THE MIRACLE

But where the marble lay
a strict transaction: this
must be a man, and this his arm,
and that a woman
looking at him hard,
afraid of it stretched towards her
and nothing but desert all around.

First he tried it out in snow
heap-modeling quick in the mild
morning till he got
the sense of it in his hands
how the shadows of the thing would fall

so then he knew. Went to the stone,
bringing his knavish apprentices,
their little friends, a cow
to give them milk and keep them company,
some hay for the cow.
From town

every week a caravan supplied

news, whetstones (forgotten at the start),

water, wine, hay for the cow.

Fast they worked and in one moon

or a little more the Man stood,

the Arm stretched, the Woman

shrank away. But then the miracle:

from her reluctance a fire

leapt out of her belly

and entered him. His arm fell

to his side, his stone eyes closed.

Ah, sisters, stone can move,

stone knows how to \textit{do}.

It is we who ail and aimless and amble.

She pushes him aside, he falls,

she strides. Desert no more.

It is green where she goes.

5 January 2006
EPIPHANY

Showing. Showing forth. Showing in.

Showing how. Showing you. Showing me.

Show me: show me showing you.

Show me showing you showing forth.

Show you showing me how. Showing who shows who to show or to show forth.

Show to shoe how. Show how to show.

Show you showing me. Show you.

Showing forth is showing how is showing you.

6 January 2006
Want, I want you in Malibu
with the big royal palms on the upper cornice
esplanade whatever it is
in fact I want you with one of your legs a palm tree
and a rat running up it and the other
leg one of those rare staircases that link
the lower roadway to the upper where the trees are
where the glitzy shops and the phony Montreux hotel fronts
there, and on the little humbler steps
that take you from the lower level to the actual beach
there is a sea there not just to look at
and suicide dogs and a dark house with a man in it
and the man is not me, want,
I want some of this to be true and some of him to be me
and the rest of you to be you
and the palm tree sturdy and noble in the quick sea breeze
spoken of in a famous poem by Mallarmé
wishing to arrive at this very cornice
and watch your thighs press together as you cross
your legs at that ridiculous sidewalk café
and all the poems suddenly come true.
I want you absurdly. This is because
the half moon is riding over the Hudson again
and it isn’t snowing for once
and the stars, but that’s only an excuse,
I want you because of the candle flame
precisely and because of the rutabaga peel
I scraped into the steel sink three days ago
with a high-quality vegetable peeler
and the ox tails I cooked with it, you understand,
or probably you don’t understand,
I’ve forgotten your name again, it’s almost
New Amsterdam and wooden sidewalks
and canal on Canal Street and fences and hogs
and it’s also almost like somebody else’s childhood
inconceivably tender and boring,
I want you like that, I think it’s you anyhow,
though as I say I keep having this weird
problem with your and anybody’s name.

6 January 2006
CABIN FEVER—
when a small
enclosure
feels hollow
in the heart

and wants us,
yearns out at us
through its grey windows
willing

an arrival,
a penetration.
I have been there,
I have felt it

so often as I traveled
woods especially
and old farms
the hysterical buildings

ramshackle
with thwarted desire
the lonely enclosures
harem of wood and dust

and sometimes I have tried
to be their doctor,
push in the old door or
at least stand on the porch

and settle for an hour
like a man smoking
at ease in the evening
at home with his house

but I am not theirs
as much as I want
to belong to everything
I have no right to them,

no right even
to my own desires
no less absurd
and desperate as theirs.

7 January 2006
BLOOD

But will there be
a word left
to say so?

1.
After the Trafalgar cannonades
the drowned men torn sails
scarlet awash the infamous scuppers
what is to be said?

Every day a war, a victory,
a cortege. The fallen.
For a day or two
the dead are very loud

but then they sleep
deep as the living.

More war! he roared,
the sun is too bright, the snow too clean.
There is a power that compels these things—
politics and money are only shadows of its claw.

2.
You don’t have to go to Iraq.
You can look in your heart
and find the War God
very small, clutching knives,
teeth whittled sharp,
snakes for a helmet,
his eyes bright opaque shells.
When you have found him there
it will be easy to spot him everywhere.

When you have found him
there in your heart
you begin to know what to do,
to soothe that angry desperate rattling person,
to ease his pain too.
3.

When that god is healed
of the long wound that is his will
the world will wake.

4.

I have begun my campaign for world peace
by bringing my lips close to your heart
and whispering what I have found in my own.

7 January 2006
AFTER PARSIFAL

Wer ist dein Vater?
Das weiss ich nicht.

Who is your father the Old One asked

That’s what I don’t know the Young One answered

but what is a One? Young or old
what is a One? What is anyone?
That’s what I don’t know.

Who is anyone’s father?
That’s just what I don’t either.

Why do I dare to say anything
if I don’t know either?
Because there is a nude on the wall
and a woman in the bed
because there is sunlight on the snow
and the same sunlight on the wall in the window
even on my hand.
What does it mean to say same?
What is the same sunlight?
Same as what and different from what?

I don’t know that either. Or those either.
I don’t even know whether what just got asked
is one question or two or even more.
That’s how much I don’t know either either.

But the sun and the woman and the nude on the wall
and the wall and the house and the sun,
these things are some kind of answer.
But I don’t know the question either.

7 January 2006
1.

Something else to be busy saying
what saying something SUN is doing
because the broken BRACKEN out there
among the lost tribes of amanita
profiting from Santa’s colors a blue
shadow under REINDEER SEMEN or
BOAR SEMEN shed a truffle grows
white or black depending Lapland manners
SHADE break TWIG break LINDEN
break stream STREAM the ice STREAM
flowing down under the river
under the river an entirely different river
under the earth a different earth
the Aztec Eskimos of Lapland SWEDES.
2.
Portugal knew such WEATHER sand
spiteful spiritual torturers HURT YOU
because you consent to SUN the sun
turns into the MOON AND BREAKS
it was all about agriculture means
drought rain TERRACED HILLSIDES
WINKA Peru about the marsh elder
about maize maybe about DEER MEAT
I was born on that day what day
were you born AMERICA Columbus
Day THREE SNAKE you were born
EIGHT CORN when you were a woman
hearing a black CRYSTAL tell you were
born halfway to the other side of now.

[7 January 2006]
Examine the difference between ‘it looks good’
and ‘it looks good to the eye’

Build a cabin in that space,
ever mind the little cut on your thumb
suck it so it won’t infect

Roof the cabin with branches tarpaper thatch
though nobody knows what thatch is
hanging down over the soffits

Make windows as wind-eyes
let the wind in
suck the wind so it won’t
infect the sleeping quarters
of those you love

Name them

Roll them on their sides
and put healing drops in their ears
then swab them out
carefully – somehow
they can’t do that for themselves
or their selves

What are selves

Clean their ears
pat them gently on the flank
and tell them all will be well
in this little house *made of wood*
in the woods

where a flock of bluebirds
famously gregarious
will assemble *come spring*

and then we’ll see.

8 January 2006
THE MISTAKE

The poor man poured
eye drops in his ears.
Later he found he could blin
his eardrums and
shut all sounds out.
All the Lamarckians
stood around and prayed.

8 January 2006
ROSES

on the table.
New yellow old red.
Sympathy. We tend
to live in the spaces
between colors.

Our natural home.

We could be defined,
you and I, by
the colors we live between.
I between red and yellow
and pray to blue and pray to green.
Where I think you live.
Like smart lovers
we pray to each other.

8 January 2006
The gravedigger Joseph Rothmayer a dozen years after he had shoveled Mozart’s body into a common pauper’s grave dug down and pulled out what he said was Mozart’s skull and now somebody holds it in his hand somebody takes two teeth out and does a DNA trick with them and decides.

But what is decided by such a decision? Lift the bone up to your bone and listen.

8 January 2006