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The day after death
the decision
turns into an ear of corn.
The day after death
I grow again in a corn-crib
I am almost a child
amazed at the red corn snake
that plays near my feet
I am amazed about everything
I have come again
and everything has to be done
again and still it’s all beautiful
I think. The day after death
I come to do it all again,
it has to be beautiful
has to be tree and sailing ship,
a museum built entirely of light,
that’s what it is
the day after death
I have to learn to speak
some other language again,
not the old cuneiform stuff
wedged in my heart,
something modern, something
at least one or two other
animals understand,
the day after death
it’s all about learning to speak
again, about being willing to tell
where I have been
and where I thought I was
and where I am.

26 October 2005
MAKING MEMORIES

When you read this
you’ll think it happened
to you – the moon,
cornfield, little cat,
the blue cloth – shirt?
dress? – by the pump
the smell of gasoline.

When you read this
you’ll think it’s nothing more
than something you read.

26 October 2005
The spirits of the air
live on the smells

that we refuse to smell.
For instance, we grow

used to our own smells
we think, don’t notice

smells our skin gives off,
the redolent folds,

damp places in the dark.
We don’t – but they do.

They steal our smells up there
and turn them into music.

Gandharvas,
celestial musicians,

their name means
smell-eater,
we are their flowers,
their morning coffee,

the burger on the grill.
So when we smell

each other we must
make music of it too.

Pheromones of lust,
vast decaying boudoirs

of desire built
on bacterial decay,

singing songs about
how I love the way you smell.

26 October 2005
Chopped out the something else
grown up through the euonymus,
its pretty green unfit for that dark blazing—
hard to get through the red to clip the green
down at the ground line so some
stalks still prick up, suppose
they’ll be heard from again,
brisk decisions of the pruning knife—
the same strange will invests the red, the green.

27 October 2005
CAFÉ

Talk to me
I’m smarter than the paper
but then it would have to be
your animal parts in play
haunch and muzzle coat and withers.
Talk to me I am more an animal
than you are, I am content
almost with gravity with weather
your face is so angry, no animal
is angry all the time,
I’m in the wrong zoo,
I should be in Berlin
where in the Tiergarten
there are only animals like me
sitting on benches walking
watching people read the paper
wanting them to stop
reading and talk to me.
All languages are German.
When you look again all
the words will have slid off the page
now you’re just like me
you have nothing to read
but the afternoon light
falling on people we will never know.

27 October 2005, Red Hook
EDEN

Water on the table
in the sidewalk café
dead leaves in the water.
Only the plastic is green.
Wonderland, a car
stopped at a red light.
Actual clouds in an actual sky.

27 October 2005, Red Hook
Spiel of journeyman
assassins blue blithering
parrot-wielding
kraut-kopf’d actorlings
sprawled across
the divan of the sea.
Be me. I dare you.
Drop your attitudes
and shiver in sunlight.
You need me terribly.
I am the last lens.

(12 X 05)
27 October 2005
TYPHON’S TEETH

Fangs of wind
come hurrying up the arroyo
to see you.
Only you.
There is nobody here
but this fear.

(10 X 05, Woodstock)
27 October 2005
Who is the heroine of this war? Who is the eye when she is closed?

(mid-October)

27 October 2005
There is an amazing bird
ate bread from my hand
while I sat by the bridge in Morzine
the footbridge – they call it passarelle—
over the ice-cold downrush of the Dranse,
but back to the bird.
It looks more like a fly,
blue glints on metal dark,
my hand (right hand)
was more like a plate
with my cheese sandwich on it.
Rain spattered now and then.
Or spat. People quick
down the street. I was waiting
for the market to open,
my wife was swimming
in the municipal piscine.
I think it really was a fly.
But a special one, a French fly,
modest, industrious, small,
like a day in the French
Republican Calendar.
And like a day, when he
flies away he’s really gone.

(mid-October) 27 October 2005
Tell the old table
all your mind
it listens

its tin top
vibrates to the truth
its little drawer
for forks and spoons
holds the dust of all
that’s left of Myth

that sad soft story
nobody knows
how it ends.

27 October 2005
Red Hook (Mexican bodega)
The Aztec alphabet
spells me again.
Deer Jade
Shabby Little Dog
covered with sores.
Today on the brink
of history – such
strange tomorrows.
I was born to be a priest
you were born
to be my religion.
A larger cat
asleep in moonlight.
Animals
are all there really are.

27 October 2005
(Red Hook, bodega)
Watch the sun
walk on the grass

glint sapphire
faceted to answer it

Answer everything,
love, this is no description,

it is the thing itself
all over your skin.

28 October 2005
Slower, slower, a face in the sun
it hurts to see.
Exanimate me a minute,
let me stone.

But even granite
has a sort of wit,
leaves on the hill
Xerxes’s army
dead on the unpronounceable earth.
Everything is alive but what we kill.

28 October 2005
The humming’s worse today
and yesterday. I wonder
what it wants me to know
about myself. A defect
in the machine is also a gleam
where something else shows through.
Let it be love
after all, the park again and dark
and a city all round it
just the shadow of an idea.
Nothing has happened yet,
we walk through leaves.
ἀπειρον – no end to it.
A little pain comes home.

28 October 2005
A little loan to last till Judgment Day
a little light to fill my glass.

There are burdens and you know me –
the rafters of your bungalow
have baskets hanging from them
full of my losses. And my breath
fills your living room.

Why can’t you see me?

28 October 2005
I have come to pay back all I took,
the love and listening, touch and trouble.

I’m all around you, whirling with giving
and you will not take. Take.

Only if you receive can I survive.
This word means live again, or something
left to live. Ghosts
move small stones up and down the hill.

28 October 2005
They still come by. We used to call them
Unitarian vagabonds, they cadge clam chowder
at Trinitarian rectories. Oh all the snow,
the poor young man, Thoreau in one pocket,
hash pipe in the other, call the doctor.
No! Here, have some nice soup. Chowder
isn’t soup. Common crackers, a glass of milk.
A mass of glilk, he repeats in his stoned
sincerity, anxious to please. The parson’s wife
is thrilled by this young man and yearns
to serve him. But won’t let on. Do nothing.
Transcendentalists really need nothing
other humans need, just some food.
No affection needed. The trees love them.
Trees love me, the boy says, and shuts his eyes.

28 October 2005
Call me love
and then forget me

a blue narcissus?
unlikely flower

we see by sheer
contradiction

in negative our truth
a final color.

28 October 2005