Two for E.P.

†11.1.72

RICHARD SIEBURTH

Alto Adige

swoops back
to earth
in the span of a bird
alighting
no heavier
than a whispered word

the voice not carried
on tablets of brass
but as a trace
through thin air
or prism'd by glass:

no Law is but Love
(though we break it faster
than the dark
in the eye of a dove)

to the East
the lightning stumbles
and plunges down
broken rungs:

thunder seeded

among clouded tongues

each one unalike

each one

forkier than flame

they climb

the coil of Babel

and fall

into the dream of a common name dancing to the dove

finding fluency in every tongue

all our scattered

sticks & stones

now leap into praise

all our words

now gather song

circling through terzo cielo

face to face

a single bloodpoint of light

wingbeat

in the white

of night

Santa Maria dei Miracoli

acqua alta, wave-taps
on marble, pooled light,
seepage, eddies, chaff
chopped in the wake,
windows into water,

stagnant glass

sirens breaching the mirror. come up for love, come up for breath, dolphins risen from the dead, breasts cupped in their palms, light gathered at the nipples through splayed fingers scissored in stone, flanks smoothed by the swim, marble veined like the back of a breaking wave,

eyes laguna grey, mouths at a loss for song

a ship gliding through the stillness,
lit at bow and stern
yet the bulk of it
pitchdark,
shadows in its hold,
cargo of ghosts,
singing into oblivion,

night with a fringe of foam