

## Blue Oxen

(it's scaffolding) (it's supposed to be temporary)  
(the domino effect) (had been forgotten about)  
(it was in storage) (nobody knew where)  
(that's a logging road) (you can see its gutters)  
(they leave hand prints) (they shudder with dolor)  
(nobody could settle on any particular color)  
(they meant different things to different people)  
(for luck) (on the cheap) (stop now) (flesh for sale)  
(fresh fruit) (insect free) (aquafarm) (moon control)

(It was label-resistant) (nobody knew how to embroider  
it) (it felt like hailstones) (big as tombstones)  
(it strained everyone's intelligence) (we had tooth  
problems) (we'd been flying too much) (our edges  
were curling) (we were like silt over sand) (we felt  
as if we were sugar dissolving in lime juice) (it  
was heavy-handed) (we were covered with tread marks)  
(it was cosmetic) (like crystal handcuffs) (we were  
fish then) (we wanted our ladders) (most of them were

rotten) (we can cut down some trees and build new  
ones) (we can contrive it out of convection)  
(say you're a weatherman) (seed them some clouds)  
(remember how it felt to be scuds on a mountain)  
(we had good motivations) (like tree roots buckling  
up sidewalks) (we worked like tree roots) (we'd go  
anywhere looking for water) (we were hydrologists  
then) (we had stew pots) (we were fast-breaking)  
(we were aerosol) (we had currency) (we were paper

airplanes) (our creases were in all the right places)  
(we hadn't been stratified so many times) (it was  
because they were eye-minded) (they couldn't see us)

(we weren't eyefuls) (we were just something to take note of when they weren't working) (we were like scrimshaw) (you were one of the ones covered with flags and lady liberty) (she was an eyeful) (we were hay rolls) (then we were haywire) (we needed paperweights) (we needed dollys) (it was money-laundering they did

as a sideline) (one little cooking fire stirred up all of that cloud cover) (we were walking through a ghost town) (it was a terrestrial globe) (it wasn't any bigger than an eyeball) (it was at the bottom of a fish bowl) (there weren't any fish in it) (the water was gone) (and it looked as if it had been consigned to oblivion) (do you still have it) (it's somewhere around) (we tried to put it in a safe place) (in one of the tree trunks) (act like a lumberjack)

(show them your blue ox) (your animal companion) (show them the marks left where you merged) (they said they were covered with scruples) (they needed some tear lifts) (you can seed them with dry ice) (that will use up all of the liquid assets we have left) (then we can sell off some of the dunking contraptions) (we don't need them) (we can act the way hummingbirds act) (we can fight the way hummingbirds fight) (you can wear your red

vest) (you can wear your red cowboy hat) (it looks awful) (as if it were made for television) (the worst kind) (remember the scripts that were written to teach us something) (past the stratosphere the sky isn't blue anymore) (we were unteachable) (we were wood blocks) (we lived in a sawmill) (when there was lightning) (it nearly burned down) (we were unwashed) (we were scoured) (we felt untouchable) (and somewhat equivocal again in our science)

(you were always exact to me) (like a storm cellar)  
(I liked it near your airstreams) (you never called  
me a social parasite and I felt good about that)  
(you never said things like the handwriting is on the  
wall) (you never said we were biding our time) (you  
weren't a warden) (you weren't a damper) (you didn't  
live in a chimney) (you didn't work for management)  
(we were still under construction) (there were  
warning signs all over us) (in that shocking pink

orange) (like we'd been pickled) (as if we were beets  
or some other kind of root vegetables) (you weren't  
a gladiator) (you weren't resistant) (you weren't  
a virus) (you didn't know what a firewall was)  
(sometimes you did do a little fire-breathing)  
(not like a firebrand) (more like a fire that some-  
one banked in the evening waiting around until  
morning) (there were streets of clouds over the  
plains) (we were ice crystals) (laboratory grade)