1-1-10  
  
**Audh**An afterthought  
To my thesis on MacDiarmid:  
Is Audh the feminine form  
Of Hugh?

2-1-10  
  
A thousand flowers bloomed  
The jade-toothed chairman boomed  
Some suckers booed and that was that,  
No bud but bowed to the chairman's  
Flocks that browsed, that ruminate still  
And brood on his one-liners, brewed as tinctures.  
How they boozed! Prisoners, with luck  
Were bound and bruised. At best  
That was what happened.

1-2-10  
  
Ode to Uncle Ben  
The King of Lichtenstein  
A tithe of the tenth  
Of the life that was left  
For your children  
Plucking the fragrant rice  
From their reflection  
Caesar's face from a coin  
How old they are.

1-1-11  
  
If ink should ooze  
In blots under glass, bruise  
And blur the sharp of a scratch  
The focus of owls and cats  
We'd not tell what was ours, at night  
The hours till day.

1-1-1

1-1-12  
  
We didn't trounce Napoleon for this:  
An ounce is an ounce;  
There's at least a dozen to the pound  
For English gold.  
The ins and outs of it are intricate.  
Nevertheless, one ousts them  
And majesty's back in the saddle.

1-1-15  
  
But we won an hour with our favourite flimstar.  
What do you mean - two ticks and a signed photograph?

1-1-18  
  
Luminous owl at my wrist,  
The watch I don't wear,  
Quarter this jungle at night  
Where by day  
The blood tide turns  
And I am all the little rodents' prey.

1-1-5

1-1-9  
  
Oust a counterforce and find  
Your old self out of kilter.

1-10-1  
  
**Aye, Right**My good eye looks  
I see with words  
A bit of what's  
Just there.

1-10-10  
  
"The ide is tenacious of life"  
- Freshwater Fishes of Britain and Europe  
Ide deploys in cold reflux  
Thrawn in brackish bays  
The armoured warmth of self and will  
Surviving logic I'd have died in.

1-10-11  
  
**Olive (for MC)**Where age is beauty, avert the eyes  
Or, like Modigliani's chrismic women,  
Do without them. Vincent tried to paint you,  
Ovid didn't name you in the Metamorphoses;  
For Ulysses the sailor man  
Tinned spinach was the better part of valour.  
  
Vrubel' caught your cousin's  
Lilac aisles of blossom in the isles of wood  
Then thought if he could stare until the ides  
His eyes would turn to emeralds. Aye  
Aye, my dear, not every man can praise you,  
But I have made a capo for an old guitar from olive wood  
And this will echo in your upper reaches  
For a day.

1-10-12  
  
Or how, far out in the Kalahari  
You found, on the keel of a rock  
Painted in the Bushman idiom  
Animals long gone from there:  
Ice.  
Ice where ice is law and metal brittle  
Colours blench in the reserve of all  
Affection; the reverse, but the prerequisite,  
Nearer than anything else on earth  
To nought.

1-10-15  
  
**Goodnight, Irene**Irene, I dreamt of you again last night.  
No need to tell you. You told me  
Unless we stayed together I would not see you again.  
Your tongue is salty, pacific. We grappled  
In the alcoves on the street but never quite  
Sand in my saliva when I woke, sand in my pockets.  
Shells in the bathroom marked "Made in Formosa,  
Ireland" the wintering of anger  
Lazybeds of semtex please  
Do not disturb the sleep of Roman  
Reason with the gods Irene, Irene.  
Iris, rainbow, messenger of the Greek  
Gods, I see you gold and brown and black.  
Why? Have I lost the farther colours?  
Or are you the message now? Tell her,  
Tell Irene, tell her anything, from me.

1-10-18  
  
If I blew my nose my gran would say  
'You'll blaw your brains to train ile!'  
which I thought must be somewhere between  
Lough Derg and Innisfree. But no. Ile was oil and train  
Not diesel but, as Olson told me, blubber.  
Blubber, eh? Like your mother-in-law  
As her son goes down the aisle.

1-10-4  
  
**from Tantris, part 1**Tantris MacDuff?  
 - That'll do... am I no deid yet?  
or are you St Boutros?  
- No, I'm Doctor Smee;  
now tell me, Tantris...  
- First name terms already?  
That's odd, I don't remember swiving you.  
Here, give me a sick line, pal, I need  
 the best specialist in town.

1-10-5  
  
What I've been doing  
All this time  
Is listen to the language.  
What you've been up to,  
Well

1-10-9  
  
Iced water. White molars  
And jelly-fish gums  
In a glass by the bed at night  
Morse-coding signals  
To alien craft in the bay  
Before sunrise  
Melting away.

1-2-1  
  
I am what I owe  
And that would be attention  
For example  
To the dead,  
My dear departed.  
What moves me most, these days,  
In the little blackbird,  
Is the way it listens  
What it hears  
That it just has to sing.

1-2-11  
  
We're a buzz on the circuit  
Recycling  
Scrap and iron ores and haemoglobin.  
Indite your careful odes  
To get the meter read in hertz and ohms  
Which is not what you meant. But then  
Who owes and who owns what we don't know.  
Ship oars and drift.  
You might take the rushing crackle for applause.

1-2-12  
  
Building kilns and oasts of coal-red brick  
He'd felled a stand of oaks to fire  
And toast his hops and oats in.  
Never a swing-door opes  
But hapless oafs in howffs will hawk  
Their oaths and subsidize the publican.

1-2-15  
  
At the end of the day, a handful of copper ore  
And a lungful of dust.  
A grubby note for the boatman's  
Patient digging with the oar.