

1-2015

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**Demanding more of the self
that it abstain
from mirrors and leave
only a reflection of the place
alone, the life-giver, the
mother the mind.**

1 January 2015

LITERATUR UND LEBEN

**How to win prizes:
animate the obvious.**

**How to wind friends:
conceal it.**

1.I.15

=====

**Break link
to Arabian past
when they poisoned Europe
with ancient Greek
science and philosophy.
Without them no medicine
and as everybody knows
doctors make diseases.
But who can say what
philosophers produce?**

1 January 2015

== ==

**Bright morning so clear the grass
etched shadows, edges
on everything.**

**The humble
music of light prevails
over the silent mind.**

**Awake! he said,
the difference begins.**

1 January 2015

SALTIMBANQUE

**stays in mind
frequent flyer
visiting levity**

**uplifting man
lady with her feet
elsewhere in air,
blank space
their Rubicon —
from far away I see
a bead of sweat
trickle down the spine.**

1 January 2015

= = = = =

**You have to start
somewhere.**

But why?

**Why not
just be there
already, nothing
to lift, nothing
to carry:**

**change
every word
into its opposite
if you can find it
and you'll be there.**

1 January 2015

=====

**All the ink
all over the world
evaporated from
inkwells and old
bottle without
in the least
darkening the atmosphere.**

**What can I hope
from writing words down?**

1 January 2015

COLD

**The outside
gets in the body,
becomes an extension
of winter,
 a discomfort
displaces identity
brusquely.**

**No wonder
Florida, *Drang*
nach Süden, Tenerife.
We flee from
what possesses us,
this ownerless animal.**

1 January 2015

== == == ==

**Writhing into the glare
Palmetto Street old
shadow shelter me.
cobble asphalted over
the base still holds —**

**how can the windows
forgive windowshoppers,
what glass can withstand
years of deferred desire?
At a certain moment
it's bound to crack, shiver,
tumble onto the lascivious
display of objects so long
shielded by the cold glass.**

**I know. I stand there also
wanting and wanting
the unwearable, undrinkable,
unreadable, untouchables
in the ethnicity of no.**

2 January 2015

CONFITEOR

I didn't know who I was,
thought I was me
but who is that,
mestizo o the mind,
my half-breed heart
didn't even know
how cold and hot I was
just standing there
my head half drowned
in easy explanations—
god if I were only a book
I could pretend to sense,
would at least have covers
to shield my faithlessness.

2 January 2015

= = = = =

**Doe now
near
 little mound
of cracked corn**

**is this all
I can give back**

**leave a message
if you know
never answer
the first time she calls.**

**Believes me.
At least the animal.**

2 January 2015

=====

**It makes no sense to remember
that is where the children are
those naughty inferences from adult life —**

**a body is the strangest thing to be in —
I fell from the sky
it's never what they think it is,
it is alive with spiritual personhood
each riding on a molecule so small
it holds the whole world in it.**

**So why does anyone fall?
In summer a little insect
lands on my arm, walks
in the fine hairs, takes off
and is gone. What more
can I say? I am not here.
I never fell.**

2 January 2015

=====

**Christ you could worry the
light out of the sky,
your trembling brain rehearses
all the horrors all things
turn into while you sleep.**

2 January 2015

=====

**Call the mainspring from the clock
tell her wear a simple blue gown to the prom
blue silences desire, breeds respect,
get someone in to wash the windows—
is the lawyer here yet, the stupid witnesses?**

2.I.15

=====

**Casting the runes meant
laying language on someone
so hard they couldn't get it
off their skin their backs
bent under the weight of what you said,**

**in Old Language. so potent, means
beyond meaning because nobody
knows what blank signs mean,
hence are powerful,**

**the snake
of meaning under the pretty grass of sound
is dangerous enough. But this
is markless, darkness, silentium,
and whatever we do not know means grief.
The unknown word slips
up the bloodstream to the heart.
Bless me with babble, the blessed
maidenly running the mouth,
save me from the empty sign.**

2 January 2015

= = = = =

**Candles and honey
string for wick
and glass to hold.
a book to read
old music with**

tandaradei
**the old love cry
from one more lost
religion but no
love's ever lost,**

**candles and honey,
birds in a book,
they taught the words
to sing till what are we
but the song's pages,
glossed equerries,
seneschals of almost sense,**

tandaradei
**love you forever
dove and plover
duck and swan,
robin's a raptor
too in this tune,**

tandaradei
we all know why

light the candles
read the book
lick the honey
from a fingertip

and never ask why,
tandaradei.

2 January 2015

BIRTHDAY POEM

for Susan

**I hate birthdays
they keep reminding
me that I am me**

**and me is someone,
something, that the years
have happened to,**

**me is far ago and long away
dragging now down
into the sob-story of nostalgia**

**away from now.
And now has you in it
right now, and I**

**can only be now
where you are
no nostalgia**

**nothing lost, everything
found, right here**

where you are

**I'm here too, I love
other people's birthdays,
they came into the world**

**to save me, I also
am here for them,
we get excited,**

we got born for this.

**2.
So far that could be
any you
but this is you you**

**who teach us to see
and be, 'everything's
perfect' you say**

**all the time, sometimes
with tears in your eyes
you don't let us see,**

**almost laughing at yourself,
your will to see**

everything is right

**so easy in a hard world.
But I think you're accurate
after all, I have seen**

**you seeing, we are led
by your eyes
into a placed moment**

**where everything
really is perfect,
means everything's become**

completely what it is.

3 January 2015

FOR SIR H. GILBERT

snug somewhat upon
the *Squirrel* beside *The Golden Hind*
went out to see whereof he'd read
in David Ingraham's narrative,
his ten-ton sloop

how small to face the sea
the men creep out
upon it,

the sea stays home.
Which is why we love it wild or tame,
always the same in all the changes,

mare, Latin, third declension, neuter.

We are made of it
but it set us free,

in ridiculous little wooden boxes
they come upon it
they dare its frowns
looking for all the rest
that Ocean made,
a land here and there,
a barren continent,

**an island of jewels,
with those princely savages
of whom I read,
in towered cities strolling
their skirts of gold plates made,
their trumpets made of teeth.**

3 January 2015

ORPHICA

**Tell me more
than I remember
that's all I ask,**

**and tell me again,
I ask that too,**

**only means never,
all means some,**

**give me your time
to swell my night
with arcane identities,
water-witches of late
afternoon, trolls
of the gloaming, Huldra
having me by night.**

**I am the story
you're trying to tell,**

**I'll be here till you finish
and then we'll see**

will it me or you

**who levitates
into unscrupulous celebrity,
the loudest voice.**

**And so he prayed to the Mousai,
making them famous as they made him.**

What else is language for?

3 January 2015

CHATTERTON

Snatched away
the only way we can say it,
stolen from us
by the life we gave them,
snatched by language,
snatched by love
rebuffed or too generously
conferred— gone,
they are gone.
We see them stretched
out, death-pale at a dawn
they were determined
not to see, not ever
to see again, the red
lifting to white beyond
our loveless rooftops.

3 January 2015

= = = = =

Hope to a fever
the world is cold

sarabandes by centuries
unstudied etudes
the parable
walks around the olive tree

sands kiss the girls goodbye.
What happened was a man
thought he was a stone
and stood on his head
in the desert till
the rest of men believed him too.

But women never, women
never have been
taken in by pyramids.

Quietude *in deserto*. Venus
casts a shadow even
rising in such clean air.

This little stick
I jab into the sand
its shadow clearer

than Cheops—

**we know where
such things go,**

**follow the shadow
with your ears.
the river you cross
is not of water**

**the shore you reach
you created with your feet.**

**The dream woke you
in time enough,
time to be alone.**

3 January 2015

EDGE OF BROOKLYN

**Swamp was sexy, marsh
was sexy, the places
where feet sank in,
rats and weird birds
from the flyway**

**solace, silence,
the welcoming black mud
out there by the sea
where nothing was.**

**We called it the sea
but what did we know
of Archangelsk and Surabaya,
what did we know
of what the sea did?**

**Kinderhook they called it,
wooden houses on stilts,
just like La Tène villages
on Pontius Pilate's lake,**

**rowboats parked beneath them,
their only way to town or milk or mail—
subway station a mile or two away
where the 20th century began.**

**They had no gas, no electricity
but the houses looked decent,
sturdy, not shabby. Paint intact,
roofs solid. The wooden catwalks
came close, ended maybe a thousand
feet away. Jamaica Bay. 1960.**

**Who lived there? All gone now.
What have they done with the sea?**

3 January 2015

= = = = =

**I wanted to write this
in another language
but it wouldn't have me.
It said *I am only
for those born with me
in their chests.* Every
language is wrong,
I answered, the blood
is illiterate, the heart
terribly mute. You
are just a bunch of sounds,
of loose ideas. But still
I wish you let me love you.**

3 January 2015

= = = = =

**Let it be more thee
and less this shadow
on the snow or green**

**at Buddha's noon
the shadow's glad
to sink down into**

**all it has seen
vanish in the seeing
as the light comes on.**

4 January 2015

= = = = =

**West part of a place
where the sun wastes**

***no wonder n Dwat*
lay over there, far
shore where the dead
shiver in the longest sunset.**

**Can we trust
language, our best
beast, to tell us this,**

**thus, what the sound knows
about the soul?**

4 January 2015

= = = = =

**Where the light goes out
you'll find me
caressing the dark
coaxing it to speak
in me the way I try
to answer the morning —**

**the dialect of dark
is difficult, must
filter out the fear,
even the longing, till all
that's left is what it
proclaims, this
missionary from the unknown.**

4 January 2015

WAS HEISST DENKEN

**You don't have far to find it
it lopes alongside you like the alphabet
waiting for you to find a piece of paper**

**then it becomes this thing you call thinking—
don't you know that what is called thinking
is always *talking to the other?* Know it.**

**It is your faithfulest lover, but never
your husband or wife. You have to be that
with your own loaf of home-baked bread.**

4 January 2015

FATE

**Anybody who knows
anything about fate
knows that it is always
on your side. It
is your side. Full
moon over the snow.**

4 January 2015

=====

**Deer see better in dim light—
so do I.**

***Crepuscular*, they say,
dawn and gloaming.**

**Born me
on the day One-Deer.
Everything coheres.**

4 January 2015

= = = = =

**Let me sleep again
and understand
the white morning
is a merchant of silence —**

**and I saw a white bird
sailing through the trees.
Which me should I believe?**

4 January 2015

SPARROWS

**Sparrows seem egregious
today, flickering over the snow
every bird for himself**

**as if a solitary piece of nature
hurrying to be in place
when the ceremony begins.**

Normally they blend right in.

4 January 2015

VERDUN

**Alumettes de bois
flitter in in the trenches—**

**old wars are best
the blood long dried.**

4 January 2015

TILLEUL

**taste of a tree
early summer nights**

**in the cup: *tisane*.
The porcelain rehearses**

**the little dream of the bees
around your blossoms**

**friend patriot lover—
and the steam from it rising**

benefits the eye.

4 January 2015

OF COURSE THE COMPANY

**it's there, it's here
we're part of it,
we are it,
 it reaches
like Deleuze's rhizomes,
mycelia,
 out through the world
and growing up is learning
you're part of it,
 but never
before the end, or even then,
knowing what part.**

**Your job is to be other to the other
and bring the other
everything the other needs,
 you have it,
you say it, pray it, beat it
on an oil drum,
 bring it down
from the plum tree with soft hands.**

4 January 2015

PTERSEPHONE

her voice destroyed
or destroying,
 snake-silent
in the underworld—

grief of those who must spend
half their lives in hell,
 in suspended animation,
as hibernation
 folded in on themselves
against the terrible cold.

And if no winter
 where would be
her Mother's apple trees,
 and the *stone-fruits*
they call them, peaches, apricots,
plums,
 do they need weather too?

And from this little stream too
 in the First Time
the Thundergods
 rescue her still
shaking her free at springtime

pregnant from silence and mystery,

**they shake all that out of her,
snake-silence, jeweled darkness,
shake it out and send it
back below earth and leave her**

**new with us again,
 light-voiced,
flower-able,
 Blodeuwedd,
the Maiden, Persephone.**

5 January 2015

= = = = =

**Pity the cold
I'm left with**

**pictures
buildings I've built**

**on islands I discovered
in lives I never**

**schoolchildren in a village school
all of them my sons and daughters**

**a great turreted temple
with a statue of a god in it
too terrible to have a face**

**I am left with a lawn at morning
visited by learned crows.**

5 January 2015

TOUCH

**To know by feel
is not to
know at all**

**the one you touch
does not live inside
the skin you feel**

**but far away. You fool,
fondling a shadow.**

**2.
Unless the body out there
your hands stretch forward
to touch is really
your own body, and you
some stuffless spiritual
personage desperate
for a lodging somehow
in the flesh of the world.
Unless the one you see
is just you seeing it.**

`5 January 2015

OLD MUSIC

**Some music I lost ago
hampers me now
the warm againness
comes round me
and stills my hands.**

**How can I write now
what wrote me years
away and none of them
alive to thank or blame?**

**The tenor lifts his real
voice towards some
imaginary love that never
could have been there
for him or anyone but
the sound! lifts us
with it to the rapturous
nowhere from which
music comes and no
one could ever live.**

5 January 2015

(listening to Act 1 of Pfitzner's Die Rose vom Liebesgarten)

== ==

(A Little Book of Nonnets)

I.

**You like when you got what you came for
so say it again so the whole battalion hears
steam clanking in the pipes bleed the radiator
choose more elegant verbs and do wht weekend**

**or anything with me. ¡Caramba! we used to cry
at the sight of the sea doing it to you, wave form
sinusoidal inference of hip and carry on
in those days we said we were up to something
meaning language made fools of us yet again.**

6 January 2015

(A Little Book of Nonnets)

II.

**I like things like a heap of cracked corn
rounded yellow on dead grass in the dawn light
call me if you think of other resemblances
I wait your inspired intelligence while deer eat the corn**

**you mean you like the size of the thing you said
honesty of something just being there not nothing
savages round their cook pots dropping hot rocks in
more than one way to chauffeur the economy**

up the luminous highway to where money ends.

6 January 2015

(A Little Book of Nonnets)

III.

**Robert Duncan 95 today in heaven telling
leave accents off when writing Greek the Greeks
never used them or French in telegrams who need
better to be uncertain and from that bafflement**

**new music rises, just listen to me today
authority at last on the unsayable, hélas
Hellas, death is like that — get the feel of words
in your mouth and you'll never make mistake**

you are the lords of syllables and spit and breath.

6 January 2015

(A Little Book of Nonnets)

IV.

where we used to have 'shgutzim on snowmobiles'*
we now have mysterious unmarked white vans
transporting arugula to start-up bistros
and we used to have partridges and wine-glass elms

or am I thinking of another kind of bird sadly
shrew skittering across back roads in rain
it used to be another country altogether
but now it found itself as you found me

full of phony doctoring and uncertain ancient Greek.

6 January 2015

-
- A phrase I owe to Robert Rockman, who used it to describe the social world of Red Hook township in the 1950s.

(A Little Book of Nonnets)

V.

**Twinkling waters seldom still an hour after
we were that place together touch and never tell
organized around entropy the music swells
its bravery brings tear to the eyes all the fond hopes**

**all the little miracles who come for the piña coladas
week on Carib isle their long mean ride home
into preposterous winter where I always live
no wonder I keep talking to keep warm.**

the words we speak are humans' kind of wool.

6 January 2015

(A Little Book of Nonnets)

VI.

Great-grandfather in old Baluchistan
found gold and sent some home but but great
uncle nameless intercepted it so poor we stayed
while there he rode in a carriage in Karachi

spent holidays in the snows of Kashmir
rode the Jammu Flyer down to Delhi—
a poem in each place and not a pahe for me,
o grief of ancestry, such loss of thing

to keep the name and guess and rhesse pale eyes.

6 January 2015

THE BOOK OF RAIN

[*Scraps left of a dreamt imaginary mediaeval manuscript, "El Li'ro de Lluvia,"*]

Volcano —

**everybody is one
sooner or later**

Rule the radix! Rule the root!

**She thinks science will give her back her planet.
Nothing could be further than the truth.**

**Spending your life
trying to get her number**

Natura, her skirt of fire.

7 January 2015

=====

**I'm not frightened
I just haven't started yet
whatever I'm meant to do.**

**The mercy is waiting,
cloud, cold, sunglint, solitude.**

**No need to talk—
let the words arise.**

And arise.

7 January 2015

=====

**I could be unknown as anybody
writing is a desk job
only my name evr gets known.**

7.I.15

== == == == ==

**Not sure what is
compression of a single line
a brisk fold**

**number of stars
exactly equal to
the number of molecules
in a human body**

but whose?

Find her and know.

7 January 2015

= = = = =

for/from Charles Stein

Unwound yourself!

blessing meant sprinkling with blood

**now cleanse, wash
eleven times in starlight, run
garnet pebbles in and out of your hair**

**and the inner wound will be gone—
not healed,**

**transposed
into a patient rock where it will wait
some other lover in some other weather.**

7 January 2015

=====

contra Josiam

**Something about Jericho
something about Jerusalem**

they are lost into the actual.

**The temple is gone
that should not have been—**

**now it's time for
the First Temple again.**

**Then we will come home
into the imaginal. The real.**

7 January 2015

(A Little Book of Nonnets)

VII.

**None of this makes sense
because sense is something you feel
in the curious chambers of your body
sense is not something you say.**

**So what is this then or any poem
but the thirteenth egg in the dozen,
the one that tells you in a whisper
the world is new again, possible.**

The exception becomes the rule.

7 January 2015

CONTRA XIII

**I want to take away from women
and from women's discourse
this number Thirteen they've been saddled with.**

**Leave the moon out of this.
The Moon was assigned to women by the patriarchy—
a lesser light, a borrowed light, fickle, feeble,
you can barely read by its light.**

In fact women are of the Sun.

**This is what we have to make clear now, before
all women are conned into being the lesser lights,
the soft agreeable undependable.**

**Women are of the Sun—
the sun was feminine, the moon masculine,
in our old language, still that way in German
(der Mond, die Sonne).**

**Women are of the Sun — and like the Sun give life to the
world, warmth and growth, light to see by, study by, the
light of intelligence and reason.**

**So their number is not thirteen it is twelve,
the Sun's completion, twelve houses, twelve signs,
twelve hours of the night, twelve hours of the day—**

if the suppositious thirteen lunar months in the solar year truly were of or ruled women's menstrual cycle (the usual male explanation), then all women would menstruate in unison according to the phases of the moon. Patently untrue. Moon as linked to menstruation is a male canard, one more male attempt to creep into the hidden, ever-alluring, frightening chambers of women's thought.

7 January 2015

DREAM AS CRITIQUE

1.

So much read in dream
so many talkings too
dense print of codex
flapping page of manuscript,
causes, rabbles, tables,
increments, pale blue letters,
now at waking nothing to say
but what I can remember—
and I only know anything now
by remembering where I knew it
first — knowledge is place,
knowledge is local—
only wisdom is everywhere.

2.

Distinctions. I have been late
with my necessities—love
is imagination that seeps through
into the breast—you can tell
love by breathing. Your own
breathing I said but he said
Did you know her father died?
I said I only saw it in the paper
in June or September on some
island how old was he?

3.

**It seems he kept a parrot
blue as much as green.**

**They do, those people over there
in the old kingdom, sand dunes
and dragon towers, whatever they are,
and a wide river peculiarly flat
(aren't all of them? yes but this is special)
oozing westward to a quiet sea. I don't care
about all your geography, how old was he
why did he die who was he anyhow
when he was alive? But I was silent then
distracted by thinking about dragons and towers.**

4.

**So forget me today as a source of information
my lips were sealed by too much reading
while sleeping, those dream chronicles
wipe the sun off the sky — o Night
more sex than text more text than meaning.**

5.

**It was time to bring Kant
back into the conversation
his almost painful lucidity
like a thick slice of candied
lemon from Isfahan.**

6.

So *rigor artis* set in.

**We had to move to Brooklyn,
everything was too easy,
in the current state of our practice
only paying the rent is difficult.
For everything else anything goes.**

7.

**He was being cynical again,
it really was a joy that each object
and every relation could be lifted
up to the sun as a work of art,
the art is in the holding, the beholding—
everybody matters, everybody counts.
And suddenly it all felt like a poem
he had read in Anglo-Saxon in a dream
full of hal-lines and parallels and kennings,
the bridge to Brooklyn lifted up by swans.**

8 January 2015

EX NIHILO

1.

**Cantinflas of course
rode a donkey as we do
who are not serious
enough for horse, or lack
the force to stun
the audience with dark
of glance or serpent tongue,**

**I used to know the Irish word for that
but now the sun is setting over Round Top
highest of our hither hills
as my grandfather's people would have said
long before there was Spanish or movies
or maybe it was a mule? the difference
has something to do with generative
ability, can he father another or is he
last of his line, the animal not the man.
You can always get another man.**

2.

**Lord knows why I think of that,
his ratty little mustache smile
like a thirteen-year old wizard
weeping to be a man (you can always
et cetera), his sly little smile
as if he takes it all out in laughter**

**because what else is there really
but laughing, and who is there
ever to laugh at but yourself?**

3.

**So it could have been maybe any
face any actor any smile but
as Robert would have said
a face came out of nowhere
to help me, his name made me
begin saying what needed to be said,
the deep song of nothing in particular
that is so beautiful. His little smile
also knows how to make me weep.
An actor, only that, only who knows what
it means to act, or say anything, or be?**

4.

**Just a face from an old movie. A face
in other words, name of a comic person,
a living ideogram of alien attitude,
ajeno, the smile from somewhere else
that studies all the stuff we do — science
with a smiley face, a mustache like a sneer
left on the face after a failed seduction.
But it never really does fail, does it,
darling, because here we are.**

8 January 2015

A NONNET FOR MIKHAIL

**Everything I write is ludicrous
so why not this? A girl I used to know
used to pronounce it lu-drish-us
and why not, the more laughs the better.**

**So why don't I feel like laughing?
I need you like water in my shoe
but I need you. I need you like honey
in my hair but I need you. Everything
should be in its place and your place is here.**

8 January 2015

=====

**We know the ones who love us
love us best don't always love us back
stand on the shore and late
late come their schooners close**

**Sandymount to Cornwall to Brittany
and who is listening, who
dares that forbidden garden where
two make one**

**the animals
are never far, the horn call
drives the deer, the cars slow down
as they near the cliff edge
where he's waiting,**

**what can he do
but wait, the one who loves him best
keeps him waiting,**

**love is that, that
alertness linked with appetite, that
knowledge that all things
may be messages from her, every sound
one phase of her approach,**

**a conviction
that the waves of the sea know something
that the birds sometimes remember to tell him.**

8 January 2015

THEOLOGY

1.

Inferences like rabbits
under hedges winter torpor
I have agreed with silver the certain
integument of liberty but then
the miracles begin — I stopped
serving the succedaneum, sought
to reconcile with the originary,
put on my hat and went to church
and lo! the church was everywhere.

2.

Each syllable a line each line
an animal in a herd headed east
to meet her whee she was coming up
out of the salty bath from which by rising
she instructed us to wake or something like it
and be about *the mirror of the mind* (that thing
in the sky) right here in the moveless whirling
heart of the centrifuge — men call it city
women call it the place where people are —
I took off my hat she stared me in the face
and all my ethics fell away except for her.

3.

The signboard of the little church
said SUN WORSHIP as if they guessed
what really does go on in there
Lutherans though they were (o Altona!
non-aligned mysticism of the Hanseatic Rose!)
the broken mirror turns into medicine
the other side of water, drink and be cured
like the *drinkable gold* of the Rose+Cross,
anyhow saunter in and settle down and pray,
this kind of temple needs no roof.

4.

Caught by local symmetries the pattern
pretends to be simpler than it is —
here is the maiden here is her sheep
wipe the dust away and there meaning is
or one of them, she has as many
as you'll ever need, companion mine,
her garter taut around your thigh, the king
all smiles and chivalry and kiss the cross
but we know better, we are Lancelot
the Archangel, sign bearer, in lust with the obvious.

5.

Poignant discomfort of the new
left-over starlight to confuse
unseen creatures of your private dawn:
the names that live in your mind
gold-diggers one and all, from Portugal
to Kazakhstan they come, all hair and eyes
in unfathomable languages but you
decipher them with the ease born of longing
the black sand quivers with your need
and their slow steady pacing graceful feet.

6.

Nothing worth writing but theology
why did it take me so long to figure it out
those quiet admonitions we address to deity
lyric reminders, definitions to console her
for her supreme unknowability. *Know me
never but be me ever* she shouts in sunlight
summarizing the point of our researches—
everything from one thing arises, so be that too,
the highway is clear now, the children
are lost in school. The birds explain it all.

9 January 2015

=====

**No one can outlast the music,
it waits for you too
around the corner of silence
always, and if
you don't hear it you're
thinking it, caught
in the in mesh of intervals
sliding your feelings up and up
as if there were somewhere
a place where you actually belong.**

9 January 2015

= = == = =

**Something between a fox and a wolf
but even further from adog
I'm often surprised not to see there
when I pass a mirror, that school
for humility, shock therapy, dismay.
All that meat to make one face!
Shouldn't it just be bone, merciful
sinew holding identify up to the light
as the animal shambles from word to word
feeding and needing and trembling with cold?**

10 January 2015

= = = = =

**The unanimous
is something else.
A quiet stream
slipping down the hill
like Keekenhanna here
keepings its crystals
safe 5000 years?
To have one soul
it says, the word,
and the stream reveals
how to do that
perfectly, in one
direction carry
everything with you
there ahead
and like the stream
you're there already
at source and destiny
all the time,
the goal becomes
the road to it,
being unanimous
you're always
arriving. The river.**

10 January 2015

= = = = =

**Take my word for it
dust on the mirror
pearls round your neck
a calico cat on the back
of the sofa, no difference,
not much difference left
in this world, the pearls
may be simulated, what
I think is dust might be
the light itself at play
or fading in the old
quicksilver in the glass
but no difference.
It's all cozy, domestic
as narrative, tragic,
a dead cat. broken
mirror, necklace snaps
pearls all over the rug.
Or not. Some things
last, they know no better.
The way we are
always together
as we can be, all
different, and no
difference at all.**

10 January 2015

=====

**Logic led him there
but there was nowhere.
Certainly no one.**

**He waited to look
into someone's eyes
to find himself there,**

**no romance, just
to see who he was
in the clear eye of a stranger.**

**Learning should not be
so expensive in this
winter world, the stone**

**clear sky. Tabula
rasa, he thinks,
I am no one,**

**an animal made of
waiting, wanting,**

too doubtful to hope.

**Then came people
running , laughing,
and a car came by**

**distracted him from
emptiness. I am
a bare bush in the wind**

all my springs behind me.

10 January 2015

FORM SKANDHA

The pictures fall
from the story
nobody tells

and we study them—
shapes of shadows
spilled on the wall—
where are mother and father
when the child is left
alone with the terrible white wall

don't they know what a wall
can be, what a wall can do?

I have seen these shapes all my life
one says, one is a panther
one is a woman riding a lion
one is a fish swimming through the air
how can I sleep at night
when they ride with me

even in the dark a picture *once seen*
forever seen is visible,

the inner eye is where they play,

**a little song from South America
plays with them, they move
around the frightened child**

***any* shape is terrible, *any* shadow
tortures, it won't go away, can't
go away, the picture is part
of the brain that saw it**

they belong to one another

**the chuld whimpers under the blanket
alone with the images we doesn't want to see
tries not to scream, what good
will screaming do, the lady will still be there,**

horrible soundless snarl of the panther.

10 January 2015

=====

to a traveler

**Did you go south with him
to the music?**

**There is an island
where the trees talk,
I heard them once
and understood a little of their story,
the birds know more,
are free with explanations, but you
are sailing there in your silk square
from Hermès, the island
you want to lead it home**

**but I hate dogs and don't understand
how to have anything with me
that is alive and can't talk. makes me
live its story instead of my own,
if you come back and try to help me,
keep hold of its leash, I fear
commitment, my body aches with refusals,
I will never be there for you.**

10 January 2015

IMPENDING

like a grey sky
or a little snow globe on the window ledge
with a penguin in it,
things great and small
our lover sends me,
will it snow?

Planning to be out of town—
air color of sky color of salt-frozen road
snow in the woods a minor third above it,
name something, save me, be a tree.

2.

Sourp means saint or holy in Armenian
that much I know, from two sources:
magazine and a friend's mouth.
It's hard to believe what everyone knows—

winter morning everything no color
call it bleak but call it beautiful
(the word once meant white. like bleach,
like black — absence of color
now do I begin to understand?)

3.

From a table

at the window

to decide.

So often the angels

meeke principles of something known,

told,

vector-analysis

mountebank of mathematics—

the only kind of

(Thomas tells us) intercourse they have—

because an angel is an only

acrobat of alphabets

we have to learn to read,

the whole pale world out the window

a single page.

11 January 2015

= = = = =

**That's what happens
when you wake too early,
all the same sane world
turns different on you
and your lover sleeps.
For all you know
you could be a tree.**

11 January 2015

= = = = =

**Fighting my way there
across the resistance
the blue-shouldered valley
so poignant with permissions**

**but to be pure and evident
and always again,
 clean
as a crystal from the sky**

**when it was the earliest
thing you ever really knew
this shadow of it, this
shelter, this marriage.**

11 January 2015

=====

**The obvious is there
to *be* belabored.**

11.I.15

=====

**A sortof signal sent
across sunlight into
the certainty of day—**

**don't be so sure, be
love as you can, skin
knows the truth a little,**

**some of the rest the mind
knows but here you are
fresh out of dream.**

**Fool if you worry,
the empty street outside
is your therapy.**

**11 January 2015
[Start of NB 374**

**[The word 'therapy' replaces the word 'guérison' which I guess is not
English, and thus not allowed. But it was the true word.]**

=====

**How many ready to credit
your account of the miracle,
man with a monocle, dog
preaching from a book,
a city with no streets, trees
all over the place?**

**Don't expect to be believed—
she lay there with you, back
to you, or turned mouth
to mouth—who are you
stranger, she kept wanting
to know, and you did too.
But we have no answer for
one another. We just are.**

11 January 2015

=====

**Hard to be long on a curt page—
short as a cup of lentil soup
or a rose set floating in her tub,**

**everything we say is testimony,
honest witness we try to bear
but to what? Thing after thing**

**as if they counted, and they do.
Me and you, for example, bride
and priest always waiting**

**for the tardy groom, a word
that only meant a man,
just like all the rest of me.**

11 January 2015

=====

**Weather remembers
as if another language
partial to fairy tales
a woman lives in the wood**

**there too is a time when
windows talk — permission
is granted, goats wander down
from unattended hills**

**separate me from my dreams
dreams are the place of sins
just last night I mocked a boy
said the soul weighed 3 ounces,**

**god knows what I told the girl.
So dreams reveal lower reaches
of the imagination, not just
Jerusalem, not just Beatrice.**

**And so doubt is born, it smells
like coffee brewing, lucidity
is close to pain, suit of Swords,
air signs in the attic, you know?**

**But she knows comfort too,
that maiden from before the moon
who set us loose in Eden
with hands at the ends of our arms**

**and all we did was build houses
and roads to connect them
water and fire to bless them
and music to take the chill off emptiness**

**and there we read our tablets
that glow with boyish moonlight
keeping your lover awake and this
is what it all was for, this text**

**that lies us us that all is well
this abbreviated Iliad
to say I love you in a hundred words
and let you both slip into sleep.**

12 January 2015

ACROSS THE HUMAN

1.

**Something has to happen now —
beyond the glare
there is a common world
to share with Adam
when we finally understand
his sin, when we learn
it really was he who
reached out, snatched,
holds still in his hand,
never ate, never tasted,
just blamed the woman
who was always there before.**

2.

**Help me understand.
A white car parked in snow
is a sign of it. A text message
comes in while you watch a play,
layer on layer of no one says.
Who was she? Was it Lilith
bound but never tamed,
was it a wise animal in the woods,
an alien, an alchemist?**

3.

**Finally we know that
nothing really works
but never really fails..**

**We change ideas
about why things happen
but things keep happening.**

**And we blame Eve—
blaming the victim,
bad as the Bible.**

**Across the human stream
another maiden beckons.**

4.

**And when you build the Temple
they come along and tear it down—**

**you don't need a place to do it,
a church is just a domed distraction**

**with steeples beside it to scare
the wits out with those bells.**

**You are the place itself. You need
nothing but consciousness.**

**5.
So what's for supper
we ask the Mother,
she weeps and feeds us
all the good stuff
when all we really need
is Milarepa's broth,
the nettle-flavored
soup of nothingness.**

12 January 2015

=====

**Beginning like snow
multiple instances of
identical differences
no two alike they claim
urning everything same.**

12.I.15

= = = = =

**To be like
nobody or to be else
like a street parallel the river
canalboats beside the parked cars
move slow as opera past the jubilee—**

**we are born again in metaphor and truth
while crowds rejoice in this and that
how could they keep from happy
when the river itself chuckles
with ripples of moonlight
just because boats go?**

We're talking suchness here, the brave banal.

12 January 2015

LARVA

**ghost or mask
in Roman dark**

**an identity — who knows
who anyone is? —**

**the Nostrand
trolley roared past
field full of milkweed,
I was a child, that is
a ghost
of what is to come.**

**Children are the ghosts of the future.
that's why they're scary, and why
for all their fearsomeness they
must be protected,
their faces
masked in ordinary feelings
into which they grow.**

**I was a child, I know
what I'm talking about,
I sucked the milkweed pods
they were forbidden,
they gave me the precious
clarity of being wrong,**

=====

1.

To be on the way to
what she means, a husband,
it could be a story, a Lincoln
anecdote, town on the prairie,
grasslands of the 38th Parallel, Oz.

No one is sure, not even early.
The birds are here but do not sing.

2.

Prevaricate, 9 degrees, stone walls.
Everything means. Everything
means the other side of this.
Be partial, be incomplete, foreigner.
Or as I say, a husband, the wrong man
when interviewed declined to speak.

3.

You begin to detect fiction,
that lyric poetry
of actual things
pretending to be otherwise.

They — bricks, blocks,

**clocks, cloacas, china closets —
sit there thinking
and you sing.
Who is responsible for truth?
What Tolstoy told you?
And why not the birds?**

**4.
But it isn't fiction,
it is truth stumbling along
from line to line**

**naked as usual,
getting there, arm
uplifted, an excuse**

**to be there and be known—
of all things that
is what we most desire.**

**You reach out to touch her
and find the glossy magazine
picturing Botticelli's famous nude**

**the one the friar never banished,
the actual bare fact**

the allegory high above your bed.

5.

**Things have intention
you think, the way plants
have flowers sometimes
or phosphorous explodes—**

**you ask yourself, that
lump of polished brass
with two blue eyes in it,
what does it really want?**

**Who is it pretending to be?
Isn't that fiction, the myth
of meaning something
while the world is fast asleep?**

13 January 2015

[Partially arisen as response to a letter (via Gmail) from Masha Mitkova, answered in turn early February 2015 by her video Severe Gremlins.]

= = = = =

**Rathskeller fantasies
drunks beneath the senate house
madness underpins the state—
universal fascist conspiracy
starts in the kernel of the brain—**

**imaginary flags, lies
we explain till we think they're true**

**did history ever even happen?
You wonder if that's what she really means.
And both of you are probably wrong.**

13 January 2015

== == == == ==

**Sit still and nothing bad happens—
there is a reason
whgy we speak.**

**Oh, so it's 'we' now, is it,
I wondered when that was coming,
the plural of appropriation,
of possession,
my hand snug in your pocket.**

**Take it back, it is only
you here, you and the tree.
A tree does not share,
does not belong.**

Treedom is like that.

13 January 2015

=====

**How many beginnings
are there in it,
crouched low
like songs inside an afternoon?**

**You could warm your fingers
back then holding onto them
as they walked from the radio,**

**you thought it was music
but it was touch, pure touch,
the famous tongue in the ear—**

**she tried to find out who she was
by how you reacted to her —
and that's what music is.**

13 January 2015

THE VOYAGE

**Meaning something more
than music can
they built a ship
to take tem there**

**garnets mostly, and a few girls
waiting along the shore
pale people
as if they never.**

**But the sand was warm
they stumbled up,
almost time
to change the weather.**

**The sun went out,
their new country dark
around the people made
sounds like water**

**running water
so they knew it was here
the imagined thing
footsteps of the cloud**

moonstain on the mind.

14 January 2015.

=====

**Seem to hear
something in another room
bright and cold
train rolls by loud
a mile away
valleys do that
houses are mountains
briefly in between.
Not a voice, not
music, not everything
has a name.**

14 January 2015

= = = = =

**What a strange man
someone is.
Up-to-date as rain
but shy, like a word
you can't quite recall
that means the soft
delve on the upper lip
you fall in love with
first, then anatomy,
character, destiny.
Will he remember it
in time to wake?**

14 January 2015

= = = = =

**This is where I used to be
before I was another.
Childhood was like that too**

**always a different
book for breakfast
always too close
to the end—**

**how can you trust a book
at all when even your
fingers holding it open
tell you it's going to be
done soon, and then what?**

14 January 2015

== == ==

**Give me another chance
to decide who I am.
I thought I was the weather
plus a little wanting.
But there's something left over.**

**I don't much care what happens
or what I get or don't get.
Just give me a chance,
I don't even know what I look like—
a mirror is just the impostor's tool,
a glass ID of the wrong man.**

14 January 2015

== == == ==

**I would tell you if I could,
the words know how to
and the ears to hear, but
where I'm coming from
and where I'd go, a place apart,
sealed garden, a fountain
whose waters are curiously
clear and thick at once,
like liquid glass maybe, or
La Sainte Chapelle on its island
waiting for the end of time
when all the colors become one
and better still we suddenly
have a name for all of it.**

2.

**But as it is, bodies yearn and bodies
try to understand, and sleep maybe
is the measure of their comprehension.
Sleep is a way out of the body, isn't it,
and all the somatic signals body gives
are just signposts to another winter,
another weird religion on the prairie,
the frozen grasslands stretch around the earth**

like the arms of someone greeting us at last.

3.

But that's not it either.

**It was something simple,
no geography of desire,
no star maps of ontology.**

**Just this. The nameless
accurate. The animal
who knows how to speak,
write books, forgive sins.**

**That animal. I think always
that it's someone like you,
or really you, or some shade
of you neither of us knows.**

And in that darkness I consent to live.

14 January 2015

=====

**Try the legitimate
stage for a change
a man standing
on the street, a dog
walking by. Impossible
fantasy. But it works.**

15 January 2015

ALKAHEST

in memory of Bulee Gaillard

**molecules released
from all previous seeming
atoms set free from molecules
and then the music starts.**

**Down there or way out there—
call it whichever way you choose,
all the directions are dissolved—**

**all that's left
is consciousness
which the vulgar
play on strings and drums
and call music.**

But we know better.

15 January 2015

= = = = =

**Is the name they gave me
better than the name I gave myself?**

**I worked with the sounds of my soul
and came up with this**

**but it would not let me, even now,
day it out loud.**

15 January 2015

THE BURIAL OF THE COUNT OF ORGAZ

so at certain moments
—is that what ceremony is for,
the liturgy, the people's work,
the openings? —

the vertical
suddenly behaves

all the way up

and everything from that point
unfolds through all the spaces we know or guess,

all the way up,
no empty space,
personhood triumphant
and God just one more being at the top,
the highest thing we can image
and he looks like everybody else,

all the realities happen all at once
tumultuous waterfall of God's robe the winding sheet
apocalypse of linen and cotton
mass without line,
now at this moment

**we see all that is to be seen,
the cloth is one the man another
for we are naked in the up,
cloud around us, colors define us—
is color the same as personality,
the same as sin?**

**And all the people
standing around
are just us after all**

**in all our weird clothes
all our weird religions
all going up**

in all the colors of maybe.

15 January 2015

=====

**Rudra, roaring red
out of a different
way of thinking,**

**Huldra sleek and dangerous
closer to our forests—**

**but in between these very trees
another, a
wanderer, a one
just like us but hungrier**

**every early morning
hear leftover night.**

16 January 2015

= = = = =

**You chose me for this
out of all your lovers**

to learn to contain

**Write the kernel—
the seed shall have
the whole ode in it**

**on slender pages
pith not pulp.**

16 January 2015

=====

**Church bells
and no church—
who comes?**

16.I.15

ANTI-LUDDITE NONNET

**Technology is best
sleek devices
smaller and smaller
do more and more**

**one day even I
will wield a thought
cool from my fingers
it will light up**

and tell me what I mean.

16 January 2015

= = = = =

**We have been white a world
and even then the light came down—**

**we faltered through it, magic,
touching one another gently,**

**tentatively, elbow, a shoulder
just to be sure we're there**

**both of us, because there is n
other way to go but us**

because I am other people.

16 January 2015

=====

**Short words are best
in confession,**

**there was no crime
and I committed it.**

16.I.15

MARESFIELD GARDENS

**Hungry all the time
except at meals**

**want to go anywhere
until the train comes**

**water and hilltops, wind and rock
I love but hide inside**

**in a room overcrowded with
my love for empty space**

**I came up the path to the door
breathed on the glass,**

**whispered Please let me in
then ran back down to London**

dreaming but not dreaming of you.

16 January 2015

= = = = =

**I went nowhere
I didn't want to know them
I wanted to be them**

**and so one age of poetry
becomes another
all the same, all different,**

**the words in beauty
uncoiling to shock or ease
and someone always there**

**to fill the page with them,
the words, always
someone to be the poet**

the single one needed at that hour.

16 January 2015

= = = = =

**Not a blot
I want to leave
on the napkin**

**my lips are
stain enough—
the wind blows**

**and what I say
is already a
parody of me.**

17 January 2015

= = = = =

**Is it having need
for wheels?**

**Sunday church empties out
at one o'clock
the cars go home,
o sumptuous afternoons
of the middle classes,
spectacles and family meals
I have no appetite to describe
but animals are eaten
and pixels watched
those reliable pastors
of our civic downfall
into winter evening
when looking out
your own window
is enough to break the heart.**

**Lacking wheels, though,
that world is closed,
the classical *figures*
of rhetoric instead
move through your house
chatting, confessing,**

**quiet, quiet, zeugma
waltzing in the parlor,
shy litotes hides
below the stairs.**

**Language is all.
And a wolf outside
silvery with twilight
trots harmless
past your door.**

17 January 2015

= = = = =

**Suppose you had a teacher
who told everything wrong,
every fact a fiction,
every date off a hundred years,
every definition false.
And here you are.**

17 January 2015

=====

pasai tekhnai brotoisin ek Prometheu

All our arts
from one hand
holding fire—

as on the altar of the Keramikon
shown,

potter's craft
early art, an early
entropy, slowing heat down,
a lock of motion into matter—
to misuse a word or two—
and coffee's brewing, in quiet
demijohns vinegar grows
strong with mother,

and wine
in its mystery con-
denses exal-
tation and misery.

17 January 2015

POLICE-CAT

The woman of a certain age solves mysteries with the help of her cat Phluff—simple names are best — a cat knows that the solution to all mysteries is being able to live inside the heart.

17 January 2015

DREAMT IN THE DARK BEFORE DAWN

All words are blue.

All words have healing power.

+ + +

I dream I break into a stucco house in a good neighborhood skillfully. Once inside, I creep downstairs, and in the basement find my mother, looking at me, she is old, and on her face an expression of mild puzzlement, as if she wonders where I've been.

+ + +

It's always open season on the heart.

17/18 January 2015

4:15 AM

= = = = =

**Are you on your rooftop now
are you wondering even one second a week
about whether I can see you there
smoking, being alone with the sky**

**you think — but I'm there too,
you gave me the key to the sky,**

**told me where to find you
and how to stand just out of sight
and read your soul
by the gentle quiet movement of your hands?**

17/18 January 2015

THE LAW

**All things are possible
I argue, reading
from an old law book
I must have written
in a previous life—
mine or yours, who
can tell — all things
come within the scope
of the law,
 all contingencies
covered. The law,
being law, is complete.**

**Everything that can be will be
I assure you, I am
your father in this matter
or the Pope. I am the Pope
all molecules below
the orbit of the moon
are believers, believers,
things doubt me
at their peril,
 it is a sin
not to exist.**

Mine

**is the policy of starlight,
always present, always
influence. Am I the Law?
Sometimes I think so
or think it is the simplest
thing to be, the law
is just a child
walking across a lawn
wet from rain or dew—
how can she tell?**

17/18 January 2015

= = = = =

**Studying an empty road
by lamplight.**

**It is the hour of night
when observation
is the only action**

**just like poetry
where everything is known
and nothing happens.
Nobody comes, nobody goes,
everything absolutely here.**

17/18 January 2015

= = = = =

**Glued a quarter
to a bottle cap.
This is called
adding value.
Odd, faintly creepy.
Makes me feel
like a travel agent.**

17/18 January 2015

== == ==

**The car of early
calls the morning.**

**didn't the darkness let me?
Doesn't the answer wait
always under the nude bush
we dreamt has flowers on it
the kind that don't grow on trees,**

**those deep purple crocuses
fall out of the sky around us
till we cry out**

**Soon it will be dawn—
what else could fate have in mind?
If we could only forgive one another
one by one we might finally wake.**

17/18 January 2015

= = = = =

**I opened the mirror
and wrote certain words
inside the glass**

**Now they speak
to anyone who looks in,
their honest faces
tell them something
they never knew
but now is utterly their own.**

17/18 January 2015

=====

**Suppose I pasted the Vienna
Opera House (the one on the Ring=
strasse) on top of my cup—
would it cool my coffee faster
or would such music at heat?
Thermodynamics should be simple
but are not. Or is not. I asked
Andre Breton about this in last
night's dream, he handed me
a note I could hardly read
about poetry, from a girl who
signed herself Cherokee.**

**If that was his answer it made no sense.
No more than this.
Yet what can you expect from dreams?
Or poetry?**

18 January 2015

SOUNDPROOFING

**Whip it out and generate
a zone of silence all around me.**

**What a weapon!
No bigger than my hand,
weighs hardly anything.**

**Yet muffles a church full of Baptists.
I'll put it on the market
as soon as I can make another one—**

it took my whole life to make this.

18 January 2015

= = = = =

**I want to walk
and walk into the sky**

**where my mothers are
borne on currents of
consciousness
we dream as memories,**

**they abide for us,
centuries of care, they make
promises we have to keep.**

**I want to meet them face
to face, I want to see their eyes
on this side of sleep.**

18 January 2015

RAINY ,MORNING

**Turn back from the wet road,
those headlights are leaders,
would guide you too deep
into the asphalt gleam
where your glance would stay
trapped in beholding
sheer guesses of water and light.**

18 January 2015

ODE TO FATS WALLER

**Day of my silence
why — rhymes
with science,
 twin blessings:
knowing and shutting up.**

**2.
The quiet shout
of ordinary things —
who's listening?**

**the amazed trajectory
of the waking eye—
did you even see?**

**3.
I wanted to be more
than I am so I read the news**

**to find what is the opposite
of information.**

4.

Still ice everywhere
black ice
they warn us

as if we were children
and had never

and we never.

5.

Road is danger
but sky is home.

I go there soon
to interrogate
endlessly the obvious

there is so much of it
it must mean,
deep secrets of it —

of course I love you
what else do I know how to do?

6.

**Comes of listening
all night to old jazz**

**wake into the attack
anxiety of who**

**will take care of me now
when the world is gone.**

19 January 2015

=====

**So much to remember
beauty always *specifies***

**why some people
grow uneasy around Monet**

**but I say his blurry surfaces
magic into single crystal.**

19 January 2015

= = = = =

**You wake
then sleep again
and wake and wonder

but the sky's still there.**

19.I.15

= = = = =

**A door tries to stay shut
did I say silence?**

**I meant adoration
the sensual saints and angels**

**crowding the sky above
the burial of Count Orgaz**

**sky full of wanderers
dancers eager**

**to welcome you
emerging from earth**

**into their dance,
their luminous evidence.**

19 January 2015

=====

**Or maybe I don't know where I am today
maybe it's simple as that, a laqcuna
in location, a lover's spat
between me and geography, why not?**

**Yes, all politics is local, yes, poetry
is the breath of the place outspoken
through my capive lips, agreed, but
why do I have to be anywhere, can't I
just one day be nowhere and still be?**

**Just because I forgot to throw the switch
this morning, forgot to sign in at 42N
by 73W, the shale beds of this post-glacial
dale forgot me in turn, my words float
like those remarks angels are so free with
in old paintings, wise or terrifying words
shepherded out of their mouths on long
silken scrolls or ribbons floating high
above the miserable sinners or suffering
saints. No one is there to hear. No one
is here to insist on my physical presence.**

I think I am nowhere as I want to be.

19 January 2015

OLFACTION

**Dreaming makes the body smell strange
have you ever noticed that?**

**—I pay no attention to what the body does,
the body is just along for the ride.**

**O I don't agree at all, if anything, I'm along for the body's
ride**

**—That makes you stupid in my eyes. And aggressive,
and inappropriate. You probably like to touch people.**

**What can I say? I'm never more alive than when I;m in
contact with someone else.**

**—So that's your problem. No wonder I call you stupid.
Stupid. You probably want to touch me, that's how
dumb you are.**

What would be the matter with touching you? I mean, just as a matter of curiosity.

—I detest being touched. It diminishes me. Sensation should be all about me, all coming alive in me. But your hand, or anybody's hand, would have skin on it. And you know what skin is, other people's skin, I mean, skin is a loathsome network of fat and membrane and nerve cells and capillaries, a network of meshes that try to capture me into themselves, wrap their stinking fibers around my essence and draw it into themselves, so that the skin's possessor whispers to me *I love the way you feel* but all the while I am screaming with hatred and retching with disgust at what I've lost into their satisfaction. Their ignorance and hunger.

Well, it is hunger that makes me touch. Don't worry, I won't touch you. I'm not even sure I want to, given what you say. It's awful to think of stroking you to give you pleasure only to learn is disgusts me.

—It disgusts me. You disgust me. Why are we talking about this disgusting subject?

I asked you, remember, if you ever noticed how dreaming changes the smell of the dreamer's body.

—No. I never noticed it. I don't believe it, either, unless the dreamer lost control of his sphincters in the dream. More disgusting stuff. You really are disgusting.

But when I wake up, I smell different.

—I don't want to know about it.

But don't you smell me, now? That's not how I usually smell, I just had a nap before you came, and I still smell weird from the dream.

—You're saying that having a dream can change the smell of the body after you wake up?

Yes. I'm glad you understand me.

—How do you know it isn't your sense of smell that changes? They say sleep refreshes the muscle tone—maybe dream refreshes your sense of scent, and makes you more able to smell your own disgusting body.

If so, it's still dream that does it, right? Dream changes the way I smell.

—I don't want to know about it.

Do you dream?

—I do hardly anything else. It's so safe in there—I die a million times and still wake up. The morning light sneaking in the window is what scares me.

Don't be afraid, I'm here.

—Don't touch me!

(19 January 2015)

= = = = =

**The beard grows by itself
but what should the man do?
Blow the shofar, beat the gong,
Deus providebit, and walk out
with the pretty lady, dance
by himself like Whitman
all alone on the Jersey shore?
I'm talking here about Nature,
our Mystery Mother, who
slays us in the cradle or
gives us long grey beards
to terrify the natives and be wise.
The best part of getting old
is not having to do it all again.**

20 January 2015

= = = = =

**Call that a sonnet
call it LitCrit
a giveaway red rough
chin to show you've
been kissed, a lot.
Call it mercury grieving
for its lost thermometer.
Call it Parvati in love
with the shsdow of His dance.**

20 January 2015

= = = = =

**The names of things
are full of salt.
Without them
the broth of wisdom
is insipid.**

**They are not eternal,
things, but outlive me.
Or maybe, I'm no Aristotle,
maybe they and I outlive**

**one another's forms and go
on into the Changefulness
kicking and singing so
silence shrinks before us
and moonlight is loud with us still.**

20 January 2015

SACRIFICE

**But who will measure the yardstick”
You can feel the straight of it
as much as you like, lay it
across your shoulders or your hips
but what then? Who will know
the truth of so many numbers?
Is even one number true? Ever?**

2.

**I have to ask these things, *moriturus*
as I am, about to die, we say. We say
so many things. Death makes us talk,
we sing for his supper, everybody,
everybody is about to die always.
In the alleyway behind my house
I first saw a sick old man, he limped,
I got a sense of where he was heading.
His nice dog was leading him along.
We, I tried to understand. I had
no dog. And still they tried to
teach me numbers, and trust them.**

3.

Algebra wasn't so bad

because there was nothing there.
Just letters, like real words
a little, but saying nothing,
never getting much beyond c
except for x. A shrinking alphabet.

But a word that pointed out
the window of its sound
to something else: that's
what I call a real word,
a word equal to nothing,
not even to itself.

4.

for Nicole

So measure makes the steps
we mount to climb the temple.
And measure meets us at the top,
stretched us along the stone
and does that weird thing with
obsidian to my chest so suddenly
I know nothing and they know
everything. The bare heart
of a living man is where
humanity and cosmos intersect.
The priests study what they made
of me, then look at one another
finding names and numbers now

for the wordlessness they found.

5.

**So many lives ago this was
and still feels fresh.**

Only the world changes.

The screaming numbers stay.

And I have done my job.

I have been measured.

**They found numbers
in my blood and bone,
an astrolabe of ribs,
a tiny sun in my heart.**

20 January 2015

ICONOGRAPHY

1.

The noun of nervous
waits for you here
a slip on ice, diamonds
small around the throat
how can it swallow
with all that light
squeezing in.

Hardest

light we know.

2.

We worry paintings
to discern the 'scene'
they represent, woman
with her little dog,
wounded duelist
maybe already dead,
Maximilian falls.

So much to fret about,
so many paragraphs
before the signature—

**who loved me this letter,
I who never sinned
except to stalk the moon.**

**3.
Didn't the wise man say
we need to have fireplaces,
we need to *see* the heat
the way we have to hear
the hammer. How else
could the angel intervene?**

**I am the angel. This is what I say,
translated from Greek into
the space around their bodies
through which they try to move
bvut the painting holds them still.**

21 January 2015

= = = = =

**Glossy surface. Vitreous luster
words do many, things few.**

**Arbutus in a neighbor's garden—
no bush, no garden of mine but**

**somebody has to turn out to be me
or else who is speaking?**

21 January 2015

= = = = =

**I met one I wanted
to be with and wasn't.
That was Saturday.
On Sunday I slept,
next day I resumed
my official incompetence.
Or officinal, having
to do with apothecaries
or printing presses,
Brooklyn Yiddish *drukkerei*.
Where was I? What
happened Tuesday?
The days troop past in camouflage,
I saw that one again
but it was Thursday now
and no one can see me.**

21 January 2015

CRITICUM

**In any poem find
the *operative* idea—
not what it's about
but how it links
forward, how it holds
and leads us through.**

21 January 2015

Criticum sounds like *triticum* sounds like wheat. Grind this.

= = = = =

**Near mirage
shimmer city
streeted with horizon.**

**Met a door, a pert
usher, a seat
in the music—**

**would it hurt to stand
opera all the time?**

**Single-minded porphyry—
I am a church of it.
The stone is saying so.**

21 January 2015

=====

**Exorbitant obvious
yet again—**

**a gleeful *via* to the City from
imagined hinterland
of cows and granite—
a fox is looking at you
from under the porch.
A car is idling softly
in an alien alleyway—**

**forgive my certainties,
I lived my way to them,
forgive my doubts
I'm not there yet.**

***Via* is cognate with our word 'way'—
a truck also goes by.
Some children are playing with a star.**

21 January 2015

= = = = =

**General Washington
was six weeks old
yet before a hundred
years had passed
ozart was born and died,
Bellini came along
and made song happen
all over again, and
Beethoven gave me
Opus 110— what did
Time have to do with that?**

21 January 2015

= = = = =

**But I wanted to see it
it was my fault
the triangle in the eye
that's why winter came
and snow fell, covering the
lovely shepherdesses and their swains**

**because I had found
without intending to
the number that operates the god,**

**I think they're still alive
under all the cold white numbers
girls and gods and guys and sheep**

**under the cruel hexagonals
a triangle making love to itself
the bodies and ideas persisted**

**and me, frightened, trying
to spell everything right.**

21 January 2015

**everything is held
all equal in the body moving**

democracy of dance

**only all this I want of you
I beg you to do**

**can this voice
make you want to**

**and wanting, do
till dance be you?**

21 January 2015

= = = = =

**Could but can:
rooftops of Paris
I saw in '54
what have I been
doing sixty years
with what I saw?
Michigan Avenue in snow.
Dawn on the Great Trunk Road.
Everything told me where I am
so I tried to answer,
learning my coordinates by ear.**

21 January 2015

= = = = =

**As if a candle
made a window
and from afar
a night looked in**

**Will you be my star
the red fox said
heaven is so quiet
where you are**

**Need said Now
it's always now
love letter signed
by unknown name.**

21/22 January 2015 3 A.M.

=====

**They call this liquid gas
to confuse the young
and when the car is out of gas
they say it runs on fumes
which really does mean gas.
No wonder children take to crime.**

21/22 January 2015

= = = = =

**Waiting by the brook
for the miracle
for all these stones
are baptized all day long—**

**if anyone is holy
it is they, washed
in spirit, running water,
gleam like saints**

**beneath the tumbling
of all circumstance
and people like me are
only here to hear them speak.**

21/22 January 2015

= = = = =

**I think I'm hungry
I think I need to dance
read Greek elegies, send
a letter to my congressman,
take a bus to Philadelphia
for Rodin or for Duchamp,
call that man in Tennessee
they tell me has a field for me
to buold my cabin on and taste
the sweetness of the mountain air
or wake my wife and see her sleepy
smile so I can go to sleep again.**

21/22 January 2015

= = = = =

**Have I done all this before
gone through that door
heard what they were saying
in the flickering lights
of an overheated imagined room
with you telling me the truth
as if I weren't even worth a lie?
There was an old car just outside
and a magazine spread out on the floor
open to a photograph of Lenin
sad face, not noble, nervous,
I picked the picture up, why?
and carried it with me into the dark.**

21/22 January 2015

= = = = =

**Could pretend all these
were dreams. The way
daytime pretends to be real.**

**But it's not as simple as that—
the yew trees by the road
closet a dusty little space**

**where no one goes. There
but not as real as here.
Ontology is hard to separate**

**from zoology, anatomy,
girls on their way to school
boys studying in the yeshiva,
a long hair left on my pillow.**

21/22 January 2015

= = = = =

**Who ever listened to the snow
the six notes of its crystal?
Tremolo. Six tones
in a billion timbres
all of them white.**

**I wanted to be small
but not a sparrow—
so I was born again—
listen to me, listen to me,
tell me who I am.**

22 January 2015

=====

**I am the untranslatable
the mistake
you can make
only in your native language.**

22 January 2015

= = = = =

All evidence persuades us.

**This is a light
pencil sketch of an angel.**

**Or you can read it at length
is the dark of a book
where words try in vain
to cover his nakedness.**

22 January 2015

SKETCHES TOWARDS A MURAL OF JERUSALEM

**Judas on his way out of town
leaves his old black cloak
hanbging on a tree—
at first glance a suicide
but he's gone.**

**Peter on the battlements
shouting into his cellphone.**

**Thomas was called the Twin
who is his brother? Or sister?
Show them beside him.
They both may be riding
on white horses —
don't twins mean money?**

**What it meant, to be demanded.
The mother sits at an empty table.
Still young, still waiting.**

**No one gives birth all at once.
It takes years
before the child is done.
Truly made. Truly man.**

**The pure white tablecloth.
Dove wings. The passage of time.**

**In the shadow of an old tomb
a healed leper
buries his old clothes—
we see his eyes
gleaming, still incredulous.**

**Maybe we too
are meant not to believe the picture.**

**On the sunlit road
someone is walking towards us.
Looks a little like your wife—
how could she be here
so long ago? Or is**

Jerusalem always now?

22 January 2015

= = = = =

**Knowing things back
is celebration, warm
air from the ceiling
reaches the toes—heat
rises though? — pain
never far, astronomy
of daytime when last
night for the first time
in years saw Orion!**

23 January 2015

= = = = =

**These huge tragedies
are little because they
only happen to me.
There is a republic
of disaster everyone
shares. Speaking
of stars, lights in the dome
impersonate constellations:
there's the Bear, the Woman
Combing Her Hair. Here
below we stand and worship.
The images at least are real.**

23 January 2015

=====

Could outside be the same as in?

**Study Melville on this, *Clarel*,
our master, and his wife Stein
and Walt their bawdy son—
for time means nothing in
America — we have no others.**

23 January 2015

= = = = =

**The numbers are coming
to catch me up again
in their glad imperious embrace.
Who are you this time,
Seven, mourning for the man I was,
the world I left unattended
while I snored in Eden?**

23 January 2015

==== *(for MURAL)*

**

**Matthew close-up
one eye brown one eye blue—
how Jesus knew
he was a tax collector,
a man of numbers, looked too close,
filled out too many forms.**

**He is holding a plate
with a filet of fish or a whole fish
depending on the painter's skill
given him by a relative.
He is patient, not hungry yet,
thinking what he has seen
and all he has not seen yet.
The sun is in his eyes.**

**

**Sad seeing men come
on their way to work
in the busy potteries,
to work all day by the kilns
with the sun beating down**

**John sits on the hillside,
no beard yet, wondering
if Jesus told him to get a job—
he of all the disciples
follows no trade — men
on their way to work, sad
sunlight of never-ending
labor, maybe write a book
deploring it, or greve with
young butchers sobbing at their job,
old butchers staring blankly at them.**

**One of the Miriams
hard to tell which
sits on the rim of a fountain
chatting with friends.**

**Her hands are lively,
her shawl shifts, sometimes
we get a glimpse of her face.
But her hands tell the tale:**

**last night a bird
fluttered down the chimney
and swooped around the room—**

**it perched on her finger
and she taught it to speak.**

**So just assume
this pomegranate
lying on the dusty shelf
cracked open, a few
gleaming garnet juicy seeds
spilled on the wood
was His. He set it down
when someone called.
Now it glows red
in the evening sun,
the white pulpy part
bitter as remorse.**

**Dear Painter,
I tell you things
that you can't see
now make me see them—**

**all around us
the painting is in motion**

**quivering to be made
firm in the colors
of the blessed ordinary.**

**Notice how from the tower
a Rman is looking out
wishing he could see the sea
again, or at least a woman
hanging out laundry on the roof,
the smell of lavender.**

23 January 2015

=====

(for MURAL)

**Not clear among the thorn bushes
something that looks like a crown
or hoop of gold. Why would it be there?
A little boy is looking at it—clearly
he wants to get it out but fears
the thorns. We all fear the thorns.
The gold thing might be paper, might
be the rind of a yellow melon tossed
by a careless man bound for the vineyard.
You can see the vines on the hillside.
The little boy is crying now, licking
a bleeding thorn prick on his wrist.
The crown has disappeared. Look,
a woman walking towards the gate.**

23 January 2015

=====

He wonders if he's said enough so says some more. The audience, college students mostly, are sure they've heard enough. But people are amazingly patient. Movies can go on for two hours or more and nobody screams. Except me. To spend hours in somebody else's idea of a dream, you can hear metal grinding all through the story, plastic cracking, paper shredded. Nothing is new anymore. Except the old things that were there before.

23 January 2015

= = = = =

**At 10 A.M. the snow
all lace and surplice
on the land, trees
of seeing, all
delicate, not so cold.**

**We see what comes
of it as the sky
comes on giving
itself before
the wind blows
and comes to
tear the pale
grisaille away, tiny
birds in our faces.**

24 January 2015

=====

for Levi

Mirror globe
who gazes
in it sees
himself the core
and all the world
rushes away
from him, Ashbery
solipsist style,
all things in one
sleek retreat
and I alone sole
source of every
rivering.

 But I want
a concave glass
shows it all
arriving, arms of light
all round me—
I suppose it's not
so different from the sky.

24 January 2015

=====

(for MURAL)

**It doesn't rain much
in Jerusalem
but show a rainy day
a waif in the street
sitting on a curb
(spell it kerb so
grandmother gets it)
staring down at water
guttering over
such pale feet. This too
is baptism, the salt
of poverty and longing
tickles the tongue.**

24 January 2015

=====

**At any moment the real
poem begins.
Not these lyrical
preliminaries, these
vestibule rhapsodies.**

**Maybe not in my time,
maybe someone else
far into tomorrow
gets to write it down
on some glorious machine
or with a stick in dirt,
the poem at last
in its own clothes.**

24 January 2015

== == == ==

**No, it must be me
that does it, can't give
up so easily,
you can't let me—**

***the task belongs to
whoever imagines it***

**doesn't every knightly
romance tell is that,
and every myth?**

**What is the mind
except who thinks?**

24 January 2015

== == == ==

**I wish like French our
so sister language
we could specify
the sex of the possessed
not of the possessor.
Sa langue is her tongue
or his. Then the world
belongs to everyone.**

24 January 2015

=====

**Maybe I have to say it all again.
The mirror and the monocle,
the hysteric in the taxicab
his English wife the three-
legged dog, the cherry pie
with butterflies on it,
old-time plastic radio my
cold hands warming on,
music coming, Christmas mass
from Minnesota. splintery bench,
mango in the subway, the lover
lost in the kibbutz, B-14 bus.**

24 January 2015

=====

(for MURAL)

**What did they drink in the morning,
first thing, warm? No tea yet. Coffee
unlikely, from Ethiopia, the land
in which the pagan gods took their ease,
drinking a magical liquid that was black
then white. We guess. But can't
be certain. This is not Punt. This is Salem
the Holy. What did they drink
for breakfast, Jesus and His mother,
the disciples, his old father drowsing,
weary of all the joining. As are we.
Wine, like the sordid Romans? Sumac
tea like the Armenians? Water
like the Essenes. The painter decides
or doesn't, shows earthenware mugs,
steam drifting from their rough lips.**

24 January 2015

= = = = =

**I am Dante yes
but the old
floor boards
beneath me
would splinter
my bare feet.**

24 January 2015

NAIL POLISH

or something like it
to seal the air holes in
my poor ink bottle cap.
Old acid post office ink
ate the plastic through.
So long ago. Women
put it on their hands,
colors with so many
names, you could read
for hours in the store,
drug store, five & ten
but there aren't any
any more. Does anybody
still learn Braille?
Talking books. Digital
all you like it's still tough
to learn Polish or Irish.
I used to watch them
doing their nails they said.
It made me happy to see
their quiet concentration on
this mystery of being just
slightly different from

**whatever nature made them be.
This art. Beauty. Majesty.
And this girl at the register
with jade green, dotted
with specks of gold, what
is she telling me? Really, she
doesn't even know I'm here.**

24 January 2015

HYDROGRAPHY

A map

**of the Sawkill is what I need
the Metambesen the old
name what does it mean**

**where does it come from I know where it goes
I am on the golden carpet of his last descent
down to Mohicanuck, the river of the north
that flows two ways,**

**I don't want to say
poor Hendrik's name,
jettisoned at sea, in the Arctic almost,
by his crew,**

**o god damn this new
music just stops and goes**

**give me my river tell me its true name
tell me its cursus its lingo,**

**yes, I'm paranoid about this
and right to be so,**

**hydrography is the big secret, they won't let us
ever see the maps of little rivers,**

**just the big ones with hard names,
the boundary markers, the tanker lanes—**

**but our actual waters, that feed us and the streams
that feed the rivers,
there is a taboo against revealing them.
They are the real secret of the land—**

**do they keep their own secrets
or is it that
not one single human knows
the exact course of how any of these little rivers flows.**

24 January 2015

=====

**Always something
left to do
a leather jerkin
stitched to fit
and leave your arms
free to wield
the instruments of
Venus or Mars
as suits the history
of this matter
this ordinary life.**

24 January 2015

=====

(for MURAL)

**The other Mary
crouches by a tree
trying to recall
what a tree was like
before He died on one.**

**The other other Mary
comes along and finds her there,
sits beside her.
Paint her teaching her
how to smile again,
a little thing
letting the world back
into her face,
the light.**

**“He
didn’t die for this
to make us sad.”**

**You must make us
believe she’s saying that.**

“Why did He die?” the other

Mary asks.

**But no painter
can be expected to know that,
or show it, a stretch
of pale ocher, rose tinged
where it touches earth.**

25 January 2015

=====

(for MURAL)

**In the lines of the figure
how they twist and meet
and turn away all
meaning lies.**

**The figure the lines intend
to reveal is just an excuse
for curves and salients
that tell the music of what
happened here, and who
it happened to.**

**Just as we are
or form a single shape
coming from all future time
to make sense of what we are.**

25 January 2015

= = = = =

**Use pale ink
to hide again
the message from
the messenger**

**once the sun
gets in his eyes
the answer changes,
when he gets back**

**just read the streaks
his tears leave
on his dusty cheeks
before he speaks.**

25 January 2015

=====

(for MURAL)

**You must make
the wall exult
at all the pain
it can't keep out—**

**all feelings hurt,
even a wall knows that.**

25 January 2015

=====

(for MURAL)

**Let it come to you
of itself, the color
it should be.**

**Any color
is the shadow of a man.
That's who.**

25 January 2015

JOGGERS

How lonely it must be to run,
it bruises me to see them
panting little puffs of human breath
when all our breaths are measured.

Walking is solitary enough—
but to run like this, hardly
seeing, keeping measure
only by number, how desolate

their strides, I forgive them
as they huff by my window
forgiving my stillness, watching
their soft footsteps animaling past.

25 January 2015

= = = = =

**Sometimes I feel
the real poet forcing a way
through my habits and obsessions
beyond predilections to assert
the trumpet clarity
of the untouched poem
free of me and all for you
before I close the stupid
door that is my self.**

25 January 2015

LIMINALITY

is strong around here,
hard to get here,
hard to leave,
it's always snowing or too far,
or the land beneath our feet
itself is slow.

It's all threshold
everywhere,
all the entrances are sealed.

Year after year
we linger at the gate.

25 January 2015

=====

**Exact definition unnecessary.
A bird in the sky—
what more do you want?
Taste the image,
the size of it nourishes.**

25.I.15

= = = = =

**All instructions are magical
depend**

**on the lily to open
in its season, releasing
that subtle, almost mortal,
aroma. Juliet in her tomb.**

**So much pretending
to be done**

**just to get through
a winter's day any time of year.**

26 January 2015

BLIZZARD EXPECTED

**We think ahead
of all that can go wrong
and hope by thinking them
to forestall the event.**

**Theory: things
happen only once:
Sacred Law of Unicity.**

**But a law that can be broken
is no law at all. Hence
let this law be real law,
real as gravity. Think it
to keep it from happening.**

Survive even the snow.

26 January 2015

ETUDES D'HIVER

1.

**Being sure
being well brought up
hearing warm air
gush softly from the heater,
could this be me
after all these years,
a man with a job,
educated, married, in love?**

2.

**How strange this warfare is
against the seeming,
all I can think about
is not thinking about what I'm thinking—
I suppose mind is not meant
to be comfortable.
It's we who have to mean it.**

26 January 2015

== ==

**Could it
by writing
understand?**

**Hearing Vasks' violin
holding the world
in precise focus
don't have to go
on wondering**

**The soul goes
from leaf to leaf
in winter
fragrant with absence.**

26 January 2015

=====

(for MURAL)

**Two Buddhist monks
on their way to Alexandria
the world-city
waiting for them
and all the words and minds
and gods they might bring
to that hungry metropolis**

**have paused in Jerusalem.
They are resting in the marketplace
eating cherries, chatting
with young John.
He always seems to have
time on his hands,
an ear for listening.**

**Shave the monks' heads,
Painter, be sure,
and give them saffron robes—
apricot for you, or even
orange would do.**

**One of them is telling John
“Your master is like a herdsman
whose calf has strayed,**

he hunts night and day
till he finds the animal
and makes it safe.”
John listens, tries
to understand, at least
he takes it in.

The other
mon whispers, though,
“Your master is a door—
don’t just stand there
looking at it. Open
the door and go through.”

26 January 2015

= = = = =

**Trying to come through
the way wet ink
comes through
from the other side
of the paper
and we read the words
always going away.**

26 January 2015

= = = = =

**Be your face at night
oily with streetlight**

**stand there on
the broken terrace**

**thinking Waterloo
a hundred years**

**your eyes are full from
thinking of all the names**

**you never saw. Bare
shouldered you shiver**

all round you the truth.

26 January 2015

=====

(for MURAL)

**There it is,
that pool
an angel comes
to stir in
one healing's worth
of touch.
Only the first
sick man to leap
into the water
will be cured.
Is it once a day
this happens?
Or only sometimes?
Aren't angels
outside of time
altogether? You
have to decide.
I hope you let
them all be healed.
And does that water
also fork for grief?**

26 January 2015

=====

**As if a bird were perched there
over the pool on a bare branch
and the sheen on the water was
the only conversation — keep
counsel with silence, change
the subject frequently and run
where the path lets you, watch
out for roots, the bird (there is
no bird) will guide you true.
This is what comes of looking—
life a quiet party in the next room.**

27 January 2015

== == == ==

**Make more happen.
Be blue for instance
or find out why all
those people go to church—
is it the candles, the words
nobody understands,
the boring music that some-
how feels good for you
like ovaltine or exercise?
Let me know when you find out.**

**The angel tells me though
to change ovaltine to broccoli
so people have some sense at
least of what he means. Yes,
angel. Not me. I know nothing
here except the words. And just
enough breath to let them out.
All else is angel. And you do too.**

27 January 2015

SNOWDAY

**As if nothing
needed to be said.
Yet all that white
invites to write.**

**Make ink
of eyes , leave
traces in the
snow who'll read?**

27 January 2015

=====

**So it's this:
how far can, how can,
language push the body
into and as
the so-called dance?**

That's what so much of my work means to consider by provoking. And the plays I've written try to see what language alone compels/persuades the actors to do, 'enact.'

So that 'dance' and 'drama' would be, as in their beginning, two ways of *ode*—the song as sinew for movement, for action.

And someday a dancer will enter the empty room into which the poem speaks, and *have to* dance.

27 January 2015

=====

(for MURAL)

**There were reasons
the knee bent the way it does.
The cross had toppled over—
just to touch the wood
meant kneeling or bending.**

**Don't think of it as upright—
show it as it on the ground,
the lowest thing there is,**

**the instrument. Crows
fly over it
making noise
that sounds to me like
heart break, soul crack,
fear of ever having
to come down to this earth again.**

27 January 2015

= = = = =

**I'm a sucker for
sun-glint on cars
not just after grey
snow days but
all the time,
thrilled by what it
lets us see, a hunk
of machinery
tinct with glory.**

28 January 2015

= = = = =

**Still close to the ruinous beginnings
of a nation
working by slaves—
whose proportion in the population
steadily declined (six
percent of the US now it says)
they could not even breed
their way to freedom
except on paper.
What have we done?**

28 January 2015

= = = = =

**Cold sunlight
I wake having no
cure for their anxieties
my friends.**

**I am a shaman
with no ayahuasca, no kykneon
no dose
Just words to make it all go away
empty as an angel
on its way home.**

28 January 2015

=====

**The thing I write today
is part of it.
What color is its fur?
Where does it sleep
and what art does it behave
to win its mate?
All I do is feed it in the dark.**

28 January 2015

SUDDEN MIRROR

**My lips are too red.
There is a beast here
among all my maybes
why does this one show?**

28 January 2015

= = = = =

**It depends. The coal
under sunbeams over
somewhere between.**

**Labor policies gave way
to immigration. Fuel
on two feet. Once
any society enjoys
slavery it will always
seek to reproduce it.
Minimum wage.**

29 January 2015

=====

**The proposition
can be iniquitous
as a pronoun.
Philosophers hanging
fake fruits on trees**

**you bet I'm angry
or would be if I knew
but this is all guesswork
Adam and Eve stuff
in sinuous doubt.**

**Nobody home! Pure air
at liberty to breathe
play with itself
it can generate sounds
without us servants.**

**Whistle a whisper
to lead me to oaks
leave myself there
let the dog run home.
Nobody cares! Free wood!**

29 January 2015

=====

**Would the light
have been down
to meet me
or was the sky
herself annoyed
at all my fervent
approximations?**

29 January 2015

FRAGMENTS FOR KURTAG

**Hide like a leper
in hard-to-read sentence**

**Carry a doubt
around all day
and never let it out**

**They look at you
as if you're talking nonsense
know you've found friends**

**Everything begins on the other
side especially this**

29 January 2015

= = = = =

**The snow says
all weather says
what Rilke's Apollo says:
You have to change your life.**

**Looking out the window
is seeing the gods
working inward towards you.
Quiet terror of that rapture.**

30 January 2015

ONE LAST SONG

**Last milking
the cow of mind
waiting in her byre
for the last weather.
Then those hands
will come to let
the matter out
she meant so long.
Or will it be
the soft muzzle of
her youngest calf
humming as she drinks?**

30 January 2015

= = = = =

**Feeding on itself
the weary worrier
takes any evident
as evidence
and hunts in horror
the absent crime.**

30 January 2015

= = = = =

**The wind says
I too am angel**

**what I blow away
you never needed**

**and all the airs I bring
teach you to sing.**

**But we live in a different age
no angels and no singing**

**just store-bought songs we
have to blow away all by ourselves.**

30 January 2015

=====

**This is somehow
How it goes
Watching the children
Of other people
Making the mistakes
You wish you could make
All by yourself.**

30 January 2015

= = = = =

**Terms elaborate pirate tressure
hair into whiskers blending
not a cockcrow between now and waking
your hands full of gold, my silver.
how close we came to rising
timely through fathoms into
unshimmered sunlight, air again,
our old master. Death too's impermanent,
like a ship with no sails who knows
what shores in reach? We try to speak.
Not like a screw propeller like the one
in Munich, not like that hydrofoil
in Puget Sound, noisy as memory,
but like torn out page from a notebook
floating down the gutter, back in the days
when there still was rain.**

(30.I.15)

= = = = =

**I slept with a phantom
at twilight
a herd of deer
nosed through snow
to eat cracked corn.
This is a song.**

30 January 2015

=====

Un fantôme, c'est un homme sans homme.

RK's Heart Thread, Stanza 177, tr. CM

31.I.15

=====

**Every house is haunted.
everyone you meet
has died and walks again.
There is nowhere where we're not.**

**We are the resurrection.
Beautiful. Terrible
only when we let ourselves forget.**

31 January 2015

= = = = =

**Cautiously silver and gold
write from all
the distances you read
between the words
between between.**

31 January 2015

= = = = =

**Sometimes instead of water
a woman comes out of the well.
Not young not old
she holds a candle
burning bright or a piece of b read.
This is how we live
knowing things
come to us in our great need.**

31 January 2015

= = = = =

**Jerome translated the Hebrew
into Latin, the Vulgate.
A thousand years slide past.
Finally they begin translating
the Bible back into English,
the primeval language
to which all other languages
will finally recur.**

**Language itself
is a holy, backwards thing,
ass of the angel hurrying
hurrying through the centuries
to get back to the beginning.**

31 January 2015

FOR KIMBERLY LYONS

[A birthday poem for Kim, scribbled on the back of a postcard Charlotte brought from Dumbarton Oaks showing a fourteenth century Byzantine icon of St. John Chrysostom, 'John of the Golden Tongue'.]

**Golden-tongued
the people of God
all are, they have
language wet in the mouth,
they croon chemistry
lessons the flowers
understand. You
speak this gold
severely playful.
Conversation is heaven.
But so are your
silver silences.**

31 January 2015

=====

**Park bench covered in snow
rows of hummocky white
mimicking the slats below—**

**no one there to see
the miracle of forms
answering forms,**

**shapes self-sculptured
in this cabbalistic garden
each thing a letter, white**

scripture who will read?

31 January 2015