

AT THE SOUND

By Paul Hoover

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Collecting leaves
in the flat

of his hand—
what will

be enough,
and what

will be
too many?

*

No thoughts.
Irreducible manners

and the outer
shore ruined.

*

Every hood
ornament

in the shape
of its driver.

*

After coherence
Cassandra

and Susan
in a glass

house sleeping.

*

Where the relics
stir

& eddy,

the aesthetic
boundary's

square.

*

A clair-
voyant

object

adjacent to
its sign.

*

Still in
the dark,

its half-
eye shining,

the world's
mind

awakens.

*

Stained by
flies

and green
fir

puddles,

routine and
its mother.

*

No gnomes
for me—

discipline,
measure and

lots of
rupture,

gallic and
gnomic.

*

Apart from
these signs,

“the tragedy
of serenity”

marked with
human figures.

Nothing is
empty;

everything
filled.

*

On holiday
for the

season—
lots of

blue water
and every

house
on fire.

*

As the future
draws near,

the universe
relaxes

in the shape
of a lake.

*

It is *possible*
she would say,

all is quite
possible.

Eventually
of course

the gray edge
of being.

*

Dressed as
a bride

from the
neck up only,

the dreaming
shoe salesman

is quietly
aroused.

*

Hard shocks
in sand

when a heel
hits

the beach
along

the froth
running.

*

Alone
at the movies—

shapes in
the dark,

now's gown
lifted.

*

“A person
too foolish

to suffer”
is the

comedy of
the story.

*

The meta-
physical

diary never
gets filled.

A rain-
like weight

sinks in
real water.

*

“Where the dark
Housatonic winds

between Hoosac
and Taghkanic

to the sea . . .

a tall
newcomer

refused my
card. . .”

*

Two dark bodies

“gauged in
their brightness,”

prepared for
the wrench.

*

Invention is
possible

as history is
the probable

weeping of
a tribe.

*

A triumphant
Stein

reeling in
the possibles.

Ostriches and
music.

A long painting
drying

inside its
camera.

*

Being is not aware
of being's

being written,
and that's

a form
of candor.

*

The process is
a pause

in the magma
of events,

sentences cut
away from

their mothers,
meant now

for others.

*

The way
things look

in a blind
photographer's pose.

The next
bangs fist.

I dreams
of seasons.

*

Mountain *at*
the window

is what
I should

have written.
The *e*

in speech
eaten.

*

Together and
alone,

a moral
cataclysm

and two
pink pills,

the brain
god dying.

*

Whose polyvalent
music

is faint and
laden,

at least in
this painting.

*

Radiant impression
of sun

on stone
is a written

anti-shadow
anterior

to meaning.

*

So art
can be rated

or be berated
or be

“B” rated
by the

size of
its nerve.

*

Not unlike rhyme
or the politics of paint.

The faint-hearted buy it
to dwindle on a wall

as a man in his chair
grows fat waiting

because he wants comfort
as paint wants painting.

*

The horse as such
luck as such

snow as such
a bowl as such

mother as such
another as such

the word as such
letter as such

meaning as such
nothing as such

*

Avuncular grammar
waiting at

the gate,
within as it were

the lateness
of the day.

Wittgenstein's
patter.

*

Erect while running,
proposition's darling

is rococo
and didactic

as even
these leaves

*

The closer we get
to language,
the more the world
approaches.

*

Permanent words
installed

in nature's
secret places.

Meaning's
iron maiden

impeded by
the real.

An infinite series
of coefficient rhymes

talking and
glistening.

*

He could say
the sea or

intense as
narcolepsis

phone La
Paloma.

His death
was lived

in radical
ellipsis &

singing to
the choir.

*

Have you been
in laughter

or ankle-deep
in answers?

The chowder's
on the town,

lyric in
a spin.

*

Not from
the self

the drowned
sense passes.

*

Semblance
and the soul

before a tarnished
mirror no

isness quite
gets clean—

*

Sam the Sham
and the

Pharaohs.
What the

Mysterians
know.

*

A blank
mouth speaks

beneath the
ought root.

Song sung
true but

with certain
niches between

the sought
keys. Father

and his
likeness

confined to
their rooms.

PAUL HOOVER'S most recent books are *Edge and Fold* (Apogee Press, 2006), *Poems in Spanish* (Omnidawn, 2005), *Winter Mirror* (Flood Editions, 2002), *Rehearsal in Black* (Salt Publications, 2001), *Totem and Shadow: New & Selected Poems* (Talisman House, 1999), *Viridian* (University of Georgia Press, 1997), and *The Novel: A Poem* (New Directions, 1990). He is editor of the anthology *Post-modern American Poetry* (W. W. Norton, 1994) and, with Maxine Chernoff, the annual literary magazine *New American Writing*. His collection of literary essays, *Fables of Representation*, was published by University of Michigan Press in 2004. He has also published a novel, *Saigon, Illinois* (Vintage Contemporaries). In 2002, he won the Jerome J. Shestack Award for the best poems to appear in *American Poetry Review* that year. With Maxine Chernoff, he has edited and translated *Selected Poems of Friedrich Hölderlin*, to be published in 2008 by Omnidawn. He has been Professor of Creative Writing at San Francisco State University since 2003.

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