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Aunters and aunters of it and still
the cup is full. My uncle's redhaired wife
that brought me such bliss, a parting
from her impossible, she is the groove
in my head, the furrow between
the cerebral hemispheres, her hair my light,
radio show, eternal silence, the gap,
the bridge of listening. And she is drunk
as usual, crawling around the party
on hands and knees, a black hole
coming to caress us, impartially,
with annihilating energy.

How great a man my uncle certainly must be
to live with her every day and go to bed with her every night,
accepting all her pupils as his own.
He is always in another room at these affairs,
she is close to me now, I feel her breath on my face,
I smell the words she's saying to me—
sumptuously she stretches out until she fills me
and then she is small again, other things happen,
she lives inside me, little as my own name
which of course a man doesn't think about all the time,
his own name, then gets surprised when he hears it
spoken, or when it just comes to mind, oh that's
who I am. I think I am. Like my face
in a store window when I'm running to catch a train.

25 June 1995 KTC

Sudden transparency
Of mirrors
Rain drops on a dusty leaf.

26 June 1995

There's a wooden hill and then out of sight a stream
and then more woods. Beyond them, the highway.
Every now and then you hear it thundering
or hissing with a fast little car or snarling
with a Harley. Brand name America.
The Indians who hid here, didn't
live here, had a name for this stream.
Today I decide to call it A Garnet Pebble
Holds Some Stupid Papers Beside Me
Safe From No Wind. And to paper it all turns.

26 June 1995

A day to be small. Day e,
tooth, sounds like *go*,
like *road*. I will stay here
wondering
 when a thought arises
where does it go if I don't go with it?
And for that matter where is this here I am?

26 June 1995

And that it should rain, the smell of it,
a drizzle first and then a rush of it,
dark in the little woods so thick around our house.
Can't see into the trees. Even at noon
the trees hide in solid shadow the folk we were.
The liberator struts underneath the sumacs
and curses Spain. The brain synapsing
like a Rockefeller Center skater,
an old man reading *Martin Chuzzlewit*,
a doll house on fire in a picture book, all
fear and no flame. The mind rehearses
virulent destinies. Fear. Origin
of heresies. In the time of the later kings
a scripture written with the help of demons
preached violence as the means. Murder.
A flame is a crack in a mirror, a girl's voice,
her cheek on a warm day, the arid lawn
below the boss's rock garden, watering.
We get the blessing always we anticipate.
A good man has good luck to give.
He preaches it among the sodden darkling trees.

26 June 1995

Why doesn't it sound the way it feels,
the air, the green breeze of middle morning
when for all its wafture honeysuckled
it brings news of noise, some housepainters
shouting to each other to keep good cheer
in the graveyard their jobs must be to them,
one actually whistles, and the machines
machining us all. But the breeze
brusied by what it bears is sweet as Saxony,
long-dimpled musics and a plate full of cakes.
Breakfast time on earth. Measurement of my face.
For a man's a god in his little garden
till the noises come. Wind drives the *Mani*-wheel
you made, a bell upside down is swallowing the sky.

27 June 1995

THE INNER ARRANGEMENTS

The inner arrangements, our speech
fluttering up among the wings of waterfowl
—postcard from Lake Baikal— sunset—
the long boring tragedy of fishermen—
I know the truth of things, leave feelings
out of it — wake, Kundry, your needs
(knees) compel you. Repentance is a body thing:
we genuflect, prostrate, grivel — we like
the down of it, at such instants to be low.
Yesterday I felt some dust, fine dust,
as I was cleaning the vacuum cleaner, felt
dust as a liquid so fine and ample as it fell
through my fingers palpating the filter
housing clear. If we can feel it. If it can fall.
Breaking is a way of answering. Comet
at the end of the old man's life. Be stalwart,
one day also we will defeat the sky
and then have nowhere to hide.

Kundry in her slinky train kneels silk before a tired knight.

28 June 1995

SAPLINGS

Saplings are rare in the Mongol regions
and when they dare to cut some
they prop them up to swing
prayer flags from in the west wind,
flowers in the big sky.
By the power of the Founder's motivation
a faith endures. Religions commonly
wander from the point. But there are those,
seers, keepers, seekers, finders,
who see to it that some core is kept
not impossibly remote from honest hearts.
The heartwood of the slenderest tree,
its capacity to ride the wind and stand.
To bear significance. And from far away
say Human folk are here, and herds, and water.

28 June 1995

One delivered to its destiny. Or: once
delivered to its destiny, an individual
consciousness pours from its blue pitcher
all that it has. Splatter of some pure
fluid onto the dry earth beneath
the last paltry rhododendron flowers
once so marvellous. Last moon.
Wind shivers the flowerets loose, which fall
and the whole operation appears pointless.
The pitcher is empty, destiny seems
busy somewhere else, the solemn individual
buffaloed by silences. But who knows?
This whole thing of ours may be an afterlife.
Or that adorable beforelife we read about
in the annals of the Lake of Milk,
biology of asteroids, the Book of Between—
my blue pitcher, my rhododendron bush.
Dusty and windworn the words we find to speak.

29 June 1995

THE SKILLFUL

Death has skills,
skills and crannies and broad boulevards
into your neighborhood for sure
no matter how many barricades,
impasses, triumphal arches, mazes, laws.
Death has coins and granaries,
skills hard for us to speak out loud
so hard those words are, and hard to resist
when Death comes speaking.
Such as they are, our weapons
rust from our tears, our maps
lead only to his door.
And our subways! He is the king of signs.

30 June 1995

in memory of Joan