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SYNCLINE

Now a day later
a link to the sky
stop thinking in ideas
think in earth-forms
instead, earth
is the measure of truth.
Love, we are caught
in the folds, we don't
know the way.

6 December 2009

ACES

Is one of anything truer than two?

They say there are four elements
but there is only one: the space
between the things that try to seem.

Is every absence the same absence?
Space inside a cup. Space around a knife.

6 December 2009

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If children had the voices of men
and men had the voices of women
the world would be a loaf of bread
warm from the oven, on a windowsill.

6 December 2009

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Organize for
the catastrophe
letter by letter
in blue ink.

6.XII.09

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Trying for alternating current
from the molecular frenzy
inside a maple tree in March—

Listen, piece of wood,
I am Tesla, talk to me,
I don't want sugar I want song.

6 December 2009

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Carefree, as if caution
understood why leaves were green
and let them be so, too slow
to get into trouble.
And when they do they turn red.

6.XII.09

PSYCHOGRAPHY

As if caught by the purchase
itself the soul of the cashier
goes home with the shopper.
This is fun, to rest a tired
body on an alien settee,
stroke with absentminded
tenderness an unfamiliar cat,
all that. The unknown country
of another's fridge. And all the while
the shopper goes about the house
stowing the latest purchases while
this one, this weary check-out girl
regains her vital spirits and waits.
How does she come to be here?
Why can't the shopper see her or relate?
Money makes strange things happen,
but it's not all money's fault.
Sometimes we just stick to things,
the soul of a thing can be deeper
than the soul of a man. If only
someone could come along and see her now.

7 December 2009

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Getting a chance at doing
is chancier than going
to get a glance at someone
going by in the street.
See, there's always a street
because a street is out there
and there's always an outside
but doing has to begin inside
and inside is a pretty chancy place—
inside has no streets, no chance
of going. And certainly not doing.
Doing has to do it all by itself.

7 December 2009

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Not exactly metabolism
more like waking from the dead
but it isn't Easter yet.
The stone is moving, though,
and a little light comes in.

7 December 2009

MOTU PERPETUO

A machine that runs
on its own exhaust?
Of course. The mind.

7 December 2009

PASSACAGLIA

Unfamiliar raptures sway the pontiff's chair—
distraction is the price of life. The same
as being, is what I mean. To have one fixed will
is to be dead. Any river can teach you that,
you don't need Heraclitus (though we love him).

Ein ewiger Wille, sings Faust, turns
into the marble statue of a man
once living, caught in a rude gesture
forever. The gesture of seeming to be.

So I fled from philosophy into the church,
fled from the church to the altar,
from the altar to the street and in the street
I found at last what I was looking for:
the living being that was not, is not, me.

7 December 2009

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Have I finally caught up
with the man on the street
the one selling buddy-poppies
from a forgotten war?
And Miriam danced around
in front of the bar and the el
roared overhead?
Is there only one image
that lives its own life
ever after in someone's head,
making them see
everything the way it was
that day, no matter what river,
when they stood naked
at the window abandoned
to the stupefied sun
making its way over the hills?

8 December 2009

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Don't go to Plan B.

We are miracles enough,

help the vertigo, doctor,

the precision fear,

turn off the buzzing in my ears,

the endless drone of the poor,

rattling of the war-obsessed.

I just need a little pill

to make me me.

8 December 2009

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To be given something
and know it's right
to be right with it
and let the horse carry
where such horses go.

Then one morning there was a strange
horse in the field—younger, trimmer
more like a racer than a percheron,
swayback though, a bit of the bay
but the weather was dim and the cr
I was in was fast. Strange horse
in a field I have never walked on.

But I have only lived here fifty years,
and this is such a new place,
I feel like I just moved in.

8 December 2009

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I keep telling the truth
I keep leaving the lies out
you love me for,
the footsteps, the shadows
on the window, the interpretations.

8 December 2009

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Without myth, truth
is withered and tamarisk—
only a desert people could imagine ‘truth’—

the winy Greeks spoke instead of
aletheia, what you can’t forget,
what you remember even the morning after.

8 December 2009

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Running in the sky there's
always a risk of rising
out of sight like an iris closing—

we believe only in those things that believe in us—
religions are fussy that way, each
carves its own peculiar narrow doorway
leading to the hallway you have to trot along
till you get to the ballroom of
how things actually are.

It is said that vast chamber is accessible
just as easily from outside this hotel
if you can think of a way of getting out to get in.

8 December 2009

TO GOD

Love and lucid estrangements.

Formal features of the soft noise I hear.

Ostinato. The burr of presence

never lets up. I have never been alone.

8 December 2009

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Election over. The snow won.
Everything is our fault—
that, only that, is clear.
We choose our history.

Who is we. Who is choose.
We pick the thing we choose to be
or be aware of. *Uguale*,
said Ezra, on the other side of history.

But how did I do it, am I a part
of the we that did, still does?
I thought I was just like a color
and could only be red, say, or history

wielded me with its angry brush
and I was only me, and all the ones like me
were mashed into the finished picture.
Never finished. Not even begun. History

hasn't happened yet, the thing
we really mean, the noise
in the cellar, somebody's dog in the yard,
the old car rusting in the snow.

9 December 2009

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The ones over there
the ones we want to be us—

cloud avengers,
noble oaks. Why?

Why are we content to seem?
Isn't every nakedness the same glass?

Wed wine, wise wine, a beach in heat—
is there a way to be anybody

among so many images at all?
Isn't Jordan a river never reaches the sea?

Isn't a word the only thing between you and me
or between us both and understanding?

I hope you're listening, I don't think
I can repeat these questions. Even now

thought turns in upon itself, cold, dead, leaf.

9 December 2009