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Be special. And it is special, 
the avatar of everyday 
comes down the old stairs 
dressed as sunlight.

It is still New England, 
we are always ready to 
begin we think but now 
something is unaccountably old.

It may be me it may be 
the seaplane dock at New Bedford 
or the white deer by Lake Cayuga 
or the four of hearts. The new lord

ruling hard in the room of the old. 
Yesterday on Mill Pond 
where there's never anything, 
a single swan. Is it he?

1 May 1993
or less.
Easily less.

But, the problem, ever,
in our faces
since 1950
(Olson Eisenhower Jasper Johns)

is can we more.
Can there be more.

Even yet there is a guess, a grail that something means.
Stress there,
on the last word.

Countdown, waiting
for the first human footsteps on the,
Earth.

1 May 1993

[responding to a posting from Pierre Joris responding to my response to jamato’s test. Done, from the numbers 3, 2, 1.]
THESE FLOWERS SLOW TO FADE

for Betty, on Mothers' Day

It has flowers in it war poor people death
Mozart and marzipan. Now and then
someone walks along and makes a road.
There is a thought that runs through all this
but is not this. It is a way to go. Somewhere fine
where you can catch your breath and turn around
to help the rest of us. You know all this.
Milarepa knew the way and Francis.
Marx sat writing postcards of the view
that Moses saw. Maybe Mozart heard it too.
On May Day everything looks close to what it is
—gnats shouting at the setting sun
finches' ballet art of appetite.
Somewhere in all this grass and glare is Wisdom
mother of Buddhas and the only sense.
Every mother you find yourself become
can't be any mother but the mind.

May Day '93
to go along with Charlotte's video
GARLIC

for Charlotte

you cut out and discard the green bone
that lies along the axis of each clove of garlic

d this is not the only thing you do
but I never saw anybody else do

making a longitudinal section with a sharp knife
and prying the long green prong out

a bone I never knew!
a taste I never knew was wrong!

Now we sit and listen to Rossini realizing
the world is stranger than we know.

That much we know.

1 May 1993
FROM THE INFINITE ABHIDHARMA

The obscurcation of wanting what you already have to become fresh again and kiss you with its special long-familiar difference.

The obscurcation of wanting to know the names of birds.

The obscurcation of knowing too many names of flowers.

The obscurcation of habitually drinking the morning coffee before your taste is ready to notice it.

The obscurcation of desiring food your parents said is good for you, you doubted then but now you believe, they're dead, everything is sad and you want that food. The liver. The tomato. The corn muffin.

The obscurcation of thinking there is something to say.

1 May 1993
(3 May 93)
Caught in the fibers of the world
my horsy priestly day comes up again
equiflaminiar 7♥
seven as a heart, a string sung
out of the woods to loop around a sheaf
of still upstanding maize,

the mild milpa of my condition,
far out from the track. In the old woods
a horse is a balance,
the slay the horse (October) is to break
the stasis of the equinox,
the threat to hold the world unchanging,

impermanence is chance of change

7 Quiej A horse apart. A me
among roses, expecting nothing.
Counting my shoes in the hall closet
like a king in hell.

I own
only the weather. I am suited
by obedience but who hears me
blindly? Only the fibers
of the world, trapping
in their rough honesty
the drift of what they think I say.
Trapping us—
loggers, trappers, missionaries.

You're better off trusting the moonlight
the tricky rhetoric of shadows.
I am translated. Of new. A sore
bound round by breathing, some word
it behooves me (oportet) to say.
O native language, why are you any?
Why can't I sit in the mountains of Moontown
and dream about a pale solitary egg
that opens and talks to me? *All love is there*
transacted from the Soviets of Central Asia
into the actual wood of memory,
put it in my hands, how smooth you are,

all the Mongol history, all the Uighur rage,
the small tempests of each nomad heart
desiring and desiring and fleeing over the grassy horizon,

where can never plant somewhere's corn?
And here's a dragon (*kLu*) neutral in bedrock
in a groove of shale. Every micron of the earth
is full of speaking populations,
every owner owned. Each speaks to us
in a language borrowed from all the others,
the lady cardinal talks to me in mine
she thinks, I answer with awkward
whistles. Things work,
the continuity

holds.

Things separate by nature. For the Lord
hath joined together no one and nothing, the nature
of nature is such approximations
you take as fixed items in the inventory.
Whereas. On Sunday the churches go to you.

2 May 1993
Bring home what would please a wife.
A duck flying low in a very blue sky—
see, it can be easy, kiwi, it can
nibble the particulars and report its dreams,
to be young and always on the march to it
knowing it will always be there,
imagine a world without to go. εἰμὶ
always, a friend in the restlessness itself.
I get tired of counting my shoes and put the light away.

Color names, cities in Spain, shirt buttons,
a figure in midnight beyond calculation.
A bee in the cash register. Smell of cheese.

2 May 1993
So some things have been decided. Decoded. I can't forget
the imperial meaningfulness of what looks like. What the years
have bent into resemblance. That's what counts. The valleys
east of Oneonta. The hills of the Terai under Himalayas.
Don't let the names fool me. I think I cannot tell this lie again.
We despair of language precisely because language is the only
form all of us do. And we all are guilty of it. Holocausts of terrible words.

2 May 1993
The ones on our side are not here yet—a road opened (they call it window) among the ravishing horses

and while they think it was Sea Hero who slipped through “like the Red Sea parting,” his jockey said, and while a hundred million people were watching
down the same chute between things poured the troops of the High Prince of Aldebaran and we are occupied again.

Planet of the War Games. If I dared I would tell all, and name the dynasties up there who fight their duels down here—

they find us and begin. If I were brave I would list the eras of their occupation and all the wars they made us fight,

and for whom. But I am lonely of their princesses, and full of fear. But I assure: they do come, and they are here.

What seems to happen here (Lincoln's Round Dance, Plato's Crucifixion) is arts & entertainment to distract us

from the war we are. From their enterprise among us. We wake from strange dreams anxious to be ordinary

and find the bears came down also from the woods and paw our pretty cars with greasy not-quite-hands.

2 May 1993 Red Hook
ã*v-d-

A Meditation on the word, 
trel-wa
a gratitude, a sense
of what we have been given,
all
that I have been given
by man or stone,

all the weather gave me,
and the river

what my mother made me, what
my father said
to get me going

and every one and every one
who gave me what I am.

Not so much a matter of return
but being mindful of the huge permission
in which I stand.

The kindness of them
I exist to understand.

3 May 1993
Kingston
ENCAUSTICUM

We can't overwhelm the past with the future but in a present Fire use all up & leave it Now. These words, ink burn, seem scorched into what I say.

A circle around nothing. A center full of self regard.

3 May 1993
THE SECOND CHANCE

If I were sitting here waiting for it to begin
the circus that fell from the stars
in green their apparatus and in gold
the capes of her who pivots
on a purely noumenal reference point in
the middle of the air

the funambulist of the lower, is she
the queen of this whole mistake, whirl,

the kid I was gazes up at all the tinseled joinings, This
is the world! I will grow huge
to accommodate it, I will grow a bone
big enough for all your music—

maybe this time I would see right through the colors
to the uninflected light before.

3 May 1993
WAKING

for Charlotte

Sometimes it’s very like the dark.
When the people you know are in there
won’t answer when you call.
You wind up speaking to them
in a mild, expostulating, terrified voice.
When the light switch in your hand
clicks and clicks but nothing changes.

It could be a map on the wall
of a country you fell out of years ago
and only the language is left
but nobody’s speaking.

4 May 1993
At what age should a man begin his castle?
At birth he already begins to die.
His whole mind and heart should be set on leaving,
learning, saying good-bye to each leaf of every tree.

4 May 1993
This book I'm writing in is so light
so fine of paper and full of levity
a word is not guilty of furrowing,
it floats in Malibu, the sun
remembers itself, a dog sings.
All transcendence becomes a thing to touch.
Not hold. The sunlight
is tired of impersonating my skin.
In the new white muslin curtains
the day comes in like the seacoast,
the leaves outside seem nodding birds
mired in grey sky. How can a book
let a man see? In a cup of sand
a stick of incense smolders.

4 May 1993
The mowers have come.
My chubby friend sits on his tractor
annihilating (Marvell's word)
the morning. On this grey day
it's up to him to wake the blackbirds
who wake us. Around the Triangle
he goes and goes, like a humiliating
memory I can't get out of mind.
That time near the source of the Rhine.
Black swan in Austria. Yesterday
her skin felt otherwise, all my failures
sailed back to the old country. Sound
diminishes with the square of the distance—
the other end of the Triangle is bearable,
the thing he does, this outdoor housework,
this angry wife of the world. Time
has these surprises. No place to hide
from sound — which proves that music
is invented by our skin, our fault, our Bach,
our portable hell. Later we'll take comfort
like fools in the smell of new-mown hay.

4 May 1993
Place it where they sit
a stone bench far back from the altar
or what to call it where the deed is done,
bema, ambo, umbilicus or rugged diorite
flattened for another body to stretch out on.

Not yours. You're sitting here with sunlight
remembering old slurs. Usually
a family is hell on earth enough, and a woman
flees it into worse. The history
of things, cæsura, the tribes contending.

I come back to the waterfall
as if I had been here before,
half-Merlin, half-Lewis Carroll,
never knowing when the Utterance
suddenly makes sense
and all the silliness
is seeligkeit and soules ward and sympathy
sinewing the worlds together

and from its absurd relationship
discover the meaning of the broken dandelion
a flower tossed into the sky
and lands on earth.

Give what is beautiful, whatever you do find so. This offering is of the mind that offers it,
And since you love your body best, start out with that—

O yes you do, don't tell me how it fails and falters and gives pain — it is the first of all your lovers and you never forget. It is the first of you, and lasts while you do, thinking as you do. So start with that.

I cannot stand this information, it sounds like the lunacy of schools, hummingbirds, brass basins steaming under fly-buzz in Jerusalem. Go back to the stone, the informing vacancy waiting to make holy what is placed upon it. There set your thought.
Ordovician. The premise
of geology. A world on its way

(they talk among themselves
the way they talk with strangers,
listen, Doctor, it happened in the park,
I saw a dog mount up upon another,
big or little, young or old,
and I amazed myself by looking away,
blushing like an old brick wall,

o darling, doctor, I saw a bird
frantic in a sandbox, they say sparrows
bathe in dust, this must be that,

consecrate me with your touch,

I saw a shadow of a China tree
fall on an old brick wall
and looked like my hand before my face
when I look up from crying, I saw a house
and I was in it, a long hallway
full of merchandise, parrots and peacocks,
a smell of terebinth, a paper azure dragon
hanging from the calendar, I saw a woman
pouring tea from a brass basin
into an endless series of tiny china cups.
And she gave me one, saying my name
I thought it was, a sound
I had never heard, halfway between
a redbird crying 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and a
man selling tofu in the street
playing his flute, the cool water
sloshing pleasantly in the shallow wooden tub
of elm wood he carries on his back
from block to block of the old neighborhood,
doctor, can you free me from this park
I want to feel inside me,

I thought the names,
and thought the names would free,

darling,
isn't there any more to me?

The chipmunk
has an appointment
underneath the porch,
an assignation
with his appetites, which are his destiny.

Hence they called this paradise, “the park”
and we are the Sunday of the galaxy
stroll in blue sunlight
dancing & romancing
for the pleasure of beholders
our beholders
who are as many
as the stars you see
on the top of autumn nights
times all of us.

At eight o'clock I eat a crust of bread,
darling, the way we take care of our skin,
a paper full of flower petals, moth wings,
crucifers healing what they do,
oil of brassicas, rich men's white buildings
along the Narragansett shore.

Music will always have its way with us,
doctor, therefore I petitioned the warden
to disconnect my neural passages
for I found torture in the random sounds
the other prisoners cannot live without
and deem their pleasure.

But he reluctant to disengage me
from any source of pain
explained the irritant
using language that seemed to comfort him.
Rhetoric of the park, darling,
I was talking to a shirt hung on an old china doorknob
light came across the floorboards towards it
and no one understood.

Reluctant warden, tape recorder,
black and white, an ocean urgent,
how slow geology is to remedy
the Ordovician upthrust of our nightmares,
lust unwrapped in perfect silence
a woman naked in the pines
shivering beneath the anxious words

and in cold morning and in flight
to the Land the river comes from.

5 May 1993
L A R U S

Can I attend to this necessity
while the optional
carries itself high, like a black-winged gull
over a river a hundred
miles from the sea

There is ruin everywhere
to feed on, there is change.
I bring this to the committee
of like-minded terrified intellectuals

promising that wherever the moon
reaches there will always be a tide.

5 May 1993
Cinco de Mayo / Poet Day: fifth of the fifth / The High
For all the rain we had
this is the first rain

April actuality come late, things
arising, a hole here and there
in someone’s sock. First rain,
then prospering. To edit
an old war. Displace
a few hundred thousand legionaries
and settle them on the frontiers.
Corn cows beer with C&W
and all of Rome will be safe.

Save the center
from the circumference—

this is the goal of every autocrat, the work
of every committee.

Lost in my anarchy, I have no better answer
than take things apart and run in the rain.

5 May 1993