

Final Version (?)

8/2011

Canto

In the orchard  
when you reached  
your mother's hand  
to pick  
a blushing pear, or  
her shoulder  
tensed—you, searching  
your bag for  
something you need  
down there  
somewhere.

When you caught me  
having gained  
my father's  
gait, voice-drop,  
nose-prow, or  
his weight:  
new belongings!  
—Such knowledge  
like a body  
we grow into,  
bodies aging  
into bodies  
we knew.

No *fading mansion*  
as Shakespeare says  
our bodies  
like our comprehension  
one day will rise  
like a foal on shaky legs  
and look back  
for its mother  
gone already  
to graze another  
hill, to stand alone  
in every kind of weather.

Is this how  
we lose ourselves  
to come together?  
Perfection  
cannot hide  
in imperfection's  
change, nor eyes  
like coals  
increase without gain,  
dark stars of knowing  
without the questioning.  
I see them kindle,  
your eyes, in sleep's  
firmament  
like clues to a future  
unreadable until  
looking away  
I am less blind, more  
quickly tuned  
to the strain  
I hope to find,  
to outrace, un-  
bind.  
So Ta-Urt,  
the hippo, lion, woman, croc  
who devours  
the dead  
with encompassing  
rendering maw  
& tits drained  
by endless providing  
is submerged  
on the papyrus  
"painted over"  
and cannot be  
viewed directly  
however I twist  
to trace the vein  
of ink on the trembling  
dream leaf of the book—  
though you can see

she holds the ankh  
or is it a knife  
she pulls from the sheath  
approaching slipping  
behind my vision for  
the anti-aubade  
I can't shake,  
wrestling to wake  
to escape, no  
to embrace even  
as I rouse:  
hope, desire, belief, fear  
in flesh refined,  
in sleep  
passing from age  
to age faster  
than we sense  
the day stream past—  
I feel her in  
the male breast  
softening, as female  
lips darken  
with garden shade,  
her hot humus  
breath an assurance  
we share, uneasy  
but undenied (the bounty  
given, given  
back) who still  
sleep alongside  
each other  
no longer so  
opposite, a new  
merging into  
governing growth,  
your shoulder now  
with its singular mark  
rising & falling  
like a white feathered  
shag on a swell, riding  
the ebb tide, and below

the surface of things  
another nourishment  
where nothing's  
loosely spent, as  
grass becomes grain  
becomes bread becomes  
host; as wood  
turns to flame  
into light; as blossom  
flowers into  
crown—we plant  
each other  
in the one bed  
and launch  
through night  
on a sea of milk.