

1976

# The Cap

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## Hunting

I lurk on the floor of silence  
to escape the jostling sounds  
I want to flower with silence  
prefigure birds  
with intimations of their forms  
as the clear air prefigures  
a tall mountain

is it a betrayal of thing love hope  
the gates of your house and mine

a good hunter blends subtly with the forest  
becomes part of its green thron  
grows in it like a beech tree fern guelder-rose  
then the big game comes to the green hand  
and dies of its greenness

consider silence it is like a forest  
break a twig there it explodes like a gun

## The Cap

when I first looked that way  
my leg was resting by this cap

when I looked at it for the second time  
the cap had fallen half-way down my leg

by the third glance it had crossed the river  
and was clearly beyond me

at the final glance I could not see it at all  
even beyond the mountains and forests

pity we can no more see each other  
I remarked guessing its direction

don't whine for your cap it replied  
you no longer have the head for it

## Cat

I can't see you clearly it is all a lie  
but everything is much simpler: taste of water shadow of chair  
flight of steps life death

let my word and object meet like two kissing mouths  
the cat gnarl-like on that tree-branch  
wants a bird not a metaphor

## Axe

when the day has peeled away completely we bury its white kernel deep in  
the earth stand our bed over it and keep an axe handy to fight any attacker  
even in sleep

the iron purrs silently digesting the cool expectation of a blow rubs against  
our hands kisses our fingertips swims under the pillow rocks our head slides  
down our neck and shoulders touches our hips and thighs gradually shifting  
the forces of gravity which imprison us in a factual order of things inter-  
laces our hair with parallels twines its helve round the meridians

suddenly we ride the snug horse of sleep kicking its flanks searing its mouth  
the horse rears up clears the first obstacle and with a dry crack we are de-  
tached from our shadows the taste of metal floods our mouth and we par-  
take in the communion of heroes

we are now admiral nelson at trafalgar a simple soldier at verdun st george  
swallowing a fiery dragon our hair sings heroically and nobly the raging