Things get bigger as they go.
Grasp at clouds and suck them in—
all I wanted was the shape of her
let someone else hear the song
or drink the milk, I wanted
the shadow on the mountain,
shadow of a rose with all its thorns.

20 September 2009

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Where to store the books.

Where the earth stores rocks—
every one will be picked up again
and used to hurt or hunt or build.

There are places in the world
but no space, she said,
only the *choros*, the dance on the dance floor,
is open, and we fail that.
God how we fail that.

20 September 2009

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It doesn't have to be forever
to be forever
a waterfall is all you need
to hide behind another's tears—
it is so strange to be wet, washed,
as if our minds are really *outside* our skins,
a micron or two outside, the mind
gets wet and changes, mind
changes its mind, water
runs off with what I was thinking
and leaves you free of me.
We are waves only to each other.

20 September 2009

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You tell me what the difference is
between one sign and another.

A sign is only what it makes you do
and no one knows you. But the sign knows.

20.IX.09

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Don't you know there are times

I need you too?

Throw out the lifeline,

we all are beggars in the court of love,

its kisses and its fellowships

are wonderful and rare,

we huddle in hope, in shanty pride.

20 September 2009

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The money I have
they did to me.
And I am grateful
for the gift. Grateful
I think for everything
I think, everything
I think I have.

20.IX.09

= = = = =

Poets know everything but don't know that they know.

Philosophers know nothing but know that they know it.

The rational is optional — who knows what I know?

20.IX.09, Amtrak

= = = = =

an attic without a house

— Kim Lyons

From the attic window
a child looks out
The child see a lake without a swan
later the child sees a sky
without a bird, later the child
sees a goose without a lake,
the child tries to bring them together.
The child succeeds, the child
is wearing no underwear, some wind
comes through the shingles the drafty
attic wall, the child's skin is aware
of the wind of the lake of everything.
The child thinks: Wind. The child
thinks: Wind is a sky with no house.

20 September 2009

NYC / Amtrak

AFTER THE NECESSITY

The tall man watches in the corn field
tall-seeming even though he stands
ankle-deep in furrow between hillock,
even though he's whistling loud
(nobody whistles anymore)
with no regard for his dignity
(tall men are dignified)
his shoes are muddy and worms
are not far, he has a book
in his hands he's not reading

maybe it's a hymnbook
(the only kind of book
in this kind of country)
but he's not singing,
can a hymn be whistled,
can God hear pure tune,
isn't it the words that
matter? I don't know,
don't know what book
it is or who he is
but I see him as clear
as I see you sitting there
reading my *triste histoire*,
my book in your hands,

an entity like any other
fashioned out of pure necessity
(his blue eyes sparkling
with autumn sunlight) you're afraid
to come near him
(or maybe they're brown).

2.

But you did and his arms reached down
and snapped your suspenders for you
or smoothed your skirt over your hips
or flipped your cap off—anything
playful and rude—winked at you
once like a drunken uncle
and handed you the book. Now
you open and read:

3.

Paltry is misery
and enormous is joy—
live to the tips of your fingers
and doubt all your thoughts
until they sift down into words
then doubt all the words
but love them anyhow

for the sound of them, as a wife
goes on loving somehow a husband
with a roving eye—listen
to what you're thinking
and come to me later
when the ears of corn are gathered in
and I am left standing up huge
out of the stubble below
and the autumn rain comes down
and soaks us all—then
we will hurry to my house
and each of us will have the right to tell.

21 September 2009

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Symmetric remove obstacle
every item is an instance of itself
the philosopher explained but
a slim moon shimmied in the curtain
because the breeze and so on
but the words kept insisting
on themselves too (what else
can we exchange?) (who
are you talking to?) (who are
you to ask?) on a night like this
the moon looks like a quotation
and we wind up believing nothing.
You were there with me
in the diner, you understand the pain
of making choices you have to eat,
actually take into your body
no matter where they came from
or who brings them to you now.

21 September 2009

MAVORS

Could it be Mars

on meeting?

Jump up and down

let your body shake

its looseness

into form:

you belong.

Your birthday

is always on the way,

it enthralled you

to the earth. Here.

That's what Mars meant

of course not war

but begetting.

The restless habit of being,

masked by becoming.

Life after life.

No wonder his priests pounded

the ground with their heels then

leaped high as they could

three times.

A fat priest leaping in the air

a lean priest pounding the air.

22 September 2009

= = = = =

You could go anywhere and do anything—
cuneiform was pressed into damp clay
and the gouged word
dried into substance. Silence. And stayed.
With us. And would you run
your fingers soft over notches and punches
brailleing up three thousand years of silence
and make it jabber about all that business
between the rivers, between mountain and sea?
Can your fingertips make things talk?
What a caressive science that would be
and a word would be a kiss that lasts forever.
Your ear pressed to the clay you hear
it talking about green oil and millet and slaves
we took in the land of Pwent, and of some
of them we made wives.

22 September 2009

(LOVE POEM)

All the trick cyclists in Vienna
couldn't screw me up as much
as one night with you would. Did.

22 September 2009