

1-2001

janE2001

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One lives on a piece of rock what  
does it matter the name they give it  
Italy or France or Barrytown

the ground just strong enough  
to hold me up, weak enough  
to let me move

I am a field between gravity  
and levity no wonder bodies  
pull me to themselves that

is my actual home.

27 January 2001

BY THE AMBER SHORE

grind up all my old eyeglasses and try to see  
make a paste and rub it on the wall  
to let the light through

window window

you know what light it? Light is fuck.

2.

but got to see the years that came before  
as yet to come  
all this time crap is in my face

clear the stables, Hercules,  
means sweep the philosophic mistakes away

the false idea that things take time  
or happen in their little hour

3.

so this lump of amber in my pocket  
I rub I rub  
my thumb goes Becketting against  
all winter long my overcoat

they say rub rub the amber's good for eyes

and what are eyes good for  
aye, there's the rub.

Eyes is only good for you for you  
Since me has no need to see

Me nothing to see, me lives in a tree

So when I rub this lump of  
amber in my pocket

all history vanishes and leaves me who.

27 January 2001

## MERCY

Comes in a green car  
used to have a star  
used to go back and forth in a war

and there you are  
enough of a tune to get your goat

hurrying along San Pedro that's all  
this man passed me and saw me not

and lo I was invisible at last  
and pretty happy with that destiny  
hit JV's for the remotest champagne

I buy you everything  
computer blue sweater and faux-fur coat

I don't come to town often but when I do  
the whole of it is all about all about you

27 January 2001

A LAP

sunned  
maybe some (sit

there) sand  
some same  
semaphor

a drowning man  
arms in air

tearing at the sky  
why don't  
we look up  
from the book

a book a lap a book a lap  
the same  
some sand settling  
across the sky

look up anew  
the maybe man  
is not now seen

gone and the sun  
also sifting

along your long skin

o it is you  
I sinned to know

you simmering  
sandy sun  
sun ascensions

sequences of sin  
piloting it in  
mooring slow sky  
to the city

tethered tethering.

27 January 2001

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at the market for overcoats a man bought a fox  
still alive but pretty shabby  
why would he buy one but then again  
why would somebody have one for sale

a market is wonderful, like a furnace in winter  
making life possible  
but life isn't possible

life is a car that slipped backwards over the cliffs  
into the sea  
and we are slow drowners

we count our money and tread water and think about foxes.

27 January 2001

## Some Texts A Lustrum Lost

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I'm still here too  
as interruption:  
dark words on light screen  
breaking the light

like almost anything you see  
trees up out of snow  
crows in trees  
sky talkative with crows

all we are is interruptions  
in something but what?

or all of it is just a pause  
wet with new snow we  
ask each other questions

to which come no answers or  
irrelevant ones it seems

like a dog barking in the woods.

8 February 1996

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on these cold still nights  
the wind listens to us

the wind listens us  
stills us night

cold on these the  
listening you do

answers me you still  
night of all these listen

to have the wind

all around me

to wear the wind  
as a kind of still

cloth listening to the  
form the night

stands under still  
except the dark

the stars one by one

11 February 96

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I knew a  
scorpion once  
sauntered into a sink in Berkeley  
in the mild winter of such places,

bare olive trees in warm sun and the woman  
of the house standing on the windowsill  
singing to the neighbors in the courtyard,  
you know, California,  
and the husband caught the scorpion  
and I suppose killed it  
at any rate it wound up resting  
sort of forever in a block  
of neon purple plastic  
years later he gave it to me.  
I have no idea of where it is  
but I still have the morning.

14 February 96

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(reading Laurel Hoyt's poem)

so a shadow  
is a shout

that sees us  
from the dark  
inside

the wood inside the head the lively  
wood the wind blows from

swiftly  
from the right side

19 February 96

**found and revised 28 January 2001**

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But a day needs its own beast of burden  
a yak listening to Billie Holliday  
enduring the fusion culture of his Sherpa boss

say or two people on the phone at midnight  
bearing the beautiful burden of the other  
snug in the blanket of distance electric electric

who did not know awake could be so tender

28 January 2001

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Is it a story yet  
Like a book in the lap  
Or a siren passing  
On its way to woe

But leaving me here  
Inside the mirror  
Strangely safe  
From every danger but me.

28 January 2001

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*“Want to make God laugh? Make a plan.”*

I want to make a contract with tomorrow  
without making anybody laugh

so I will heap up on a silver platter  
a clueless pile of sesame seeds

every one of them a good idea  
and nobody knows which one is mine.

28 January 2001

## AJMAC

Locate, day of the sinner. Locate  
who is that. Who's that  
saying Lord Hear My Prayer.

What is a prayer is a prayer?  
Is it anything or a sigh?  
An Oh Please! burped  
out of the woodwork of my soul?

o just imagine me.  
Ajmac in Yucatan  
moiré of the window screen I see I see  
fusion is a big mistake

the drum's asleep.  
Heart of Earth, Earthquake, Heart of Sin,  
repentance tremble finger hands I knew  
handled dried snakes skinned  
for sale on the piazza at the portal

of the cathedral the cathedral

this meat was mine  
me too and me a drum  
fits every hammer

listen to my prayer  
a breath in love with itself  
and then in love with you a prayer  
listen to me we  
both need a new name.

29 January 2001

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Spilled? Spelled  
into an accuracy

like stars  
unimaginably far  
I find them

though numbers exist  
to say the separations

from here  
it is a matter  
of waiting  
for here to happen

and nobody I know  
can wait that long

we make do  
with the glimmer  
of an absent fact.

29 January 2001

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but we keep wanting to know it  
the thing that will not be known

the thing that slips through the harp strings  
leaving only the faintest tone behind it

but a sound  
is there

I swear it, it is the thing  
like a flashlight making the skin of the fingers

turn ruby red, rose-purple, where they join,  
a color that is not inside the body and not outside

but happens when the hand holds the light  
itself and some of it spills through

and that is where the color comes  
a friction between conditions

I hate harp music  
blurting out so pretty what we should barely hear.

30 January 2001

## HEINRICH IGNAZ FRANZ VON BIBER

To sit for an hour with a cup of coffee  
o yes and let *it* think  
not the coffee not the music not the me.

==

Rainlight and luster  
again and again  
we descend to particulars

==

before beavers  
what swam

and untaught  
who to dam

inextricable entity of mind

==

every beast a bright idea  
every snake a mute velleity

==

bird song  
not long

except a  
cryptomeria

sparrow in or on it  
(bonsai for Biber)

30 January 2001



ARS POETICA 31 I 2001

Do another thing to a thing you did.  
Discover a new planet  
Then the work begins.

Build some cities,  
Domesticate imaginary beasts.  
Livestock, limestone,

Your work won't ever begin to be finished  
Until you feel in your fingers and make me feel in mine  
A much-worn too long in circulation 100-something banknote

From a country that hasn't even been founded yet.

31 January 2001

ARS POETICA 31 I 2001, 2

Because the doing of it is all you do.

All the rest of it (the best of it

The first of it) comes.

31 January 2001

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let me tell myself a little bit about the night

we hear and we don't hear  
all those irrelevant illuminations that scar the night sky  
what do they tell me  
whatever it is, I do not listen, I try to pay  
attention but the coin I offer is bogus

or at least no longer in circulation.

Things have stopped believing in me.  
Maybe they just put up with me  
The way roads endure the houses that crowd against them.

31 January 2001

