SUNFLOWERS

O grace a year’s
supply of emptiness
let me be long

I ask the cardinal what it finds
rapturous in all that seed
he says the disposition of my heart

what you call evolution
compels me to discern
the one within the many

consuming it and turning
it thereby into my singleness
and makes me red

while you eat anything
at all that comes to mind
no wonder you have worms inside!

we don’t, I said, I don’t
anyway, he looked askance
and flew away, leaving

my garden flecked with empty shells.

1 September 2006
Aphrodite spelled backwards in Mammoth Cavern
we are cavemen of the great Atlantic shelf
bounded by Her – we love backwards, we bible, we brute.

And there it is, spillway down from Heavenum
glossing our merest Text – this means you,
dandle darling, pow-wow princess, my Pennsylvania

1 September 2006
(Variation on EP)

Looking for trouble
the target is not far away.

2 IX 06
We turned up from Barrytown
at twilight, a quick young horsey thing
a zebra I said but it was brown
leapt across the road and passed us
diagon from the south but in
the shrouded trees from which he’d come
leaping an ordinary zebra stood
watching is I suppose,
eternal vigilance of beasts.
Up ahead by the highway
two bears browsed at roadside.
We thought better and turned back.
Bears don’t browse. Everything
is probably waiting for us.

2 September 2006
Enough of the night.

Sparrows, many, by the garage –
acre splendor

land is our only link to heaven

God maybe.
Catastrophes of light.

2 September 2006
Something said:
I am near

by the time you write me down
I’m gone

Like the weather

a permanent celebration
of your meager will.

2 September 2006
I have given up my Basque lessons
and sold my boat, kayak really, cute
on top of my Saab. Now I have a naked car
money in the bank, daughter in every port.
I’ve given up shellfish and cigarettes
I don’t know why, change keeps you young
they say, but me it keeps chained
to the law of alteration, French today
Finn tomorrow, never let a shadow
grow under my feet. I am the bishop
of being gone, the inconstant habit,
the leaky faucet from the holy well.

2 September 2006
Change my socks
into aerosostats
soar with these
through downtown seas.

A slight adjustment
of the vowels brings
whom home?
Hope happens.

Faith fastens.
Charity kisses best.

2 September 2006
Find me in the cellar
with the prophets
but where am i

in the attic window
gazing at my neighbor’s
lawn and in between us

an empty house.

3 September 2006
Static on radio
geography confused
we belong to them
identity is the sum
science of obscurations

3 September 2006
Old concerto
meant struggle
tongue against tongue
as kiss

trombone
summoning love’s
cavalry charge
into the endless
battlefield of feeling

so soft that stridency
it is breath
that summons
always

a breath
cold metal knows
metal that came
out of the fire
to propose

the whole civilization
one ardent violin.

3 September 2006
[Ferdinand David’s Concertino,
Jerusalem S.O., c. L.B.]
THREE SURMISES

1. What if the ones we don’t know
   are the ones we need?

2. What if mercy
   became the center of the tree

   would the sun
   give green light and we

   live in warm forgiveness
   Eden?

3. Blame
   drove us from the garden,
   one of us and each
   of each,
   not disobedience.

   Blame that we turn
   on one another,
   blame of obloquy, blame
   of oblivion, blame of rage,

   Adam blamed the Woman
   and the gate swung closed,

   blame, a word derived from blasphemy.

3 September 2006
What if there were no number after Nine
then every time we shook hands
became a transcendental episode.

3 IX 06
spoke of energies
blue heron by the waterfall
Paul warns us

of what we want inside
the tireless Demander
leap from this shadow water

3 September 2006
Novelist! shun the improbable actual
cultivate the imaginary real.

3 IX 06
Two desert words

1.
Desert, salute!

Here
is where it is.

Mono, Mohave, Canaan.

šlm means a bow of greeting,
you can't strike a blow when you're bowing down,

šlm means peace.

2.
tsl, shadow, is that what I remember?

The word of God
is the shadow of an unknown man

walking through the desert, evening.

Or: a word comes from the west to meet the sun.

4 September 2006
Let the beginning understand itself
as if another language, the women in Flanders
trundling baby carriages over muddy fields
and in each carriage the sun is rising

but don’t waste your light on the sky
prudent Apollo, don’t waste rain on flowers
essences and violets, fiddles and faggots,
language is always there before us

language lies in wait, ambush, arroyo,
shadow with a serpent lurking, sunlight
with a basking sheep, weather come back,
weather come back to me, o Phoebus, o Sol.

He prayeth to a strange God
who answereth betimes in a stranger’s Tongue,
“This is for you and this is for me
and in between world and world the table’s spread.”

4 September 2006/Hopson
Under the shadow of a rock stand

no a no the no of

rock stand under now
enough treasure
map your good

pause on your way to the tree
the hall is full of light

hurry, hajji,
the stone is tired of waiting.

5 September 2006
COULOIRS

He meant couloirs, he meant
corridors, or a hall
running track from room to room
traverse the house
quiet athletics of being anywhere
the coasts of inward
till landfall – those marked
by Jupiter are so on the right foot
a stain of glory from
which they stand and step and rise.
We call this star Master of the Stairs.

So every book has in it something that I need.

Not needed. Erase the obvious
inference and leave the obvious.
The obvious has stickleburs
caught in its fur, the obvious
will lead you to heaven or to hell –
the road’s the same, the people different
depends on what you carry or are carried by
depends on the long tongue that licks the ground
(thievish neighbors, politics, tune)
depends on tricks of light, telling,
telling a Turner from a light-stain on the wall.

5 September 2006