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The hoop. Lifting things 
out through the hoop, 
through whose basket handles of hooped reeds 
is the sun lifted every morning 
out and by whose and 
into whose hands?

*The sun is Moses – cm, which is just \c turned round, the name of all names, cmc, the Sun.*

*The sun is lifted out of waters womb, passed our way through the Pubic Arch of the sky – which is all we can in this life see of the great Body in which we form, carry on, and into which we –if fortunate – recede.*

*The Pharaoh’s daughter lifts Moses out. Who is she? Who is Pharaoh, whose name means Great House? How can a man be a house? Pharaoh must be the one who possesses the great house, or is entitled to enter it. House was a decent name for woman among the Jews who came out of Egypt, tyb, a house. Did they flee from Egypt and carry the Great House with them, the one to which Pharaoh maybe had no right? And who was his daughter?*

Who lifts whom 
through the hoop 
of the day 

and what is heard? 
A hoop is a harp 
and who listens?
Within the hollow work, the hoop’s yearning mouth or maw there is always sounding going on. Strung or unstrung, this harp says so.

The workman goes to sleep in the stink of his own sweat and works with the job still to finish. The passage between sleep and waking as also between dream and dreamless sleep is shaped like a hoop.

The gate of ivory, of lying dreams, the gate of horn, of dreams that tell true, and the gate of amber through which the unremembered energies and images begotten in dreamless sleep pour into the waking day – the hoop is made of amber.

People who love basketball love watching the ten Sephiroth (impersonated by tall people, unusual in form and size, people we’d never mistake for ordinary) try to return something to the absolute.

What is it they return? A ball. What is shaped like a ball and hurtles through space endlessly speaking? The earth is the planet of words, and the holy ones of the Absolute try to return the earth to silence.

Of course the players have to turn into monsters. They are pure agility in extension. They represent the positive and negative columns of the tree of life as they struggle to abolish the earth, return it into the all-annihilating absolute.

Such a game we let our children play! No wonder Chinese and Africans are so good at it, born close to the absolute, people who live on the edge.
I look down at my hands,
my thumbs touch each other
my index fingers touch.
I have without thinking
formed a hoop.

So who am I
and who goes through me
and to whom?

Or where will you be
when you have gone through me?

Is each us also a portal to the absolute?

*The absolute means: every distinction dissolved away.*

16 October 2004
The voices come towards us
like grains of garnet in the rock

we hear a story always
in every sound, sound (song
is the shadow of an action)

is the shadow of an action.
Move me
from this place

cavern I am
turn me inside out
so the red ocher palm prints

my hands have made
all my life on time’s walls
burst out into common light

and be yours
out there
where everything is known.

A man knows nothing inside.
The palm prints
show his lines of life and heart and head

show his craft his desire
and all of its turns red
red ocher from the cliff at Roussillon
I studied in the evening light

red as everything I wanted
(a man is nothing inside,
has nothing, knows nothing,

only the red urgency
to get out, get him out,

get out of this place
the dark says, be gone
into your red destinations

and a man is nothing but what he hears.

17 October 2004
AKT

Let the nude awaken
from the marginal condition
of being beheld
to be is to be at the center
of someone’s attentive
gaze, but to be seen at all
is to be elsewhere
how else could he be looking
out of his eyes and see her
over there, at the center
on the edge of his world
where she lives.

That is why the theologians
Ibn Arabi among them
say the supreme reality
is best represented –if
represented at all– by one
naked woman
herself
the center
and circumference at once.

18 October 2004
But I asked the theologians
Who am I? If I am real
then I am He. If unreal,
why do you bother with me?
And who are you?

18 October 2004
There can’t be two kinds of real.
But there is summer and there is snow.
I was born in a gateway facing north,
my back to the sun, waiting.

18 X 04
WAITING

Waiting is a busy world.  
So much I’ve done  
waiting for the footstep  
of yours to come back  
and join the echo  
of it I still hear.  
Is all I’ve been up to  
what you wanted me to do? 
Sometimes I forget I’m waiting.  
Sometimes I think this is all there is.

18 October 2004
Come for the Waterman
passion’s valentine
in the cold waste, the *Tides of Feverway*.
Murk, then peel away
and set her house in order –
would you take your name from time?

Nay. Slay Ophiucus in your cradle,
spin the golden rovings
from the famous ram
into a double-twisted doubt of yarn
and be my shirt.

I wear you against the world,
drink the sap from the tall reeds
that grow in that terrible lake
at the cannibal hour when the mirror talks.

Love who? Love who?
Like a dinted bird
owl-phraser, nicked in blue woods
when the moon has gone home.
Yes you, yes you, dinted like a myrtle dove
so thick with symbols scarce can fly
and yet it does, do, yes you. Yes, you.

19 October 2004
Sometimes I think I can taste
the inside of time’s mouth
and when I do, this taste
fills my mouth too
as if someone you kissed at night
still could taste you
on her lips waking.
So many as ifs. Yet a taste
in my mouth that isn’t me.
And that’s the only thing
that gives me any right
to say anything at all.

19 October 2004
far away reflection
of my hand moving

so many miracles
distorted in one bright glass.

19 X 04
(after Lily Robbins)

I cannot recall the last time I knew something to be true.
The last time must have been so fierce
I’m in denial. I forget that I forgot.

True. The word true makes me itchy.
Only prosecutors and tax collectors
fish for the truth. We live easily without it,
on the other side of true and false.
All my life I’ve lived lots of lies
and like it that way, a snug café late at night,

music. No music. Dancers
but no dance. Lies all around me
and I love them. But Pilate asked “What is truth?”

after Jesus said “I am the truth.”
I am still the truth.
Nothing else needs to be true as long as I know that.

19 October 2004
PORTRAIT OF A WOMAN

Who by land or sea her
a painting by James Tissot of her
all the times her

word is presence nothing melts
word is presumption like a cloud
whose shadow falls promiscuous beneath

word is drunken sailor she
is in white leaning over the taffrail
pondering the river crossing other rivers

word is ferry foundering Malay straits
never come home
my word sticks inside my word

when I think of all the times
her word sat at home stretched
midnight daybed listening to mine

white impenetrable time!
how the painter brushes a word over a word
how the ferry shudders finding its slip

a word carried over water then another
then he paints the eyes in
that endure so many interruptions

like a kitchen or a melon a word like a melon
she spots some unknown fruit bobbing on the channel
and names it saying That is he
that onymous fruit is the not good man
so many of us are palely weeping from and run
like me away in white clothes

she says and says Himfruit Himfruit hum
bobbing on the tide stay there and be rotten
or be sweet on another or let the fishes eat

but what kind of fish would eat a word
a word is a bone without a fin
trajectory without even one blue eye

an archer asleep in the bushes
a Virgo needs everything in place
every arrow has a flaming tip

everything sets fire to something else
I will stay on the river and help the water burn
she thinks smiling at a pale blur

that runs beside the boat and that she knows
is her own reflection, the word she forgot
keeps her company below.

20 October 2004
Does it say anything
when you rattle it
does it rain
when you strike it with your fist

or is it the hand’s fault
does it bear cherries when you look away
are the leaves poisonous
can you remember what it looked like
right after the mirror broke

and if I touched you right here
behind the ear on the little bone
called Coming on a Pony to the Market and Falling Down
would you think the finger
meant something about you or about me?

Please tell me if so
what it means when I touch you,
please.

21 October 2004
THE KIDNAPPERS

Waiting for more boats
more boats and more sailors
more sails and more islands
more winds and more caves
and children and dogs in the sea fog
and all of them gone,

the women pace up and down
on the shore, on the street,
wailing their lost children,
where have they all gone, been taken,
children vanish into their future,

every person alive
is the kidnapper of a child
and I am a determined policeman
trying to track down the child I used to be.

21 October 2004
(after Samuel Budin)

Who’s sordid now?
Please come to the front of the rom
so we can wash you with our glances.

How did you get so dirty,
sordid, morally, shabby,
like socks under the sofa

like daytime TV, like crowded churches,
like not telling people you love that you love them.

21 October 2004
Everything that wanted to be thought about was done. I was alone in the beautiful zone beyond thinking when everyone’s awake and all my animals are busy in the woods and my birds feed.

No singing yet. Caravans pass at the edge of the woods and sails slip through the trees on delicate rivers and none of it asks anything of me.

So now I can give everything. This is the moment of speech which the old books call *the hour of my death* Amen.

Being dead and full of delight, bothering nobody and blissfully alert, only dead men tell tales.

2.
Every hour in the day has a room where this is so. When I talk about doors I’m really talking about trees. And when I say trees I mean a lot of them standing around silent and the space between and among them, the shaped space that living systems leave, the glad zone, has no name, not mine, right here, not yours, now and forever, here we are.

22 October 2004