

The Enchanted Adder

--original poems

by

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ABSTRACT

In the series of poems titled The Enchanted Adder an attempt has been made to imitate a musical form in that the series consists of a suite containing several movements composed upon a unifying theme. Each movement is in itself a set of variations. The theme is that of love. The first and last poems lie outside the suite and deal with the craft of poetry; they thus form an Introduction and a Coda. At the same time they contain suggestions of the central theme.

Movement 1, poems 2-5: attempts to express the joy and innocence found in love but at the same time foreshadows the adder in the garden.

Movement 2, poems 6-12: the tonality grows darker as uncertainty, fear of loss, and questioning enter.

Movement 3, poems 13-19: loss, dread and a symbolic death pick up from the second movement.

Movement 4, poems 20-26: expresses a variety of conflicting emotions: the need to accept loss, again symbolic death, the censorship of society, the desert after love, hatred towards both the self and towards the beloved.

Movement 5, poems 27-30: again the mood shifts; this time to one of cynicism and confusion.

Movement 6, poem 31: a prayer that the poet's daughter may not have to live through her own experience.

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Movement 7, poems 32-33: the ascent out of loss.

Movement 8, poems 34-38: a section dealing with madness and nightmares on the part of both the man and the woman.

Movement 9, poem 39: deals with the physical death of the man; this may be actual or it may take place in the mind of the woman who has not been able to erase what has occurred from her sub-conscious. The suite is intended to end ambiguously.

An attempt has been made to give flexibility to the whole through the use of various verse forms and through a certain amount of contrapuntal movement in time.

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Fiddlehead
Potlatch
Prism

THE POET

The man, the poet, wrote in dust,
using a curious, pointed stick,
made signs and symbols while the taste
of summer lay upon his lips.

Towers of magic shaped in air,
and Dierdre kissed the sullen rock;
Helen walked a broken wall
and Cleopatra kissed the snake.

The woman stood beside the well
and summer sang within her throat;
she watched the stick that shaped her will
and heard the black-bird's double note.

The first word drew an arc of steel
about her breast; then silent bands
enclosed her thighs, her naked feet,
her trapped, astonished hands.

The woman stood through all the day,
nor mercy sought, nor mercy found;
the poet did not once look up
but wrote his heart upon the ground.

THE GARDEN

The garden grew rank that remarkable summer
and children grew tall as the thistle and fennel;
the fruit of the apple plumped large as sweet
melons and apricots tumbled with bees.
The blackberry vines crawled over the windows
and bindweed climbed fences that failed
to keep order among the rich-throated widows,
the young men, the old men, the maids.

CORRESPONDENCES

That day the air was filled with angels:
brightly their wings sifted through glitter
of rocking and rocking sun-struck water,
translucently shadowed the shining pebbles,
the gold-green grass.

Angelic pinions lay fallen -- love
upon the sod, and incandescent birds
dropped singing across the sun;
and you and I were suddenly, wonderfully, children
in the washed morning of Eden.

THE ENCHANTED ADDER

In the garden of the flesh
the enchanted adder lies,
curled in the grasses
of that singing place;
and the children who play
with the wild rose spray,
sleepy in the honey-suckle noons,
do not see
the bright bracelet
quiet beneath
the white tree.

EPIPHANY

I

Then the whales came into harbour:
leaping, green-tailed sea hissed over
back and fin and belly as monster
after monster leaped in mating.
Water swept the sand and screaming
gulls danced in phallic fountains . . .

Shark teeth rocks stood guard before
entrance of waters to the morning harbour.

II

We turned to discover
astonished laughter
in each other's eyes.
You said, "The corridors
of our two lives
had flaming letters
at this particular corner."

III

And when the sun fell past the angry teeth
it burned, a monstrous moon in a cold sky.
A ship of filament sailed through the sheath-
held fire, and suddenly you cried and said,
"Now I have seen the containing hand of God."

IV

The night drove on, and turning from
a ravaging sea to a narrow room,
we snatched our epiphany from time,
but all our dreams were dredged with tides
and whales lusted through our bed.

FERRIS WHEEL AT NIGHT

Back from far out, steady ground
unsteady, whirling with what has been:
scarlet circles, yellow arcs, blue, green --
we saw the wheel a web against the sky;
that was the time to place feet upon round
earth circling a round sun, star steadying
its flight in a galaxy of light,
which turns again among spiralling
forms of fire caught in the net of night.

But we dizzy, we two, found
no anchor with which to grapple
sliding land.

ENMESHED

We have been into the water, we two
who willed the descent and went as children go,
hand in hand, trusting the ultimate
shell of our own innocence. And the seas
were kind for we found things to love there where
weed tangled in our hair and did not choose
to drag us down; where yellow spider crabs wore
yellow leaves, and stars lay drowned, and flecked
fish swam in nets of dream:
all were benign, none alien,
and we, so sure of our ascent, caught the thin
edge of day, and slipped, and found the land was gone.

THE TIGER

Why do I remember
here in the arch of your love
the flower of the tiger?

Grace
transfuses with light certain events:
night
and a child watching while
an Indian tiger lies belly open wide
beneath black trees
and dark hands pluck the warm
red and purple fruit
of that fierce flower;
small boy children
naked in the circle of the fire
are rubbed with fat
bronzed into metal
oiled with strength taken from
the stilled desire
of the violent body of the broken tiger.

Here in the arch of your love I remember;
it is sheltered, this place,
sheltered and warm,
telescoped down
the funnel of time.

THE ISLAND

At first, mist floated the island far out
from the shore, and it settled, remote,
in early morning. The woman said,
"Long ago, Indians roped coffins
containing their dead into its branches."

Mid-day, it drifted so near, the fused
trees might almost be counted. She said,
"It catches the sea-birds. They die
on snags that clutch a revolving sky."

At evening it moved gently away
while the man persisted, "Are there sheltered beaches?"
"They are there for those who dare to leave
spears and utensils behind." A stone, he thought,
might hit the humped, black heart of the island.

Night fell and the man stared alone
at a wide whale flank where the island had been;
He locked all doors and slept and found asylum
in the dissolution of sea deep dreams.

WIND AND STONE

Throw out great thighs, you woman of stone,
who sleep upon the granite rock;
thighs not formed to love or bless
but for the fierce white bird that still
wheels with lust above the hill;
the bird whose beak is curved to stain
more tender breasts with blood and death.
His huge wings beat expectant air
towards this long appointed hour.

Throw out great thighs to rush of wind
that flattens dead weeds at your feet
and raises dry dust from the land.
With that primeval act complete,
sheaves of sparks, brilliant flowers,
will burst into the nascent light,
and tall the children walk again,
unblemished sprung from wind and stone.

YELLOW SQUARE

Look

do you see a figure lean against the pane?
do you see the bright uncurtained light
where the humped woman stands against the rain?

There

high above the street is a yellow square
filled with a shadow
 watching us here

Shhh!

she stands as dark as a question mark
she stands as still
 as the man was still
 the man who fell
the night the moon rolled on its edge

Don't

whisper don't run don't allow
a sound to flutter to the ground
it might show a print in the muddy path

Wait

the gate might creak if you draw the latch

It's late

the moon looks odd
 a dog
 whimpers in the lane

MATING

It was then that I met my angel;
we did not turn aside, he and I,
but confronted each other, hostile
and proud in our walking,
and it seemed a stillness was born
as we stood naked waiting
to combine form with form.

O it was not easy, and even after
(foot braced to foot, thigh to thigh)
we pierced each other's bone
no words may tell the pain.

It was a long time, that curious
mating, and I not prepared to pound
muscle and mind and flesh
into the fragments demanded
by lust of this tall stranger,
he who had been approaching the place
of meeting since that day I lay
rejected by the womb wherein
my frame was created.

Each cell must break, he said;
we will then return the way I have come.
His feet marked the dust,
his iron hand, the breast,
his wings drove submission.

We turned and walked the edge of creation,
no abyss nor mountain could alter
the road we had taken.

THE TEST

And you spoke
of the crucible; cruel
heat purifies, you said.

The dross will be cleared
we agreed,
and only fire may purge
the essential need;
the bone alone remain
when all is done.

It may destroy, you said,
and we may find
we cannot contend
with flame.
And all that time
we stood
face to face,
hand in hand,
until nothing but ash remained.

ONE PARTICULAR MORNING

Every quarter of every hour
chimes shiver the city square;
cars pass, and people, and minutes drop
through still air.

Between crossed blinds I see a gull
floating in this sea town, and, over
the bird, blue sky, and under
the arc of its wing a building
bright in the morning.

Chessmen stand on
the waiting board,
and my bruised body sits staring
at an arrow traced by sun
on the wall. The world is spun
on its thread as I wonder
if the cancerous breath
is closer.

Chimes shiver the square.

Anemones in a blue vase on the table:
unequivocal brilliant petals
of windy alpine flowers.
But one frail corolla
is already dying, drooping over
the clear grey and white of a cup and saucer.

Impossible that other lives should
have been lived yesterday here,
other lives tomorrow.
Your shirt falls on the chair,
your brush dries on the ledge,
my night-gown is thrown
over the white bed-spread.

The chessmen stand at attention;
the sun draws an arrow down
the wall; the clock chimes,
and my blind hands reach for each
knot, each slat in the edifice
built against destruction.

The pattern on the cup --
cup built for wine or water --
whirling anemones, lamp of amber,
square of blotter,
each particle of matter,
transforms, shifts, intersects with fire.

The moment only is of significance;
the moment only,
 the moment here,
waiting for the crouching shadow
seeping through the white plaster,
under the locked door.

THE DARK WOOD

We entered the darkness, we came to the wood
attended by symbols: snake, raven and dove
follow the living who die as they move;

we carried the wine, we carried the bread.

BALLAD

"Take my hands and take my heart,
lay them underneath the street,
singing birds have left this town
where gulls drink the fallen rain.

I'll tie my hair about the post,
let my cumbered body waste
up against the certain iron
and let the salt wind eat my bone.

And that the tongue may not remain
to sing the song of what I've seen,
may my mouth be filled with straw --
straw is rough and dry and clean.

Then at last the simple dark
may be let to blind my eyes
and to wrap my body in
quiet, secret comforting."

While the lady sang her song
she tied her hair about the post;
her little hands were skeletons
dancing in the city dust.

THE BELL

The plunging bell makes no sound;
crazed with gales and gusts, the round
full throated iron cup thrusts wide
an anguished mouth, but no clashed tide
of bellows shatters rocks; the chain
only creaks in slithered rain.

The tongue in the cavern of the head
pushed on palate finds no press
can burst the circle of the flesh;
no golden gong of love or rage
can break the ancient barricade
which centuries have chained in bone
about the heart, about the groin.

THE DEAD

I have been into the halls of the dead.

It is a question of the mask
the king wears,
and of how one may contend
if one sleeps in the bed
with the iron-faced judge of the dead.

There are streets,
and men at the corners
in crumpled gray suits
stand in motionless groups
under the yellow lights;
they do not speak although their lips move
in tenuous gesture,
or they wonder alone
and their bone
is soft to the center;
their hands do not feel the black stone
which presses down.

It is dark and light and dark
and sometimes convertibles pass,
scavengers in brilliant plumage.

Somewhere behind
the unseeing eyes,
there are spacious paths
where Persephone walks,
seven pomegranate seeds in her mouth,
waiting for redemption.
But the way to the daughter
of rich Demeter
is blocked by self turning on self,
preoccupation.

She moves into the bed of the king;
each night she dies and yet retains
the seeds of fruition.
How does she keep the green
when the red dyes her tongue
with dissolution?
And how, when the mask kisses her breast,
her belly, her thighs,
does she find satisfaction?

Old newspapers cling to old palings,
dead butts shred on stone,
a voice, from a scavenger window,
taunts an offer of love.

I have been into the halls of the dead;
the old men said I wore white,
and white makes the woman invulnerable,
they said.

TOTEM

Give comfort, comfort, Totem old as man
is old, and greyed by sun, ruttled by rain;
power resides in your clenched fists,
in the indifference of your staring eyes.

Generations stood beneath your shade,
birds flew about your head,
men carved in your blood.

Now alien among the peoples in palaces of stone
you stand as if God stood unperturbed and waiting.

 The noon
heat blisters the skin of the lost, the haunted;
the parting hour has come for lovers who need
a place to hide . . . there is none, so pardon
the head laid on your hand a moment, the heart
that dies a moment against your side.

LIGHTLY PASS

If loss is suffered take the wound
into your cradling hand
(even if bones no longer are jointed)
and mark the occasion;
the occasion is one
not to be slighted.

Ours is a season of careful evasion;
we turn back to back and stare unseeing
at a shifting horizon.
Eyes slip by eyes and tongues
no longer mouth the sounds
that pass into understanding
but find substitute sounds.
We tick like grandfather clocks in shut rooms
afraid to appease the hidden need
or else our words fall, eternal lies,
in halls of the sitting dead.

I remember the mother whose daughter
could not be found
and who dreamed
a rag-doll body had been cast
onto a pile of rocks.
She made her pilgrimage
slow and more slow in the hot sun
and there lay the rotting flesh
which deaf-mute brothers had thrust
onto a rocky tomb.

O Demeter, for six months of every year
you have your daughter.

Among the dead, Dido turned from Aeneas;
what could possibly be said?

The fire
had burned her long black hair,
the eyes that watched ships pass
across dolphined water.

There was a time for love and if now
the wound in the thigh
will not heal
if tongue cannot find the right question
mind the right answer
mark the occasion
and then lightly pass
the mound in dried grass.

THE CHILD

The child she sang her morning song;
the scissor man he came along
and stole her small pink singing tongue
to sell to those no longer young.

The child she danced in the middle day;
her feet were wanted by those who pay
and when the neat machine had gone
she only had stumps to dance upon.

The child she played with a piece of string
upon some steps in the cool of evening;
a passer-by who watched her play
took her hands and went his way.

The child she found when night was come
she could not reach her secret home;
she could not pray, she could not sing,
her heart it seemed a useless thing.

They made a small and narrow bed
and let the grass grow on her head.

THE WOMAN AND MAN

They came to the place for the sacrifice, the man and the woman, and there, as a part of the dance, they were tied back to back in the flooded square of the inclement sun. The ritual was old and simple: small strips of skin were torn, piece by piece, with flashing hot pincers in skilful white hands, from the chest and the breast and the hips and the thighs of the woman and man.

THE END

It is a terrible place to arrive at: here
where crucified trees are thin white bone
against a blind and pitiless sky,
where stumps hump black between
the fallen giants. Bald-headed eagles fly
over the grotesque cemetery of unburying,
and they will not find mouse or bird, but stone
to slake their craving.

Plumes of fine
smoke make sudden spurts into the burning
air and hang in the desert after love
as if afraid of dying.

SELF PORTRAIT

I saw my flesh
thick with the feathery scurf
of death,
as if impassioned fire
had consumed each cell,
leaving a wall
of froth.
No pin or knife
could make respond,
no pain
make my soiled surfaces
aware again,
no love
break through that sepulchre,
no mercy strip
that gross indecency from lip,
no loss
cleanse thigh or breast,
no hate scourge clean
corrupted skin.

CHARM

Lift your cup and find me stretched
between the water and your lip;
your thirsting never shall be quenched
by water from a wayside cup.

Stand, outcast man, before the fire,
find my shadow huge between
warmth and your pale, shrinking skin;
no fire may straighten crooked bone.

Run across the crumbled world,
hide within the creviced rock,
still your mind confronts my mind
in the mirror of the dark.

When the winter winds have stripped
each aching ounce of tawdry flesh,
when the proud chameleon heart
has died of its own curled deceit,
then at last you may escape
perilous love and perilous hate.

NAKED POEM

I am naked
Leaves which I strip
to clothe such nakedness
shrivel and die

I hide
behind walls which fall
and I reach for curtains that shred
in my hand
to bloodied thread

I run
The world turns
I stand still in my running
Uphill and down no difference makes
makes no sound

I dig
in the earth
and the earth is snow melting
wherever I touch
clod for comfort

I am naked
The eye of the sun burns the burning dance
the body the brain
 the articulate hand
 the tongue
 the bone
 the crotch
 of shame

MERRY-GO-ROUND

Ah yes, we live upon the crust
with other brilliant, startling things;
the rock beneath, the void above,
the white and hungry worm within.

The fishes leap, the butterflies
strip nectar from the secret place,
and girls with wanton, golden limbs
sport within their paradise.

Sometimes fathers kill their children,
sometimes children kill their sires,
but what's the care when fresh desire
is always there to plant again?

Ah yes, we live upon the crust
where the pretty flowers grow
and the little birdies sing
all generated out of dust.

THE SACRIFICE

Cloaked in black, the woman stood
at the entrance to the wood,
holding in her hands a dove.

She walked along the twisting path
and heavy branches shut the light;
locked in their voracious growth
sacrificial birds hung white.
In the middle of the wood
she killed the palpitating dove,
its blood a stain upon her breast,
its mouth the awkward mouth of love.

THE LOSS

When Eve lost
her Eden
she did not weep
for flowers or fruit
or birds singing
but for the child
that she had been.
And when she reached
for leaves
she died
and when the great god called
she knew
protecting walls were gone.
And when the man
cried on her breast
she knew
this would go on
 and on
 and on.

THE WOOD

I came to a wood
where the way was lost,
stick broken in hand
and no way blessed.

Thin bones were nailed
on a blighted tree
and under the bones
a leaf ticked eternally.

Can you explain,
Dante or Beatrice,
that leaf in a place
where no wind breaks?

PRAYER FOR MY DAUGHTER

Like Yeats, I too desire you have
the ceremonies of the quiet heart;
and now that you have found the signs
of woman on your breast and loins,
I ask that you shall play the part
of innocent beauty, honest love.

My darling, let your steps remain
within the shade of the spreading tree,
and if the hurting sun would move
your feet to falter from the grove,
consider the snake's hostility,
the empty well, the broken thorn.

May any whom you may offend
forgive, since life will prove that none
may live without releasing pain,
and when you open wide your hand
that bird will fly and not return
upon entreaty or command.

And when the testing fire is white
I pray its fingers may expose
within the flesh a tree of bone
undestroyed by wind or flame,
and that the bird drawn by its light
may prove to be the bird of love.

EXORCISIMS

There is that woman
calm in all her movement
who long sleeves balanced
small hands olive skinned
bends two scarlet tulips
and sets each stem parabolas
within a bowl to catch a moment
clear as water

Or there is that man
intent in all his movement
who quick with a twisting wrist
hands hard toughened skin
takes the cumbered clay
molds the bowl where tulips may be placed
into a clear whole

There is another
precise in all his thought
who poised at a delicate place
rage for order in his blood
hoops words about bright images
or polishes their surfaces
until kaleidoscopic mirrors
reveal his heart

Exorcisms may be found against disorders of the mind.

THE VOICE OF THE ANGEL

"Some day, emerging at last out of this fell insight,
may I lift up jubilant praise to assenting Angels!"

Rilke (trans. Leishman
Spender)

"The angel . . . is an angel that commands, and no
one can resist his radiance because he moves his steel
wings in the ambit of the elect."

Lorca (trans. Gili)

The fragments of his holy voice
lay shattered shard on shard, and even
when the lady stooped
to pick the pieces from the dust
they crumbled in her aching palm.

"And how can I obey a voice
Contained in broken hieroglyphs?"

She marked the markings at her feet,
listened to the small bird song,
heard the obdurate command,
"Step by step -- the way is long."

"Chi-chu, chi-chu, chi-chu,"
sang the bird.

"I loved love," the lady said,
"and died in that strange land."

The lady walked the earth along;
towers may fall and birds may lie
and water underneath the rocks
cannot quench an angry thirst
that blisters in the sun.

Cracked the grass that slit the mud,
black the branches overhead;
a panther stalked the lady's shade,
the albatross was dead.

Bones sang, little bones made harp
for a hot and whistling wind,
and still she walked because the voice
was caked into her hand:
"Take one step, and then a step,"
its unalterable command.

Desire burned her burning limbs
now that love was dead
and none could lay the bitter ghost
that cancered at her heart.
The panther walked within her shade,
equivocal bright stare
watched the fever in her eyes
her breast and loins laid bare.

Holy fragments in her hand,
the lady saw the sky grow black;
the panther and her bones lay down
uneasy in the dark.
"Another step, another step,"
inexorable command --
she dragged her bones up from their bed
and walked into the dawn.

The day, the night, the night, the day
swung passed in arcs of fire;
little stones devoured her feet,
the brittle sand her hair.

The fragments in her shaking hand
drove the lady on
until the fierce wound dropped away
and herself and self were one.

"Chi-chu, chi-chu, chi-chu,"
sang the bird.
The tree was white with bloom.
The panther licked her bloodied hand --
his tongue as sweet as fern;
the lady drew her tattered gown
about her in the sun.

A TENDER SUMMER

Let it be a tender summer
depicted in washed colours
where details
are focussed with clarity
and exactitude

On my book I watch
a caterpillar
thin-skinned, green and delicate,
measuring exactly and with clarity
the glossy page;
its half-inch length arches
and contracts
across an empty alphabet

So I, measuring with oblique eyes
the winter I have traversed
to arrive
at this present and temporary anchorage,
hear the voices
of two men and one woman
discussing
the intricacies of being alive

The caterpillar rears upright
wavering towards the next foot-space;
the sky is clouded
the sun a little warm
the sea below us chopped with wind

It is not swimming weather;
nevertheless, we have individually traversed
a black winter;
alive and measuring we sit
in a kind of peace

Let it be a tender summer

WEATHERING

The waxed octagonal cells
were stripped of all
their nectars, nymphs and pollens
the day that I
lifted the lid, examined the supers;
a dead city lay
in mathematical precision

A hundred thousand gold-furred bees
had left a lovely desolation
incorruptible under the hot sun,
and I
considered then
that could my body die
and yet remain
cell conjoined to cell
until you came,
your hand might lift a weathered board
and find
a curious consolation

THE MADMAN

A cruel, bright world, sighs the madman,
walking in his garden;
the flower he picks turns chalcedon
within his needful grasp,
and hard and white quartz daisies blaze,
and ruby hard, the rose.

A lapis lizard by the fountain,
immutable upon a rock,
watches fragile fingers pluck
stone lilies one by one:
glittering reptile, sapphirine,
unwarmed by morning sun.

The madman hums a thin cracked song,
walking in his garden.
The emerald bird cannot sing
because its beak is frozen,
but brittle leaves about the path
clap-clatter in the morning.

MAN TO LIZARD

Lady, when I wish to speak
with you
why do you turn
into a lizard with reptilian eyes?

You astonish me.
It is solstice hot
and bees prick pollen
into yellow sacked legs
from blazing roses
while you wait
immobile on the striated rock

Each time the question
I wish to ask
has shaped itself in my mouth
you have shifted
and assumed the skin
of raven, snake or fox.

But today the shape
is unforeseen
and I no longer can contend.

Lady, when will you reply,
with green eyes your own
and your black hair wrapping
my white bone?

LIZARD TO MAN

You astonish me
with your persistence.

The answer you would have
may not be given
even if
bees store sulphur-yellow pollen
and sun burns roses
into tattered chalices.

My disguises are assumed
to shield your silly heart
that your eyes may not turn
cool as this reptilian skin
hard as this hard rock.

ANIMAL POEM

There was not no not
one animal
that was not white

I walked
on thick-piled carpets
brushed hands on tapestries
heard Ormulu clocks tick and tick
in every static pause
between his words.

O that voice silky as a child's pubescent hair

They were ingenious the cages
and very small
The first was set in a blue-striped wall
and the rabbit in it
had eyes
that matched the Recamier chaise

A frosty parakeet wings outstretched
inhabited the shade of a goose-necked lamp
and a white rat
sat solemnly in
a silver cigarette box

The magician
seemed unaware of the animals
but I had a feeling
he wanted me to notice
the size of the cages

The chihuahua
in an inlaid chest
one expected to contain ivory chess-men
seemed so unhappy
I lifted him shivering
opened the door let him run
--stumbling uncertain --
through thin
cold snow
to the stunted woods
and then . . .

then at last I turned
to the parchment-skinned magician

JACKAL

It is remembering the hurling stones . . .

Or is it cries of that small animal
the woman first recalls in night-wood dreams?
O the jackal steals brittle boned old fowls
and hungry men and women must retaliate,
but even so the yelping pain
erects red nerves that arch the back
and leap into the sickness of the heart.

(Cries of love and agony are not
more far apart than skin from skin.
You may dream death and I the wish
to metamorphosise the flesh
while the stoned dog tears desperate
claws into the earth.)

A child, watching the raised arms,
absorbed faces, once wished to take
a jackal in her hands, to soothe
the palpitating wound, but the woman,
grown beyond such tenderesses,
now responds in night-wood dreams
by walking past each angry stone,
knowing any death is died alone.

NEW YEAR'S DAY

In this white wood
cat humped snow lies gentle on
branch and branch and now and then
a humped cat falls
spumedrft between the trees

Coffined in glass I watch
and find no apocalyptic thrush
to shatter with his song
this straight box
nor any diamond hard enough
to scratch a name upon this glass

There is no name to scratch upon the glass

A year has passed and now
your face has softened in my mind
Your hand may give no touch
You lie where no snow falls
where no oak or stone confounds
the dust settled at your heart

Death cancels love I say
and should he sing that bird I cannot find
forget forget forget
all this glass would shatter at the sound

FINDING

So slow the growing
secret
Nothing needed from mind
to nurture the rounding hardness
completing itself in darkness
No seeing needed
or sound
intention even

Not even love

The body shaping the body
and until the surrender
the mind not knowing
what cells have imagined
created
what blood and bone have found

So with the poem