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## Blue Sun, and other Poems

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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)

ISBN: 978-1-312-05669-5

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 27<sup>th</sup> 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.





**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.







## 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 17<sup>th</sup>  
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.



**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 noun 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



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 Supplicant<sup>1</sup>

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.

\*

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

