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## FIRST DANCE

Names of assassins names of songbirds  
cure us. Inveterate caravans arrive  
mysterious lost salt. Kalahari  
touches you on the collarbone  
so the whole body shivers. Terpsichore  
is your body. Someone indicted  
someone indicated someone  
will never touch someone else again  
and the beast plods on. Marrow cache,  
the life is in the bone. Constantine  
saw a crisis in the sky, *beauty*  
*conquers us* he thought and fell  
below his knees like any moorhen  
plashing. Heath. Rabbit. Sand  
in one's toes sand under one's nails  
the groins of sorry and a kingdom  
vaguely hereabouts. Turret, no names  
among friends. Blood paradise.

29 October 2005

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No more propositions

is a proposition.

No more sentences is a sentence.

We are stuck.

Sticks stick together.

Thread loops. Knots

happen. Meaning arrives.

Alas. How can I be quiet?

How can I be?

29 October 2005

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Absence of solids is not liquid.

A camera with no battery

is not the same as a man

willing to see a thing only once.

Let the world take care of itself.

Take care of you – that's my business.

That's the job I went to school every  
night for twenty years to dream to do.

29 October 2005

## SECOND DANCE

Deep valley  
they say the lights  
are always coming back  
itself they say  
there is never a shadow  
you can't walk right through

Someone always left  
to dream, the strange  
smoker's meditation  
of businessmen in doorways  
ankled by the cold wind.  
They do their breathing.  
They notice everything  
and nothing stops.

In India this is a festival.  
The crows come down for dinner,  
the dogs get a moment of respect.  
And then the light changes.  
The cigarette goes out.  
The shadow begins to answer.

### THIRD DANCE

Still feel the blind torment of  
not see what's in front of face  
trying to invent a mind life  
in the other so they behave  
in such wise as to be understood  
by the party of the first part  
that scientist lover projector  
wretch all love and no liberty  
like a deck of cards always  
trying to tell a different story  
but no way to dethrone  
that hierarchy those four  
elements of that infatuation  
men call 'the world' and  
women do not care to name.

30 October 2005

## THEORY OF METRIC

Suddenly he was trapped  
he was saying what he thought.  
That's not what the mind is for.  
The mind is all for sing sang sung  
not explaining not complaining.  
Music is its own explanation  
and complaint. It passes through  
your whole thinking, he was trapped  
in what we wanted to happen next.  
The future is the strangest prison,  
he'll never get out of tomorrow.  
So the body has to do it for him,  
picks up a leaf and chews a lot on it  
till the weird innocuous taste  
takes thoughts away and leaves  
him just with the taste in his mouth  
hence free to move around  
the little blocks of silence here and there  
like a child building a castle  
out of sensible interruptions alone.

30 October 2005

## FOURTH DANCE

Music not for listening  
intercept the air—  
catch sound in mirrors  
so shape it  
a message across room  
where some she attends  
the gorgeous fake-book  
the light writes down for  
you and only you to  
give her by passing  
auto window hurry  
tail light light you  
speak without listening  
till she feels feeling.

30 October 2005

## FIFTH DANCE

A knife with wet hair  
and a hat or a had  
not to be near to hear.  
You think what water things.  
Mark me Connecticut  
no kind of river but a kind of  
sea flowing between lands  
quick, breads on aching tables,  
the table drinks the milk  
the hero pours, for love  
is *heightened unconsciousness*,  
love is no one's science  
logic of transparent afternoons.

30 October 2005

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I couldn't hear anything he said.  
His name for instance. Just some geese  
passing overhead. Just the names  
of other people we both knew, better known  
than we, less prone to that obscurity  
that veiled us even from each other,  
even now, or then, two men  
after an event determining  
what it had meant for me. For him.  
Just the names of other people  
as if we were only who we knew  
and nobody is anybody at all  
just a sound in someone else's mouth  
even a goose minding its own business  
a furlong above on its own affairs  
hurrying south for winter can wipe out.

31 October 2005

## SIXTH DANCE

But the hair is wet  
but the wolf outside  
the hat dirty from falling in the road  
the drumskin has a hole in it  
but the sound still plays sort of  
but the socks are ragged  
men stuff wool scraps round their toes  
the benches are made from old tombstones  
we sleep on these  
*they sit on names*  
the wind is wet so they forget Portugal  
it is a long time  
they are arguing with wet hair  
about how women smell  
some say women smell like milk  
others say they smell like honey  
some say it depends  
and the hair is just as wet as before  
no amount of arguing dries the sky  
what does your skin smell like  
one wants to know and the other  
refuses to answer though some answers  
come ready to his mind (cardamom  
motor oil the smell of lightbulbs  
when they just burn out)

but the wind keeps being wet  
and no one dares to discuss it  
silence is such a powerful argument  
even the wolf runs away.

31 October 2005

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Accurate as arbalest.

Or addicted to the truth

like an uncomfortable monk

say or a lawyer of causes.

We are many-man the lost

as seen on black and white TV

long after midnight, making do.

A skill that winter teaches

o I know you, the stork

flies away with the baby

your long legs dangle in pale sky.

31 October 2005

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Still of night  
steel of sight  
last moon  
I touch tonight.

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**SELENE**

her torch  
in dens of  
history light  
up again  
Hannibal  
his face

Cleopatra's breast.

31 X 05

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Pay the architect  
then let the wind and light  
shape your preposterous cathedral—

we need a little house  
for a little man  
no bigger than the woods he lives in

no bigger than the sea.

31 October 2005

## PEDIATRIC EXCHANGE

My baby for your  
straight up. The child  
will never know.  
Any more than we  
do now – it happened  
to every one of us  
but only the Unhappy Few  
remember. The gold  
gate slamming.  
The taste of milk.

31 October 2005

## SOMATOMAT

Where all we can do  
is exchange bodies.

Mine for yours, even  
steven. In winter  
it is easier.

We forget often  
what we have bodies for.

If ever we knew.  
Maybe just to make  
peculiar shadows  
on the ground  
for the spirits  
of the air to see

watch, bet on, fall  
in love with once or twice  
the way a man could  
fall in love with  
some other man's idea.

31 October 2005

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And wonder if this too  
could speak its peace:  
a shining sinner for a father,  
a heart constrained  
with liquid seeking –  
*Mawors* they call him here  
a glad god and too eager  
as love in other climates comes  
hope-heavy on trembling limbs.

31 October 2005

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Authorize a translation:

a woman's at the door.

Ask her in – cider

with cinnamon, a map

spread out on her lap

to show her the stars

among which she has come.

Here – our world is this one,

where the pinhole is,

light shines through it

from the fireplace,

come warm with me

there, here, this

is all that's left of the sun.

31 October 2005

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A room full of harps  
and the wind locked out.  
Doors, darling, lead  
only to other doors.

31 X 05