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Blue Sun, and other Poems

Tamas Julius Panitz
Bard College

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*Blue Sun,
and other Poems*

Senior Project Submitted to
The Division of Languages and Literature
of Bard College

by

Tamas Panitz

Annandale-on-Hudson, New York
May 1, 2014

In my past life I was thankless.
Now there's too much to be specific about.

This project is dedicated to:

My Project Advisor, Robert Kelly; my Academic Advisor, Michael Ives;
Ann Lauterbach; Peter Laki.

And to You, the goddess of Today.

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Blue Sun (Inpatient Press)

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The Dark Webs (LUMA Foundation)

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The serial poem *Incense Games* (from *The Dark Webs*) has been given a second life in the chapbook of that title (Two-Suitor Press).

Blue Sun

“Come shadow, come, and take this shadow up.”
 –The Two Gentlemen of Verona

Dark Blue light of shadow

enwraps your candle

that is never christened
 but of the blue, black sun.

Snuffs it and

you turn into

a Lion & a she-wolf
 chasing your tail

at the very beginning

(that is what we return to)

that is what waits to begin, in the

eyes you see
 reflect your solitary light.

But who are You

a man’s shadow in the woods?

No. You’re at a restaurant

where a snake

coiled around me

on Hermész Tér, and slid off into the dark, 1994.

Even the waiters scream,
 the young sensitive ones

before they all came from Argentina

and I watch I a calm child on the cobbles

an exalted I behind my candle dark

hands on the tablecloth with no one across

from me facing the square a cool May evening.

I

This is where I really wield my snakes
 in the basement of the steppes of the self
 where I unthaw them, “Nothing but solid earth
 beneath these planks.” And a ghost chardonnay,
 the hairy women of my dreams drawn out of
 the ashes of every moment. “And I had brought
 a pack of cards!”

to combobulate everything
 I cross the road and sacrifice my egg
 an investigation carried out in the dark
 wet from lemon dripping through the salt—slabs of our stellae
 so much dark and citrus its hardly legible, there’s no waiting
 for it to stop, no such thing as waiting— these trembling eggs renew
 the lease: call the bluff of all prefixes

I really don’t know any better to let it alone so many broken eggs
 to feed the offshore bank account of my stomach
 for what else is lust but how long it takes the author
 to reach Adam and Eve again again
 find you beneath all my pretending
 God and my daughters know I’m not asleep my ribs for a subtle music
 a blue horse trots by my yurt there’s nothing between my heart and this

foggy Mongolian dawn, everything straight-forward
 works vertically my basement rubs against the sky
 it’s the horizon that has to do with numbers
 nonsense weather and conditions
 climb it like a ladder a cathedral without shadows
 or the shadows of the devout
 at the end of the day have to fill the demon-quota

what’s a particular besides priming the pump
 feed it through the verb of our patronym
 only later do we find out what this means
 not by holding the source maybe a glance
 when prudent when I say so my blue other
 a blue world on the margins of my body
 synecdoche that’s the sort of thought we’re great at

chop down a tree and you will not find its idea
 you have to plant another one inside to understand
 lift a cow every day to see how light it is
 I plant my oar in the desert like a dead heart
 pretend its worthless that's what makes the gods happy
 now only you and I to tally up our limbs in the dark basement
 (pah!) the only debt we pay each other is listening

my drones go back to the center of the earth
 now that you've found the *real* me shot out all
 the mirrors their Americans in white suits in shards
 now only Csongor amidst the rubble Tamas always escapes
 without extracting the oar from the desert of Csongor's eyes
 laughter echoes from the secret library
 O the pastimes of those rich in names!

I am Csongor
 in Pest

I remember a friend of my mothers in the middle of winter
 named Csongor when I didn't let him in, then flailing
 his red hands *my hands are cold* never what we mean

all the doors open in it's a fire hazard
 we haven't learned anything for the future but you to ya'll Atman
 or Domus whatever comes to mind redounds
 but the plural of I is not we
 the function is the name of a line trace each back
 this is Csongor's poem you can't have it
 nothing is yours you're the output of my prescience

a run pause closed high note
 and low open dunked in a pool
 water over your ears oxytocin something physical
 makes music all those measurements breaths
 everyone always counting my fussy stay-at-home body
 music is our gossip how we say there's room for you in me
 you'll know I love you when your ear starts to bleed.

Sing against the music
 Vac like a panther among the notes
 any moment a diapason her great jaw unhinged
 that's natura naturans;
 the Pillars of Hercules make good honest sense.
 dip the toes in a pool always the same but different
 it's our commonalities that nihil ulterius that prove
 with the greatest strength inconsistency

sometimes Eve sometimes a Tree grows from the side of infinity
 sometimes I wake up in Bottom's Dream in
 The Comedy of Errors talking in the dark
 the shadow my look alike not knowing what I look like
 cover the mirror and I'll measure the room.

...

your inmost councils flood over the plain
 red lightning in your acoustic shadow
 the mouths of time mouth for you narrator
 forgotten united in you come for
 their debt O royal I touch us feed us

O great neurology of people I give him to you
 High Priest of my house wooden god in the basement
 his symbol be it integral or forte
 find him under the rug because there's no good way
 to say look under the lawn there I've stowed
 the metonymical stone reaching to infinity
 eat it it engenders a care for the self a music a power over space and time

close the door to open it the raven steps in
 thought gets stuck without a baptism now and then the blue sun sinks
 back into everything else 'tis the wind you say
 tis a chair with a coat on it I'm irrational with logic

II.

The windows foggy this morning the Soon and the Moone
 the green lion condenses into corporeal perfume
 it's time to harvest the details
 a mantis crawls on my side outside
 the library it isn't merely an ungainliness I said
 to the spectators I brought it from home

“Our Soule, our Stone, borne up with wynd
 In the Erthe ingendered...”

I don't have it in me to bag the green-beans today
 to say the earth is dead and Hermes Trismegistus
 ashes no one dies in my poems the earth is

amulet, stitch in time
 simple breath that says there's nothing
 to prepare you for to undo
 the unexpected meet it all here in me
 I know all the first names forget the signs

we're still in the cathedral
 but this time columnar birdsong
 and I've already kissed the lepers away
 back into the fortissimo of the vaulting

why else these apses— to carry
 our note into the souls of the poor
 poorer one communication I get my
 voice into you you're safe now
 you understand.

The Couple, for Joel Oppenheimer

I read Oppenheimer and find he, too, had:
“jesus strung from a dogwood.”
Neither of us remember why, and I
mourn this fact in the man
I have never lived in
the same year as. That same
sort of humanism which says
“how else to be fecund if not
to put up with a man.” Who cannot share
in this religion, in the fruit
of our confederacy? We will put up
with no other sort of man.

KINDRED SPIRITS

(for two voices)

A An ark of driftwood, wood of what they held out on me
 but could not extinguish the traces of, learned things
 learned into habit although the Way forgotten
 meta-genetic gleanings, I mean faces
 in the morphological topology
 in dance rehabilitation, which is to say the polarities
 reverse –

B You push me off and the rollers are a description you slip out of
 my power now there is a great eye aloft now there isn't
 one is for you one is me you lend me your bitter ship
 and I sail out of sight who knows what I think about that
 the great eye stares at us both it will always be in your favor
 when I sail around the island and scatter my boat along the beach
 before the man who prowls the beach, who may or may not know.

– until the wind
A from your watch flies out the hands compass
 around your mark and the many blindings of directionment
 flood, flood old world frame
 as soon as I break my coke bottle on the boom! a sudden blow
 the debts of this world fly back to their spark

because capital is an item of the universe

narrative inherent the earth both Mercury and Mars

On the Range

Rhetoric: The art of using language so as to persuade or influence others; the body of rules to be observed by a speaker or writer in order that he may express himself with eloquence.

O.E.D.

1553; T.Wilson: Rhetorique is an art to set
furthe by utteraunce of wordes
matter at large.

1561; Eden, *Arte de Nauig*: Such a mutuall
compassion of parte to parte....
by one common sence existent
in them all.

(Note the weight of these sentences: bound largely in the final, almost trochaic phrase, turning the sense outward, or upon itself.)

Vac; goddess of speech for the
Rg Vega poets:

I move with the Rudras, with the Vasus, with the Adityas and all other gods. I carry both Mitra and Varuna, both Indra and Agni, and... I am the one who blows like the wind, embracing all creatures. Beyond the sky, beyond this earth, so much have I become in my greatness.

Held within a function
are the imaginary numbers
any given now conjoins.

The Inuit Alignak: only (named)
god of eclipses, also of earthquake, (land–tide
tide, water and weather.

The black sun jumps out
from behind our regular
one.

(Note the Algonquin myth *When Tcikabis Trapped the Sun*. It is a testament to sun's liveliness that a "madman"—the constant threat of incursion by another understanding (and there always is another)—lurks behind it.)

(Note Woody Guthrie's *I Just Wanna Sing Your Name*)

The Histories
(Book I)

I.

I am not in a position to say
 if their language held any certainties;
 the places have all changed their names:
 judging by this they were not us
 although they learned our language
 which has never changed.

 They came in ox-carts
 wounding themselves in exchange for the Acropolis
 in the way of short-livedness, and we were content
 to offer our prayer

 to tall, pretty girls.

While on the plain of Tegea
 buried at the head of two
 contrary winds
 lay the bone keys for dancing
 without chains.

Where the intellect fell upon the anvil
 beneath the bellows,
 and the smith put aside his smoldering griefs
 to tell you something amazing, about bottoming his well.

Croesus neared those who ate figs
 and had nothing
 in ambush in the framework.

Who held Croesus' brother-in-law
 brokered for peace during the eclipse
 in the limits of that year

 as each party
 licked the others blood
 and the river
 was made to flow

 on both sides of that summit. They
 inundated Solon's Croesus in half the time
 it took to explain the snakes, the Lydians
 having leapt off their horses and elbowed their way through
 what had been set off in their coming

 scaled the wall

no man had thought to pass a lion across,
 which is to say: the dumb half-soul of Croesus had begun
 to speak, through a peep-hole in the kingdom of his melancholy.

whose administration
 is irrigation
and carryable
 in a skin boat
supposing your staff
 is carved with a rose, or a lily, or something,
so you walk at the pace of that town.

BOOK II

I.

Solon works a hut in
 himself,
 having thrown out the ocean
 in exchange for a river
 without breezes.

Cyrus left for Cambyses,
 Croesus sent back to Persia
 drunk on the smell of wine
 culled from a horse
 in the sun.

Cambyses headed towards what I had heard in Memphis
 de-named bone-lute
 rivering the months
 under the skin of the intercalary
 nude in Egyptian silt

the measure of this new land
 the distance between the names of the gods
 silt of that vigorous river:
 the here's and there's of Solon,
 the flux of debts, that newness
 Cambyses sings
 his highest note
 flat from the mountain shells
 drawn through a cove
 of red sand
 sprinkling its salt
 over the Pyramids.

An Egypt too wise for Zeus' water
 but powerless over those
 who come to the land with tools
 with borders obstinate against boundaries.

Here the sun is driven by storms
 into the clear air
 as a cool wind blows from somewhere cold.
 As it's always been,
 just ask the scribe.

III.

The local inhabitants expose themselves
the women with clappers,
the men flutes, in honor of Isis.

And for Pan all the lights in Egypt left on,
the priests of Ares beat each other
with sticks on the stairs of the temple,
learning anything is out of the question

as a crowd presses around
a goat and a woman
the cats leap in the fire

and all the wood
 removed from the set
(although it still weighs the same).
Amidst the lighting a tar-black
Ibis kills the winged snakes,
filling the isle with spines.
As for the actual people of Egypt...

IV.

But the caves of Memphis long inundated
 the queen having thrown herself into a cheerless chamber
 the old flame displaced

 rises in a column
 at the end of every main–street, by the gate.

 But these too have been pissed out
 or turned to obelisks
 of ghostly hospitality.

 In the center of town
 around the sanctuary of Hermes, the trees
 touch the sky– so long as you are a blind king
 exiled on an island of ash,
 having thrown your eyes

 at the Pyramids
 so the island in lake Buto
 becomes a floating island
 and a canal is drawn through the red sea;
 as the Eleans are banned
 from the Eleans

and Amasis
 farts in the direction of Amasis
 having learned no trade but warfare.
 Amasis, in whose city flits
 the shadow of the man from Halicarnassus
 under the spectral law of Solon, whose Canopic Mouth
 mutters its oaths

 as The Flame passes
 through the blue obelisks of Memphis
 –glint of Cambyses' eye
 as he stalks along some nameless quay.

BOOK III.

I.

Cambyses demanded of Amasis
 a wife, or a mother
 from Indo–European roots
 joined briefly by the man from Halicarnassus
 as they regained Memphis
 Croesus seen to flit through Amasis’ dying eyes
 and into Cambyses,
 or perhaps was just a vision...
 a lightness
 as it sinks
 in the oily pond,
 as light jets in its otter form
 Croesus painted
 chalk white in a
 Crystal Coffin
 set upright
 on the Table of the Sun
 stares at the town, gathering dusk. Reciprocal Cambyses:

 his men on a mud-march, eating grass;
 his sailors buried in sand
 for the mismanaged defense
 of his purest fear, the bodies of his house
 in ruination, as the cow of symbols
 dissolves in the sanctuary, the sanctuaries all
 placed before his blind will, to the final destruction
 of his immortal tendernesses.

His miscreant sons carried off one–by–one
 until finally, irretrievably, he is alone before his Magus.

II.

The house of Cambyses come to rule no one,
 or just one,
 whoever, his name is Darius, condemned to silence
 along with his horse

his children
 the black milk of the dissolution of Cambyses
 variables halted
 on a singular variability

and the rock-rose
 culled from the beards of he-goats
 will have nothing to do with him
 in perfuming Arabia;
 nor may he rest in the river
 made up by some poet
 or know if the end of the world
 is attractive or not.

He will have nothing, which is his power
 culled from his losses; he rages in loneliness
 across the plateau

facing obstinately the cliff-face
 and in the exponent of all suffering a new sound
 rays forth from his inner ear.

THE STORY

PRAELUDIUM

A horse telling the story of a tree

forget the relatum

but feats of love at my desk like a shaman

I drink tea with my mind

I make satisfaction, working alone at my task

I ruin the garden and in the kitchen commit faults

I am always leaping.

I've come in this way because there are no windows
or doors, and I knew you were in here, with everybody else.
I will take nothing, if I can get something.

Here the mother is not too old, the daughter not too young.
I avail my self not of the spectacle but the sensation.

I devour the egg and leave its unbroken shell empty.

after *Head 1*, 1953 by FRANCIS BACON

What were the epiphanies, which calmed into the body?
Colors threatening home upon the world at large.

And the story? Somehow things were fine, equitable,
the story digested digests now it is

planted in the pineal gland and metabolizes
the narrative into hot or cold

forgotten into the story the narrative is forgotten
into sensation. The story: against all

pre-prepositional probability wipes anything typical
or what happened last time from the narrative

and as the story sits like a cat on the table
the only thing to do is keep track of how large or small it is.

“I pick up my club.” Who are we talking to
is who is this talking

I pick up my club and smash the nearest thing
it does not wait like gold birds to give answers.

An instant of hunting and being hunted:
leave the club alone and it will beat itself

to nothingness. Pick it up too often
there will be no one left to talk to.

And if I pick up my flower? If I have a flower
like the first man ever to have one

I will look out across the flowers of this
world and give this particular

to the first woman my nefesh goes for.

He made his way
in the epoch of a decomposed ray of light,

or what pretended to be so; casting its
phony lineaments around his club

and his flower. He had already
forgotten what had befallen the narrative.

He imagined a garment of hide to wrap
tightly around her thighs. He would

tailor her clothes when she bathed.
He would become the first tailor.

The spectator can convince himself of what has been
so far described; the appearance of a square

near the round disk – a large water prism
placed in the sun – edges appear, the center

deeper red, redder and deeper the angles decline
in their proof. The spectator can stretch himself

against the disc's lineaments, be it a cup or a shoe: he is as a round of bows.
A span. You can convince him of anything.

He is attentive. Give him something
and he'll go away. Like a mollusk.

He has already selected his shell from your pocket.
He has come for his shell and you must give it to him

like the table gives to the cat. Perceive
the blue, green shadows of Mont Blanc in

his heap of small luminous points. He is The Madonna of Birds,
the repeated images of the sun.

Yet he came across a saboteur,
the pickling jar opened prematurely.

Someone who hid within himself
and the preparations were made angry, and on an
empty stomach. His stone was defiled. The work hastily done.
So he chewed plantain leaves, because some things you eat alone.

He sat in the dark for a long time. He grew a beard
and then he shaved it.

He wandered without even a story.
With adjectives

he named the birds of prey of his
desert. It was already the

point of starting over. A golden sphere
flung up, the birds

swirled around him. As if in a
bodice of adjectives, the old dolce stil nuovo in his eye.

BOOK II

AT THE TOP OF THE POINT OF BEGINNING

1.

By the secret lantern I write
 so that one still murmurs in the shed
 behind the Lodge, and I turn the pen
 in the wrong direction, you say
 from what?
 Mercury in its greatest elongation

West of the sun, its metaphysical
 point of terror: I do not need to put my body
 between the lantern and the stone-shaman's
 wall spread feel, a wall dark on the stone-
 shaman's wall he sits feelingly behind
 so he scuttles like a rat in the dark

in the wrong direction! I am not one-headed
 enough to occlude him, we learn to be Janus
 bi-polarity in the stem-cell
 it's Rudra who drives your car
 we only tolerate dichotomy insofar as "analogy is understanding"
 you know I'm really talking to the back of your head

(c. *stein*)

my lantern lit behind the wall like an eye
 in the possession of all light, dormant
 ecstasies we need only to touch things come alive
 I schlep the sun over the back of the world
 am the sun and the lion who devours it
 and the king who drinks the lion's blood

the stone-shaman dances in the color
 and heat of the wall's proto-human flicker
 only in company does he think who he is
 may we see him only when he thinks is there
 company and his thought is dawn
 every day he builds Utopia

the open and close of his intraocular eye
 in the rock, maybe this is "The great *White Dog*
 not Interdicted by opinion" who has hid
 in the rock since the Egyptians "took from the Dogs
 Their access to Heaven," whose shout is every direction
 and it means *come here*.

(*dorn*)

...

STRING FIGURES I

I.

This is the anvil
 and this is the dance-hall
 the lion jumps through the flaming hoop
 or a flaming silver lion
 sits motionless on the floor.

The blacksmith begins his work
 and people start to mosey in
 groups form and comedy comes
 with company, while who understands
 laughter slips out the back like a broken cup.

2.

Everyone's here, who knows why
 here's the dance and in the dance-hall a party lecture
 and in the party lecture
 a flaming silver lion comments
every ring has a hole in it.

The blacksmith's old dog
 brought the broken cup up
 the new road, he walked slowly
 up behind the earth, to the East
 nibbling shadows as he went.

STRING FIGURES II

A little song running
between the pool and not pool, between
those verticalities, Bacchic against
the great seriousness I forget what
which means I've grown little breasts

behind the thumb the everywhere of
the life—guards backs: color rays
from my halfyness I issue
hermaphroditic commands from this liminality
and everyone in the pool stops bathing.

2.

staghorn, the rightful
 feminine buttocks and a stag
 piece where it belongs on the little
 big sorcerer, each is turned body part as they
 as if a curled up-draft of themselves disparated
 stags Bartók sudden under the hair–

(eshleman)

thatch of the being of the wall,
 where-wise but for him, simply
 in a proper not controlled
 allowance of being: his are the
 lady-like buttocks, &c. having drunk the blood
 he has drunk the blood and is love itself

but so old and populating with dawns
 he has dunk love and is blood itself
 more a Tall Ghost than Henry.
 a center for flighted creatures
 ‘the tall one gibbering’ certainly
 its here’d, heard as

(enslin/berryman)

I mean things heard and believed because
 they bring here and here, the old one
 we walk from that when we walk
 into what? the gibbered! ask the stags to come home
 but I am already there, on the hill
 in you with my eyes I recite Sir Topaz

invoke in you bedtime, amalgamate you,
 I ask you to remember and suddenly it’s all already there
 the west of you Sears house settled the old knick-knacks
 just look at the book and it looks back
 you couldn’t mess up if you tried, because lazy as Keats

the fool stands in the middle of the dance
 fulfill everyone else’s measure
 I invoke in you bedtime and Tamas is lost, lost...
 (yet still awake he whispers
let us not get lost here
the madmen stand so still!)

(c. williams)

a vision, jack-in-the-pulpit-like
 rises at the top of the point of beginning
 weird amulet of rest and motion
 before I knew even to be awed,
 having myself decided upon eternity
 she enters to give me something.

But that's not me! just the gins words are,
 the You they need, the you they ask for, that makes words gins:
 traps to remove you's,
 to flit in, at most
 never coming together, but dissolving you when you comes

when I think of my other,
 vanish my you in her,
 a me no one'd, all my tremendous animals slaughtered
 but for the big bull, who "bounded over the Ohio,
 over the Wabash, the Illinois, and finally
 over the great lakes." I think my other there

(jefferson)

with the savages in small societies
 Chief Logan commanding war from his
 peaceful hut, until glutted with revenge
 he sings his song of love
 without promising anything
 he has nothing to do with You.

He is the great *White Dog* the Tall Ghost
 who needs fleshing (and also you), who sits perfect
 and eternal in the rock awaiting our adjectives
 he rages and shudders the gamut of emotion
 it is for some reason my job to supply
 although not appointed by the town council

me and it sit in our rooms
 in the smell of hay
 reading the same book.

STRING FIGURES III

What? The echo begins to take shape
there's someone on the ridge there, in a sheep-skin
pronouncing his name backwards, or swallowing it
or it's someone else's entirely– what? I yell
and he gobbles it down.

And yells what? over the ridges all day
and yells what? to the search party
sent out by his village
until at last become very remote
he fashions himself in my likeness.

The Dark Webs

It is necessary for a certain space to exist, because a sensible object, when placed directly over any sense, is not noticed.

–Giordano Bruno, *On the Composition of Images, Signs & Ideas*

“A whole world of pain is contained in these words.” How can it be contained in them? – it is bound up with them.

–Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*

Written from Dec./2013–Feb./11/2014, most of the poems in this book reckon a structure capable of truthing the real and the dreamt, the false and factual: not dissolving these designations but bringing them into play. Raising the voice of their synthesis. The Dark Webs are the commonality our disparate parts portend, where “Washington, Franklin, Paine & Warren, Gates, Hancock & Green;/ Meet on the coast glowing with blood from Albions Fiery Prince.” As for the other poems, I found them on the shore.

Intermezzo

1.

Won't the raspberry juice
run everywhere! with a child
alone in the house, in this tedious
peasant town. And the peasants—
they still think its an intermezzo
despite

the blood-rites
so they will be disappointed:
not know about the calendrical patching up
of things— the way Strauss was in
the stork, or how the waitress blushed
when she saw how much lamb was on my plate

obstruse dirty thoughts' brief
enlightenment, the object only matters insofar as it does
so long as the story gets to telling
everything's the same that way
its all so dear to syntax
he has all 20 day signs on his body and costume

the way *real* fat men are always falling in love
taste everything, that's how we see, by tongue
you're all the exercise I could ask for
licking things I mean
that's the sport you let me continue:
Mr. Windchimes,

I name you a double-name
you say things so I can hear in them
hear my own name traced back to the wind
there's nothing to be scholarly about
ad pondus omnium being directional

we level with each other's/ the instances
of you make sudden me and senses
between us the faint glow of rotting wood
shape of the animal you carry faint ness of you
come water your sheep in me
in my perfect parts

...

the parts you didn't read
thought thought not to be thought
what's buried alive

what wasn't there to be read
what doubtful in hopes secreted away
made the rot in us
sheep shaped shadow on the field we where
like some crevasse where the eyes
don't go, still and weightless in the field

I quiver under the morning, that broken
latch of your thighs, act out the shadows
of my back in that place— and through
body giving way to the blood
Intermezzo to intermezzo
a play like light runs down yon hill.

2.

It was the telling from our
 body the indefinite yet zoned
 whence, that occasional origination
 (puff on the horizon) we couldn't flarf
 no taste can change tasting
 if we're careful not to knock dream

out of the tree, the hanged man's threat
 that dream will cease to support us
 But what great man was ever scattered in his boots
 right at the All, without getting in that
 he was the busy of something, Shakespeare's
 Joan of Arc, "Peter is the strings of the orchestra,"

rabbit living in the vertebral harp
 you're a real zoo lets not go into it
 definition offends the nature of your animal
 and I never contradict myself
 among the monsters the unguess'd offices of pre-dawn

still with a knife in his teeth in the drizzle
 in lightening blue time of re-marriage
 dawn's leg-work disappears shadows
 tacked onto their objects again- and our dashing young
 pirate peeks almost totally hidden out therefrom.
 a sturdy showre of rayne/Tooke wise Apollo from himselfe againe.

the way, Agamemnon, foredoomed!
 everything is a proof for Troy
 and anything needed can be seen again, summoned
 from its spirit world to recount even for the first time
 its story- the waitress with the Greek legs brings me
 exactly what I wanted and returns to the wall-eyed fog.

POST ELEGIAM LAUDES

“—ideally, any line could stand alone, be my Last Words, my epitaph.”

R.K., *Uncertainties*

After writing your death poem
you did not die
which was a great relief. I of course
banked on nothing: The Clavis Magna,
that opens no door, is not a key
but a problem you will never solve

problematizing all the problems
you can keep not solving. I banked
on The Great Key that opens nothing.
That’s problematic, which means what,
but to bring to life
havocs on the infrastructure of dailyness

that merciful constancy of inconsistency
without which the structure
our inquisition would plug along
empily filling its condominiums like some sun
no one bothers to magic
an unproblematical sun

never scorching the earth never even
writing here on a tree
never making trouble with
too many lovers, living a life
that is not life, not problematic, like the most precious things
like The Great Key that opens nothing

especially not Nothing.

The Message, for Sylvia

There are certain inalienable distances,
 durations without space

signed things: Akkadian cuneiform
 constructed from golden rectangles

things I can't prove in the earliest Mesopotamian
 language: fragments of their religion

what the genital god f.w.i.b.'d today, 4,000 B.C.
 his conjunction is the same now

same architectural form of the Devachan: that house of us

from which feelingly and in different keys spinning
 in our own directions we recall our memories, the images we've placed there:

adjects, what lives in the house we share against time.
 We call those to mind, and in the difference of each room

where your lamp is my crotch: from *qualis* to *qualitas*
 in the misdemeanors of friendship

we find the signal fires are lit.
 Intelligible in the pidgin of our feeling

we do nothing but mean.

f.w.i.b: for, with, in, by. Acronym for the Latin Ablative case. Bruno suggests using the body to recall declensions.

Devachan: *god-land*. In Anthroposophy, the two realms of the astral body. The Lower Devachan is that of feeling, the Higher, intellect.

In the House of the Plains

Here I am she said. Dust mites (here) are the tell all. On a plain. In such a fog. None but the sun would have it. I am in a room, on the plain. I know, she said, for the bits that hang in the air of a clean room, small hooks for time, the pots and pans of the plain, they say it all. I am of that age, a day of mists and mites. The room smells of. Not mine, said she. Not now at least. Or an old cloth, what weighs in the thick. Not my cloth. I touch my face and feel my hand's age here I am. I see on the desk by the view a sole white sheet with two signs inked on the bas-de-page. That is my age. I will be done here when I am done. When the signs cease to hold me and give way. And I am solely heft. In the thick of them. Here in it all. You'll know where to find me.

*

I am close in it. Or not. She is a church of. Bring yours to see. When in one like a thief in town she breaks in them all. Thief of you. Break into me, she said. I am a child in the well of wells. I have burnt this place and am brought back in the cloak of the wind. I cease to lift the signs but they do not cease to lift me. They tell me your name and I come a hand that won't close. I bring all to be made of. A croak in the wind.

*

The plains are still here. They don't care what town you're from. Where two towns meet, that is the plains. Where next to the trash heap, sat on the fence by a few small shrubs and trees. She says hey pal like the sound of wizz she is muse- I call and you see her in an old black hat and she looks good she does not need her front tooth for her legs she looks like most mid-west girls would sans one tooth which I like all the more hey pal she says you think the plains are just some thrift store for your mind to list through you think plains are just for your mind, where all the way in New York you don't think. My lad- I mean gal I can't stop think- to have you in my mind. I want but to prof- doff my love to you is all.

The Hub, for Lucas

You are the middle place
of the four cardinal directions
which ever way they supposedly point
one of them is you
you are the back
to make sense of the three
you could not cast a shadow
nor could your shadow cast one
were it otherwise
were you anywhere but the back

which is the middle
between two ups
where you face the back of things
where one weighs the front (where
what it takes courage to face
lives. It is important to face that,
Zeno did and we still think it
a paradox. Zeno put
the back in front. Turn your
back to face the music
he said, to go up, as in
I'm going up from Assur to Marduk
and then up from Marduk to Assur
you must believe in your back
because there is no way but up, every place
is its own god

every place is comprised of three images
and man
is the fourth, completes
the seal and the seal
floats belly up
the three images in the swash
made sense of by the back
and this seal is every place
and the god of that place
calls its back the ground
where man lives, the ground
is so much ecstasy under which
the gods cast the shadows of their
backs

and man realizes
the ground in him where he is like I said
between the three images of which he is fourth
and the up of them, and the god of his place
just as soon as he gets up.

Scroll

four things per line
 same count length lux
 haps East hum wind
 word flame twins wing

forth streams smoke of
 bread time's wine hand
 grasps casts is tree
 made green wits ax

stretch sense wide not
 thin raw web strum
 days shore night in
 lips front All's ope

eye's tea street rush
 house car shrubs fence
 spills out hot quick
 bones glow 'neath moon

now goes egg to
 world snake ring oak
 horse leaps real myth
 heart pump signs signs

bird news or cat
 struts the gas bill
 old guilt waves like
 He says hi lad

what paves paths find
 stones tell tales too
 call me my group
 knows how join us

cloud soul rain type
 grows which weeds cell
 sort red blue fez
 worn shades dance soup

grey mix does lives
 look hard dreams edge
 sails crib fact charm
 silt through via tune

verb skin fish guts
 knife home tongue hearth
 hack ign scud shapes
 'fore ye own truth

white vest meant cap
 tours hire o glyph
 hex turn hall iced
 wan whale you are

dress rears blood shake
 skirts hell free wild
 wands squint drawn mad
 needs wake this up

bear crab sky score
 star stance man plays
 high keys grace larks
 reach steep seal wisp

land break to orb
 draw crest far there
 don't dike prime's flow
 nest root grafts spore

strands curl true north
 flesh held spire runs
 face surf church pine
 bark vow leaf lift

in mould writ bell
 dark bay wax cries
 source smell work dirt
 wise gold merge hid

cross sly arch rise
 sub mind log housed
 spine neck arm span
 vert dawn ground grad

I am a siege
pen drill grinds noon
base thought mines read
sun's marl pores hair

here rays raze gap
stead bound we fit
heart's whim well cast
shape shift blooms good

hip prompt mole digs
sea bridge caulks gulf
fix each just so
corpse string soul track

leash dog road curbs
pulp wholes hole by
part place parse port
pass go hike verse

bear pin drop pad
foot on cruel coals
glove joy and song
safe climb pure snow

bald false tomes eat
meat drink goat's milk
claw down veils fill

The Drifter

I have an old friend
whose icy sidewalks
morning better watch out for

who talks about today
late at night, in a bold words, perhaps
in front of the Laundromat.

Ground through the mill
and through the grindstones
he smokes Carlton Lights

“tasting all its old
associative power” like bland
gum of prophecies.

His is the promise of a matinée
at any theatre where
no movie is showing.

He is shaped like an old friend
and you can't quite see him
because far away, and his back to the light.

The Ball

I sought the ball in America
back to the driveway of an old house
rebuilt, mini-golf up the street
permanent “Now Open” sign
in America

I sought my first word, *ball*
first for everything, Unity externalized
the world made of this.

Return address. Like a lover flanked by silence
she demands new platitudes
self evident in countenance.

I steer my desk over the horizon, over its own
simple horizon, America opened, simple
as a fathoming, a shared word
for all beyond retention. Sun bowls us over
we can only insist, say our prayer
for the obtainable, and unobtainable same,
say our one word
braid of epistemes that is all deserving
mention, where all lives yet
and pick up the ball where we left it.

Preliminary

Here be still

let
water down

the roof slants
be a proof- roof.

Water
dares not move
in sequence but

genus
this procession
and the roof
or moon, that
pulls you by
the nape

down the tracks.
Same guide
these two

no updown
the water is
the moon

rushes to that raggedy
old idea

the moon in you
you caper down the
roof and
grab.

Tinjis, for Alana (somehow)

Brutish and crooked, it stoops down to dig
entrenches itself, back to the light,
face to darkness, to hear the center of the earth.

What shadow is this, common estimation,
familiar of opposites— where there is no light
no dark. Not a shadow, but one and the same
shadow to two bodies

the hidden of a thousand bestial forms.
She is not Truth, not built like presence.
Not so originatory, to be with or without. Older than name,
Tangier of Mauritania as much a viper
as *Fortune* she listens dug in her own
that is moon-rise sunset simultaneous
ends: equilibrium that is
“Tempo! Tempo! In all things!”
bestia trionfante dug in earth
hears the root, outward grasp of
the center she hears
banished from the heavens
the stars in earth blind sees in the way we
look up marries the children of earth
to this moment does not
dare dig further, hearing the root
the heaven from here.

The Scene

High Priest

an open vein, blood flows in
 from open night:
 vestment of semaphore
 flies like to like
 and moon closer
 her inward watching
 dissolves into the silver child.

Images each in their own way
 nested with attendant shadows: those causes
 come to a head, here

*

regularity, order,
 a spirit common to every question

no. Forget what I said: all the High Priest wants
 is for you to forget he's there

 out-of-order, the images
 work but not for you,
 false tautologies
 is recreate

 garb: adjectives. How will I
 read this out loud

 is inflection
 the priest is not a priest
 but from his horned cap

 like frozen wind
 leaves a wrinkle, in the air, signs his name
 and is gone. It's the body that goes home.
 At night is nothing but question. Unvessel'd.
 No answers. Brushes word matter from its teeth.

The Haruspex

letting in an ancient set of eyes
used to wizzing through godly night
stars that have read all that ink

let me in, let me see what's hidden in you
unhidden from itself, let that think
we come from the far side of the dromenon: earth a lie, is variable—

start over, frequently
as possible, get off and stay here ever stable contrariety,
swimming against it the stream varies you

a matter of image
dizzy with restarting, tumbled claws, heads & tails of you
lifetime is how long it takes

to make your sort of net, year's name for the
animals you've been, you're the math
until they tie you to the core,

center their earth in your eye— start over
the point is the whole, must never be whole
because theirs is the definite, like eternal suffering

the conglomeration tumbles forward, seeking
its missing pieces, they are all mine
categorical as gift, La Llorona free from heaven

these are my children, the seen meant for stealing
I've sought you from the first, there's nothing else
in my head, all the doors lead home: continuous repair of the non-existent loss

just lost, picking up things, here I am
here's my address, employment deployment, dressed in the same
guts, the in and out of a moment, forgetting now and

stealing into the new, deeply convinced
thought over-thought loses value, break the glass
and drink, disregard your training

music thoughtfast takes quick hands and bumbling
scored gedankenstrich, missing the string
and striking the air

undercutting the rug to impenetrable nothing,
no reasons, no passport but what the flesh says: starting over, redoubled,
taking you with it and arriving you hither.

—
The animals you dreamt of, she said

had bi-valve hearts. And the worm I asked

since it is infinitely divisible? One

pump, said the witch. And she asked to buy me dinner.

Or better yet, make bone marrow soup

as I recite my poetry to her, or tell her my thoughts

and I was cold— I had to kiss her to get back in.

Preparation for a Self Portrait

Blown over the rocks, faint sea–mist, the grassy parts, and thinned out, the canvas for a good portrait.

Lyrical as the bones. To equalize from under,
set taxonomies, until you arrive, arise, index. All the wind could carry. Smelling of source.

Made-up in it. Color–flash body encodes

trees, shutters, leaves, flags,
you semaphore.

Mirror and behind the moon back to the cause.
What reflection knows.

Smelling of Chlorophyll, a concentration.
All that you've questioned till the reflection gave way, to

reassemble. Resemble, again. Reassess. Inscribed sediment
self-consciousness whipped

into spontaneous heraldries,
caves of the now waiting for you a thousand years.

All that was built up in your coming. Arrivals reminders.
Remember when we both started out

walking in opposite directions.
Meet back here.

Incense Games

1.

The seraglio in distress native tongue "I hear my father curse"
textiles led back to the loom, bodiless, no such thing as empty
moves through the bodiless our conversational Ottoman forgotten
in Hebrew one of the souls speaking from Yankee Stadium
saying the first thing you knew before putting clothes on it
that is verse, cutting back
to the buried cries where it lives yet
chasing the words into their sillage following the smell
back to memories so old they
never started or existed the incense burning high
Babylon invaded through the foggy fields
walls green from return smoke curled up to the ceiling
the air still for description.

2.

I wag the flabellum draw forth the rhyme cimbalom quick flutter
to rarified far roofs crowded together municipal buildings their slow
goings on along the Duna city and river in sweet mists steep wet roofs
there's no climbing but life in the thick street no knowing how
this is not where no precipice but a margin subtle as lost
train stations for directions this place is in the middle
no origin, built around the zoo
what is there to photograph cities within cities I see a rug store
in the back a courtyard of apartment fronts rugs and planters hanging
from banisters secret Babylon cobbled centuries
bloom invisible to the unwilling, people busy here
through walls, or on unseen stairs walking.

3.

They won't let me in this is a painting
I can't return to, lines I once understood
those other paintings like houses in Brooklyn
as it starts to drizzle
you suspect you've been locked in
since before you were you and see the thin light
of that hour coming in slants from the other
side of the planter
Pathetique you waltz your two left feet
from there, the paintings mean you can't
see it, you can't see a painting
because it's covered in paint, all that's left
is a rug getting wet on the banister, the smell of cooking
to tell you someone is calling your name
only they don't know what it is.

4.

Salt-cod barreled on the wharf
stones or children sit atop juice soaking
up their coat backs, soaking into stone
land becomes an extension of sea
you bring it home with a handful of anchovies
whatever you fished out of the sleeping morning
like a woman's shoe you wake up with it in your hand
wake that much less, until there is no dream
no wake no catch just the sea snoring
where its always been
gently next to you.

5.

An ancient text, yellowed sandalwood, I see the old Assyrian
accounts, the footstalks, tally-sticks rooted in a smoky
hand, debts carved in stone with cruel cunei, hungers of the
Goddess, I see Lapis Lazuli under Miscellaneous Expenses
and the desert opening wide on the red tents

I see men whipped with invisible switches traveling in
desolate ontologies of power, a mysterious woman feigning
to be Miscellaneous Expenses, red haired belly-dancer
glistening with oil in the dingy-lantern'd back-place
seeds under her tongue, her tongue pressed down on her hips
feet reversing the head, smoke tracks me away.

6.

I seek the bread, smoke before us, smoke seeking
bread and bread smoke and the bread fresh from the sea
aloeswood the smoke turned to bread and the bread
turned to wood and the wood fresh from the sea the bread
with the smoke in it seeking to be both I seek no bread
but the smoking wood and the fresh sea turning into the
sought the bread of the smoke in the fresh aloeswood
and in the sea of the sought you can smell the fresh
aloeswood and not confuse it for bread or something else
whose smoke travels to the wrong regions whose bread
allows no smoke and whose smoke seeks no bread and nothing
turns to aloeswood.

7.

I see the open field, meadows of Babylon
opened onto the vasty I am
always seeing

always open here the accompaniments
that is pasture, grass blowing
betray their smell

outside the gates the city reaches
arms farthought
the movement of Time, the field

is open in the smell of
bonded things
I'd rather be locked in than locked out
when it is open the smoke pours

forth, and it is open to me
propped open with my shoe
the shoe dream handed me

to come and go as I please
but I stay in the sometimes open field
because who knows dream could take the shoe away.

8.

In stillness no sight only the blind quiet sucking
air unseeing of the artful flame that takes
in is hidden in the wood illuminans obscurari
winter still outside the window silent construction
blocking the street, making nothing, stillness
this be the altar's sacrifice, the act and the consecration
I see a cardinal beating thrushes from his arbor
templum stillness limns, altered in its sacrifice
I see a red barn of the midnight railroad
the hour when we are all black lit by night
lit by silence the artful flame stillness
sucked in, billowing out, thrushes beaten from the spontaneous templum
smoke clears a world within itself
the gods are what flutters
at the borders, waiting to get back in.

Exodus of *The Pharaoh*

1.

for Ann

To see what I was doing– hidden from the present’s
biographers, that was the question.

The solo violin, the voice of the story teller
rose from the clay as if there’s a third

person who’s not me– a red herring, Prokofiev’s
First Symph. the biographers bluffed by an empty

what was I doing unopened and dark in the basement
what were my realities as I compressed into

diamonds? Prokofiev kicking his samovar and yelling something
famous with his cat and writing this

this “beginning without end”
the before masquerades in, like looming Romeos present

behind every mask
chained in the basement of his symphony.

2.

So much for the hidden I'm always saying yes
holding the thought of the unknown in the mind

so much for an other it's under this aegis
the coal press lit like a blue flower

pulled from the hip pocket light
as a feather I fan the trump

stormed by yes this beach
I pull the blue flower from the ten-thousandth

the doors are all unlocked from inside out
what will come is in wait start singing

and the song will find you crouched there
wearing it like a mask.

3.

The occupations are less
fearsome where they met their allegory

and now, breath rushing through Orpheo by the third act
nearly sung in he trembles delicate at the precipice

of the absolute, hanging by a thread at the point
of starting over, his bloody apron no more than happenstance today

the butcher hands my father a bag of meat
this is my bat mitzvah, I am old enough not

for anything, but to see the old
chair hoisted by Pharaoh's slaves

dressed as relatives, that is in the old sense
Pharaoh's slaves, relative to you.

4.

I lose my virginity under the pylons of Isis'
temple, in the postcard, still beating the slow

precision chisels the smooth towers overwhelm
that processual orgy– I had no choice, not even

to be myself, with my long back smeared in Sycamore oil
shoulders wedged against the porous stone

someone smelling of the river, like a wet dog
I can't I thought, can hardly but the story starts

I put back the postcard this is my bat mitzvah
thumped by this omnipotence

reminding my body in the hallmark isle
I had been there, I slept with Anubis, and no one knows it but me.

5.

All poems start in Egypt, it's your ship
moored in the distance that gives

way to you, the suggestion of a hip, far promontory
into the skin of the here, you live from suggestion to suggestion

stumble forward into the maybe of fact into another Egypt
the lesson rising ahead, seek it the sign of a hill, a

palm tree means 'go this way' you can't get lost
the ley-line is talking everything you notice is

express to Egypt a divining rod
every palm tree is a bat mitzvah

the exodus has followed us
lodged in these flimflam particulars.

6.

Integrating escape what supply city can be built
but the dodecapolis, the city we collect

and God dealt with the midwives, omitting what of
the story was a given leaving only events, only the tower

ahead this cupola staircase alley these belong to you
the rest you dress up that unknown the emptiness of everything

across the river, only here, where you make your city does
the ark of bulrushes trip you in the reeds

Prokofiev evening on *The Pharoah*, pulled out through the sycamores
through the sieve of the seen we end up here

no longer in mortar, in brick service but like the Gideons
break into every room, heap our house up around us.

7.

Egypt is never a destination once the world has a place to go
it doesn't— Egypt steps out of the bulrushes and follows you home

goes where it needs to go, a hole in your pocket
that carries everything it has lost, the lost part of anything

you have, Egypt is where the bibles are kept, monologues
in the Pylons you have to listen carefully to hear

Egypt is your linguistic precedent, all the words we'd have
if we stopped calling it language, the hips we'd be

edged with trendy wisdoms to name the proclivities
prow Egypt follows you home you have only to

jump on its back under a full moon
it will take you somewhere.

8.

for C.S.

The Pharaoh waits for us earthly branches
 heavenly stems, the twelve tribes find the 12 sons, more or less

no one is the output of form, we do not recall the physical lineage, but
 call Jacob, and he calls back, tie the earth to heaven, names are our knots

Jack, Boca, you have to say what you don't know, they hand you a cob
 and push you into the Coliseum its your job

to figure out what this means, ward off the statements
 the invariably wrong semantics we gladii are elided into name's assemblage

you have your nearly whole cob, or candle,
 almost full the light only you can see

there is only one piece missing, the 27th letter
 without which you couldn't see anything, you wouldn't be.

9.

The Pharaoh glides uninhibited hyperaxis forward
 he has no eigenvalues but the Sphynx (that is, Pnyx)

animal below deck, thing that moves the sea
 loadstone of those necessary democracies, the obvious ones

that never stop working, *The Pharaoh* smells like that,
 like a Pnyx crouched beneath its suitors, Pylons that don't

care which way you're going situated at the antipodes
The Pharaoh glides through the city night asking everyone

where *The Pharaoh* is, this is the new on its own tail
 the Pylons' delicate happenstance preparing

the world's bat mitzvahs making sure the poems
 don't keep all their promises.

10.

for M.I.

And *The Pharaoh*, nearing the Pnyx, having limned the wind
flawlessly replicating his own self—

creation, the moon full of him, wondered if it was
winter in that book, which continued its golden half—turns

from him dropping bits of amethyst at his feet
that (despite himself) was advance payment for the more

he was preparing (the processual esthetics)
morse goads subtly climbed him beyond comfort's reckoning

the sheer volume of bat mitzvah was a paralysis and
I've never known how to talk about it

or any single way a one time fix nothing here but dream things
the sunken pylons on the wide desert and I was held like an unknown
<<in the mind until the blessing snake moved in the sand.

11.

The Pharaoh can only tell one story, this is the last ship out
of Phoenicia, the same story because the only

even his friend Jatszik (to play) is real, and something new
happens every day, constant variation, newold myths

like phony First Symph.s images joined
to the stream of images, in salty syntax

of ear, eye, flesh *The Pharaoh's* cruise
shored up wherever day does, at things bottom

from one to the next, unscrupulous drifter
through where meanings' wires hang

The Pharaoh tells his salty tale
only he doesn't know what it is.

Poem by Csongor

In the middle distance
 “we couldn’t see the pictures”
 between Vísegrádi Útca
 & Calvin Tér
 between where I live
 & was born
 didn’t even think
 Calvin, looking
 right at him till
 someone told me
 and on Vísegrádi
 finding Faludy’s house
 next door after translating him
 all month
 catching the sleeves of things
 in the lost woods
 those knives
 sail through
 the known
 into
 (the unknown knives portend)
 pictures of only
 silver streaks
 foggy disclosure
 threatening involution
 into smell
 the spicy parliament
 can barely keep hidden
 behind my meat and potatoes.

Caryatid

You spin and unspin
unaware of where
loom lies
exercising your
dominion over
Time innate
gift everyone
has this movement
is the cloth of
what there is
isn't, this way
you stay young
the finished
cloth is death
you are waiting
for someone spin
and unspin for
them to show
up and in
what denudes
itself is center
movement rounds
there is a house–
beam, mast
dug out of
air and you hear
soft tapping her
little moan
let me out.

TRAVELOGUES

The White Spider

A white spider haunts
a stack of documents,

a lesson
hovering over the facts,

the proven days.
Spider is allegory

where you were The
John, whatever that means,

shoveling snow. And gave
her chocolates

we know what that means
though we get lost in the feathers;

can't know what that means:
lost in the days, proofs

too busy shoveling
to preside beyond our

size. Not so
the spider, the white one

lives around paper
white that hovers

and like an old friend
crawls up your hand.

Up your hand but lives outside
the mind— beyond those bounds

even now, redefining John
the way some stones do

to hold her, the way I
gave you chocolates with

stones in them and you ate them
you ate them all

we know what that means:
if there is a logic

I'm just a bunch of facts
you know what I mean

I pick up the white spider and
oh my god but it doesn't seem to notice.

Brancusi Tangent

I.

carved out—
 since when has
 reality been trustworthy
 I remember Brancusi
 said to me, ‘I don’t
 abstract.’
 The wood is not wood
 nothing is
 not even the antelope
 buffalo:
 image lists we painted
 to remember what’s not
 what it is,
 to carve from them
 not in the silly way
 but carve
 our tools
 from them
 mark the gterma, the precious
 teacup in every buffalo
 living its life along the plains.

Tools, what works for us
 in things, suave, half–mad
 never there
 if you break the skin.
 Yes, it was a hot summer in Budapest
 Transylvania was still part of the country

 people know about these things.

II.

her, Pogany, pagan, what's caught
in the face, the line, an old memory
older than you, covering one ear
with both hands, hearing

what? head's tilt, what body
says, words perched on
implied kinesis: the Flight of the Present

unverified, unproven, not so
originatory as to be past, or constant
or other. To be anything else

but here, so...
no so, party to nothing
only the criminal who would
steal this unofferable part

the decadence of figuring her
where no one is.

III.

No longer a Maiastra, Firebird
the teapot raises its haughty head;

yellow bird, sublime
we make subliminal.
Teapot. The gold screams
let me out, the bird
in the appliance. And horned fire

the water boiling
the bird
a bronze bull

the water
held in flame
steams

the illimitable main
still preaching
from its confines

let me out
the bird means
I've seen the water
from the other side

outside the kitchen
on my way to Gaeta
Morocco

was born
begot
renewed in the tree
before I learned
of men's voices

before I sang
the song of man, their water
in my belly

the bird we learn
abstracted measurements
still reeking of secrets
screeching in the heat.

Jugulum and wing
the seen is stolen
given name

is the eternal
the form in here, and

the birds outside
short lived.

The Real Shifts

We can see the
 angle
 which makes
 sternum
 the two arms
 hold moonrise sunset:
 roof's angle, the
 arms
 holding them
 up turn
 down
 and the sternum
 thrust
 at apex,
 the safe place of architecture
 hoisting the beams the shingles
 out of boxes
 even if we forget
 the form
 what it means is
 still there
 the residue
 does not care
 if you're illiterate
 the residual meaning
 meanings reside
 the returning side
 turning away
 but always there
 unsure about you
 (so we think)
 the real shifts
 at an incredible rate
 only the briefest
 glimpse
 of its turn can be
 lived, like
 a coil
 rotates
 slowly
 in the breeze, and
 levitation
 an upward
 movement

CALIFORNIA JOURNALS

1.

a water pattern made by a breeze off the coast
 as you cruise down the highway, and maybe
 flicking your cigarette onto the shoulder
 it would be no worse than reenacting the revolutionary war
 burning this place

you know, were it spontaneous, something necessary
 in the way we're given to express— that is
 the world tells us what to say
 is our script (on a good day)

demanding to be set on fire
 to start over, as it does, but we—

we have to elope, any way we can— or the *restorials*
 are ignored, and we won't start over,
 wont slip ourselves in where the old
 offers room—

as you near and say
 something about the price of meat
 not thinking of your body, its dirty ideas—

and I throw my
 cigarette out the window
 on a black horse

maiastra

coming to kiss you.

4.

Redwood, the gulls
 the road sweeping low among
 boulders: culch—
 meticulous as his own mechanism
 Beethoven on the tape–deck
 the weather
 we weather
 a metaphor in which one
 lives forever
 her thousand pieces
 in the setting sun
 glint,
 and cruising down the highway
 like Dionysus, delicate in her,
 red heifer of the valley
 open the image
 slaughter the bull(k).

Slaughter the bull (the gendered gateway)
 the blades of the 5th violin sonata
 that let us into her
 the very image of
 an image the bull
 weeping
 with wild hair
 (we seek a referent
 the bull
 in the rock– but in California
 there are no Zodiacs, only
 Books from the sky. This.

5.

In the sun the conquistador on the hill
the city gleam; the sun in its armor.

And a bluebird. Poets have stolen everything,
bluebirds make points. The conquistador

Montezuma saw and thought God— and
wishing bluebirds were free I think

with Ben over lunch he says well
why not say everything is Intelligent

if emergence (of Mind) is not provable
fuck it (he sweeps his arm).

There is always some *unbiased* reality
you haven't thought of yet is why not

I say lash together a thousand bluebirds
you might learn something about California.

An Air of Spain

1.

An air of Spain.
 Ravel in the breeze, try as we may
 to keep him out. Water on my feet
 crouched on an islet
 in the cave. Between the in/out flow.
 Biotherm in the cave froth. Breathing in
 speaking the deep breath of the cave.
 And high above me the Nightingale plays
 a song is subversion, for all the king's men
 lifting the North star from a piece of
 porcelain. We do not leave behind
 what is important to us. We see something,
 ride the song out, or in.
 Breathe back the cave. The circle of the
 earth through you. The day in a crepuscule—
 everything else spinning second-wheel.

2.

Figured out in my dream how to continue
 lifting out and up, over the cave, from
 the cliff face over the water, and
 seeing the land, from the On High of
 the broken fourth wall, a house, typical
 to theory, small farming, the old church
 like a cross falling head first off the land.
 And a dirt road leading into town is no black mystery
 maybe this time we follow it.
 Through the fog, the non-descript spring
 thaws, back to the Hebrew of the lands:
 we'll take this up later. The insistence
 of the weathervane, an eastward wind of sight,
 a tin can tied to my tail, the sheep their attendants
 bow before this process. The mind
 emerging from itself, pushed off
 the material of thought, swings free over
 Hyperborea, the land on top of your head. Where
 we don't know a thing, the circumspection
 of what will be said. A place farther. Very
 very far, past origin and into the draw.

An Observance

it is hard
hard to read
from the
bottom up
verse is
written
backwards
starting from the
sky poems are made
to dig, a prayer
rushes into
your mouth
nails you
to this moment
with your arms
crying out for it.

Birthday Poem for Emma and Marion

Through Neptune
 we are born in Pisces
 two
 fish on a coffin lid

 this is the oldest
 sign, hatched from an egg
 the two fish
 Aphrodite & Eros.
 Love, & Eros
 the son.
 The two fish
 only women remember
 (that is two
 to make complicity)– the egg
 and the simultaneous birth
 of woman
 and Eros, her son
 reaching from her

tells us which way to go
 directs us up stream, the son
 directs us back
 to the woman,
 the Love that drags all
 things in, the mouth &
 hunger
 a birthday party
 no one leaves.

TWO POEMS

1.

What is there until
some discomfort.

 What did
we know, we who knew
and yet asked.

Who can only say now, that it goes
if it goes, like the cognizance
of desire (how awful!) a train that never
fully arrives.

 Sleeping with
the lights on– the profound is
discomfited from us
before we ask anything
there is a light, a stone
demanding an answer
wedged in your belly button, between us–
the poem goes on
if it goes on
and gets there
or near
to where it was
to what we knew.

2.

The goddess that
is mine, and the
woman I share—
cannot have
so completely, nor
should I want
to. The goddess
of the shared
a rock on the hill
we have worn smooth
the woman we have
worn smooth to occult
the goddess like a stone
among friends
worn smooth with
understanding.
To each part
the parts give way.

The Wharfinger

1.

Today from the permafrost
a germ reawakens, the million year

old day they run an old movie
Chaplin dashes

across the sea, what is an
index, the permanent

(nature has to be always contrary)
that dies again

we are carried
not beyond ourselves

but in spite of death, a flock of doves
returning to the scene of the crime

the world has to live again
some things

it's February 17th
the 'herald patch'

of my rash appears, I feel
414 years old we kiss in the doorway

and wonder what that meant.

2.

The curse is upon me
to figure, fill

the two sides of a form
to come in and *el tunik*

to vanish, that is also a cloth
the vanishing I wear to the world's

cloth party, half-unknown
wearing one pantleg

to come in
is the only thing we think about

even if we don't
a Spartan prologue

all the rest is about this
when years later you find me

in a red dress, coming in though
the back window

of my own house
as if that were the means to an end.

3.

We can only assume that stuff that bookends
syntax between the occulting legs of things, the wharf

we don't know the land the sea
just the wharf we don't suppose

it is too near, it is us
sallying forth the emissaries, those things

we hope to be true, the hand of a pick-pocket
the winedark forearm, the wharf as if it were the inversion

of what we don't know, flat and wide
a misty dock, true but nothing clear

salt swoon of fish of secrets
the salt left by an obfuscation the suddenly alien

body is salt and the wrist a gull flaps above it
master of the wharf.

*

Washed up the salt carcass white dice
and the pink Himalayan salt, we are gamblers

the whale from the high mountains
something of truth clings to the wager of bone

despite it all the big talk what we
couldn't pay out in heaven

we have gambled our way to an equivalent
loss as if that were the origin

but it is the origin that takes from us
the dragon in the sky, the earth hording

everything away again the
old pocket watch under the cloak of the obvious

under our very noses the cosmos
turning everything back into secrets

only the naive live here
the drunkard's Latin

flashes of old pride how frequently
it's too late when we remember.

4.

The gull is a knot in all the strings
the gull is all that's yours

I want, all I want, and
errata, so sometimes

it's not the gull at all, we pick
a word up from the root

see it wide from meaning
the gull of your hair, how can you

leave home me thinking this way of you?
gulls tucked in the suitor's mirror

in you is your nature the gull
lest he spill back into the rest

like a sigh sits there
with boardwalk eyes

we think we know this of you
the place you are not

the world you remember
when the gull is gone.

5.

for Gil

And if we turned the wharf inside out
would it be volumetric again? no

we must flatten, keep inverting
until the material, the painting

ground perfectly smooth, we put in
what it took

one grain at a time
unbuild or undwel

or any smaller step to dodge rationality
even rationality will do

so long as it's medicine—
medicine? they've defined things

to rescind, no
we must build a mountain, one

self-canceling grain at a time
keep inverting, the high

mountains shimmering with maybe
the volumetric arms of the same god

will surprise us in this new flatness
and we may again not know what they're doing.

(Because we still don't understand
not everything has a consequence.)

6.

We turn wharf back to
hwearfian, *to turn*, back

to Sanskrit surpam
winnowing fan, and from there

back to our quarters to dice
kartos *the wrist* again

the kind of winnowing you do
when the boss' back is turned

and the body left
to its own devices

the translations trading lemons
for barrels full of salt

those little things we do
that keeps everything but us

the same like a wharf full of
hands pushing there pulling here.

7.

The wharf is nothing but candor
 what was left when the wharf was swept clean

and the wharf, from old tackle and salt blue
 rebuilds under everything that leaves

The Master of the Wharf opens
 his windows in the morning

to examine the smoke rising from
 chimney stacks with meteorologic

purpose, the trade winds
 headed straight inland

even this silly place can learn
 an olive skinned girl props open

her bedroom window for the green parrot
 she looses a scroll

from its tail-feathers a radio traffic report
 leaking from an old wooden boat

moored behind the square grey brick café
 near St. Albans like an anchor from the sky to make sure

this place isn't totally made up
 but the remnant of some poet she looks

at a narrow street with paving stones
 a soft light, newspapers or gulls

and an old chain tapping in the breeze
 that lifts the gulls over her roof

and tickling her breasts in its passing
 our lovers find us long before we know.

8.

We hate music anyway there's instead
the deafness of going forward yes

I will tickle your breasts O
goddess of my sad loves sitting

like a battery under the lighthouse
the copper box under the street corner

the lapis palimpsest buried therein
of walking to the store and spilling

coffee on my coat, of walking toward
the store and going elsewhere, of doing

the right thing the palimpsest at the
beginning of every story a street-corner

full of stowaways of itching and uncomfortable
sweats yea the wharf must be wiped clean

because we always make the right decisions
according to us in universal harmony

there is a delicate balance a constant
reference to the books we every

day rewrite the palimpsests we consult
just to make sure of what it says.

9.

That said, words go on
separating out the four voices

leaving the fifth, the first
our bottom line; on second sight

the façade *is* curved a hyperbola
on the grid streets you, Madame Blavatsky

enter this architecture, reincarnated
manner brought back to surface

tease from the set what could define
another, whatever rises in this geometry

might bring the world to bear when I
am not me and the Wharfinger the

Master unnamable speaks through
everything I go to sit in my favorite

place spun in the currents of this syntax
where there hasn't been a chair in 80 years

I walk into this world,
just open the door and it tells me

where to go, and who is I? the little shack
where the Wharfinger keeps his gear

the hooks and nets oddly godly
he keeps the wharf by such slender means.

10.

Not pressing in
but an intraocular pressure

cast out the images
eye-arrows

halo, the passage
& fleabane phosphenes

 on the field. The wharf
a world cast from the head

to find ourselves again: making the new things
old, the beginning of

the world an endoptic phenomenon;
when the words come, before they're

words, and we with nothing to say
start

Then the tide-tables learned behind
we learn to preposition them

the flow of this music
glues more than space

And drives back the explications
The tidal tide

An endoptic phenomenon
that presses back *enough*

it says, it's time for you to see
an Oedipus ready to stop creating

Mother
 the hunger sign

I learn to exchange for pleasure
An Oedipus ready to let the world back in.

11.

And finally we find a wisdom
it doesn't have to do with introspection

because someone knows more
than the poet the poet

who says all we know, all we can know
even the Wisdom, its name

at hand we jump into the lake
hold that wisdom around us

seems a different tier of answer
(but what do we know)

by craft (not tricks) by
knowing too much

we rediscover the obvious a rubber
tipped crook for settling disputes

the thumb who reigns over the wrist
the unveiled crook of wisdom

pulls us from the lake
Inconsolable said Ginsburg.

12.

The wharf on the sea
a towel hung by the shower

we learn what the wharf is, live
under ideas from hole to hole

all that matters now is vantage and perhaps
our nearness to a restaurant

rats, lots of rats
and a few old gulls

all out of things to say the wharf
dangles over the great

vault of dormant know-how
a bus pulls up, two turtles overhead

as I was walking to the corner-store
things as they happen in their mercy

the wharf ordering the child with its song
from chaos' brink! through a few merciful things

our oldest places weigh in again
through chains and hooks, towering

guano, an old dog, things belonging
to no one we'd never dream of taking home.

13.

Familiar as a wharf, place that turns
unknown

not contrariety but
evacuating the world

from itseself, a burning
building, the highway (from the gut)

any way that suits us
in the world to be free from it

before the familiar begins to plot
evacuating the word

leaving ourselves out there
to say what we come up with.

15.

To build a house from miles
of nets and trippery

and show a ship
really leaving this, to board up

any previous use of the function
a people wise at the smell of

fish, wise to the Noun of the wharf
and its disinheritings, sticks and leaves

giving way underfoot the thin covering
of a bottomless pit

pit can feel it draining from me
in approach, a wharf untenable

singularity 'isn't big enough
for the two of us' and now the wharf

is just this place, where we leave to,
self-abandoning, when the wharf tires us out

a wharf between two
others . the defiance or the loss

of place, a New Providence
irrational (so they say) gamblers

striving back to what's highest stakes
with us (something about leaving and

more gambling) the defiance or the loss
of place, leaving behind the imponderable

board up the bottomless pit, our wharf
is in Ocracoke, said Blackbeard, there

not a nouny old distrustful
we will find a shore (in North Carolina)

from which to never shore up again.

16.

All boarded up you stop looking
back stop informing your aesthetic

decisions stop having esthetic
decisions stop deciding

there never was a choice nor a
call for opinions no one has

proof read the opinions to
choose from no one healthy

considers the esthetics of
health, let us throw away the

old wharf for a new one expanding
out from between two things

the frame of the peripheral
where things really are,

let's expand out from two
unnameables and not forget

this origin, two things
unclear no matter how fast you turn your head.

The Flats

1.

From in over the flats
of Great Barrington
we begin at the end of the road
taught to talk

to take

say the flats
up Mt. Washington

“There’s an old church.”

“There’s a blueberry farm.”

meaning from there

I haven’t seen yet

the meaning we are told

from the Tarot, a long blue

sword holding up the crown

singularity is simple

the tenderness of a sword

between breasts

this is the only

talk I know, I

heard about the

farm, will you accept

my love as taking it?

I have only this sword

for a road

show me something

and it goes into

the one singularity

the talk itself

and the rest one hopes to find there.

2.

Unraveling from the head a road
 spoken ear tracts what you saw
 there rebuilds the road drives
 out from us the landscape, say
 the old house with the illegible plaque
 the sky an offering to the
 sky voicing the said to its
 own end where our sound becomes
 illegible slipping under the horizon
 the whisper of a name my
 words have always wanted to say.

Sign's demand, say what's
 on either side of you the farrago sighs
 demand to be pulled in toward cadence, the song
 of one sound, a word to make the others rhyme
 up from the horizon

What horizon the Horus who comes into your house
 from the marriage of the doorway
 a chest at the foot of the bed where the sun
 waits until morning we never stop traveling
 "the matrices actually go supine" the brain lobes
 fallen into the crest testicles
 pulled into axis

a road going straight
 our to sea, perhaps, and I, recently injured,
 who can only sit and watch! and the road
 at the end of it, the sea or the cause, I sit
 at the end of day in a place not material
 in the mightyness of what may be
 the road a voice with a body at the end of it, what the
 voice says, the melancholy fact of it.

3.

and I survive
 although at times
 “too descriptive”

giving myself away
 a villa, a lime-tree
 in the average grass

I say things
 I can't see, friends
 I'll never meet again

and Homer, blind
 blind as a bat- we haven't
 traveled in poems since then

without saying we
 see something, Keats knew
 to say something

is to see, walk in light of
 in the light of the said
 saying the darkness

for the light of it
 and vice versa

we walk under our sign
 darkening pelvis
 of hip folded to thigh

the sign of woman
 slowly takes itself away

a word I musn't speak
 only back into the sign

a sign you can't stare at too long
 yet the body remembers

like Cadmon,
 remembering

our first fact
morningflesh

on the other side of
words, too airy, early for them

and all there was to say there.
I survive by that remembrance

when I close my eyes and say
no one's home, and there really isn't

just the fudge you of bodies
and the song rising in them

the strange opera you know
when varying the sounds to perhaps
catch the real sound off guard
tease it out by syntax

by listening , that thing still in heaven
waiting to hear its name

However

name something and
The Fall or it does
until the name
eventually
goes flat again,

the thousand years it takes
to make a foot of earth. Twenty-six
million years of feet down is
a word from heaven that killed everything
with all its names.
The cheap rhetoric of using them
in conversation, as if the time had come.

The frogs.

or as I told someone
who did not remember but was
nonetheless glad to see me
"My travelogues are becoming quite

sparse, there is now almost
only the voice, a movement.”

“Oh, like Dream!” she said.

A mobility that is the desire
to emerge, lose the idiot
recalcitrant against the sea

against the obscurans

to move into the patterning of
life, the full emptiness of dream– the whole
spectrum of its emergence
like wearing out a pair of shoes
at the edge of the sea.

The Supplicant¹

This letter may come to you as a surprise due to the fact that we have not yet met. Firstly, I have to say that I have no intentions. My name is Mr. Lewis Smith, a European merchant. My business in reach and thus in character finds itself largely Mediterranean: although recent concerns for the distant relatives of a dear friend have led me to invest in Sudanese lentils and the Zimbabwean Electrical Machinery sector; I have played key background roles in several monarchic family weddings, besides supplying for them spices, wine, food, raw materials, furs, cloth, glass, jewels, etcetera. Besides, or perhaps I should say contiguous with my work as a mover of goods, a strong sense of the economic current has developed in me. It is the secret success of a merchant to see the route to which his items belong. To know where things want to go. Precisely this gift has created as it was co-created with my practice my practice. Only by this talent of mine do I know now to whom I write.

*

I sit here, writing to you in the dingy light of the forgotten apse of a sunken church. Under red moons I scribble hurriedly from beneath the newest hedgerows. Or an old bath-house bandied under its own weight, in what might be Bulgaria, from the wheat-tinted light I associate with Ovid's *Fasti*. But I don't know. I've come here not to. In the place where there are no currents, besides that current which has led me, leads me still to you.

*

I am the European merchant of nothing, just the sound of bicycles as they clatter along the path skirting my shelter. It isn't them I write you about. It isn't the sound of bicycles or the sweet morning flower who's dew I ate a few hours ago, or the way I contrived to sleep, naked in the hay. This is not what needs to be told you.

*

¹ I mean Supplicant in the sense of a hermit or monk; a shrine marking the burial place of same. Giving up of the flesh as something not one's own is the catalyst for metamorphosis. St. Paul perched like a bird on the rock sitting in the nest of his own hair. By supplicant I mean that: the way Ovid encounters the metamorphosis of his fate.

A Devotee of The Process

I have hardly time to
talk now, he said, rearing
his eagle's head
the bulky pyramid of his body
in that lazy old way below.

Just this then, he said
before you go catch the
bus— and he held a small polished
mirror up to his other head: a
Lion's head. Quick, I said
what Is It. But he had become
a mirror and I ran off in the
fur of a lion.

“For V.N.” *trans. T.P.*

There were corked bottles
big keys, the whole sense
lay bare.

Before ever a window, before
a rattle, a glass, an eye
to be seen.

Curling strips
blind

swept, swayed
& my own sex glittered
in the cosmos.

Like the strings tied to
a shadow puppet

the old genitals, squint
impervious, lay
across the sky:

the truth, one's writ
on earth's forehead.

The Impasse

neighbor a small bowl in her hands in the
space between our houses she sneaks up on
hers throws black sludge on the giant
rhododendron that has now perhaps created
an impasse of her front door.

We don't think a rhododendron
would do that but time, time, undemocratic
with our neglect makes even a flower
a door. What grows around
the house has followed us, be it from
Neolithic heaps or the blue shadow, the flower

of Goethe's pencil: we can see
there's a house around the house
flowers birdbaths ailanthus astral body
the part of us that touches the sky.
The flowers we put there.
Only through them can we get back in.

