

As regards the tattoo on your wrist

It's not that I don't believe you. Rather,
call it some natural curiosity,
born of a childhood's nights
spent beneath the starry curve
of the sky, that makes me
want to discover
for myself
whether Orion really is
the only constellation
traced out on the curves
of your skin.

Ad Cassandram

Let them come with their black
ships, princess. Let them come
and let them take back
what is theirs. You are not theirs.

I will love you and I will protect you.

Let them come with their black
horses. Let them harness them
to their chariots, let them rein
in their flaring nostrils
with bit and bridle.

Let them ring the dust
around our city
with the tracks of our dead.

It will take more than horses
to bring down our walls.

I will love you and I will protect you,

my beloved. My beloved,
beloved also of the deathless
gods. Most beloved by the most
deathless: master of the strings
of bow and lyre.

•

*Cursing the aim of another's arrows, he cursed your own aim: that it might
always be true, but never find its mark.*

•

Let them cover the sky
with a dozen dozen arrows.
I will love you no less
among the shadows. But
do not put your trust in shadows
and in dreams only you can see.
There is no one else who will.

I will love you and I will protect you.
I will love you but I will not believe you.

Begotten of the Spleen

And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone;
I will make him an help meet for him.

— Genesis 2:18

And so God reached past Adam's ribs,
and from his spleen was woman born.

And gone from Adam was the melancholy
that the Lord had seen in him,

but for Eve there was nothing
except that same sadness.

There is a way in which you look
off into the distance

that weighs against the lightness
of the heart behind my ribs

in your presence, that I can describe
only as the sinking of swallows,

who do not remember this
morning's sunrise, into evening.

villanelegy

well
 (i said
hell

he fell
 on his head (she said
it's just as well

 too soon to tell
(they said
what sent him off to hell

 or heaven (hell
we said
 he liked his drink too well

and so he fell
 (they said
 hell

there's nothing more to tell
so toast to heaven for the dead
and for the living, well,
 hell

Coda

When you think
about it, if you
you think about it,
what did us
in wasn't your
anger or my
apathy, but that
if in the second line.