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APRIL DOOR

Lancing as medical
the old condition —
sparrowcraft, kisscunning —
the ancients knew.

Then there was music
the unforgotten, a stone
for doubt, some thorns
wreathed around a bucket.
Nothing else to drink.

2.
That was no kind of answer
but it slaked. Sometimes
no response is all you need,
knight.

Not the question
but the asking.
Like a bowl of soup
in winter, scraps
of meat in it,
why not,
an animal you barely recognize.

Now it was the season
for the light to come on —
it waited
while you were sleeping.
Yes,
center of the world.

3.
I seem to be following
or finding a form
from another time,
another me,
one that might be you,
a *then*
close relative of now,
ode-shaped,
full of breathy pauses,
angel wings or unwashed glissandi,
forgive my countryside,
Masonic March, allegro,
they call
this dawn
because (I look around)
it is just your own.

4.

April Fool, I

**thought I was
a solemn surgeon,
practitioner of neural mysteries,
sympathist of breath.**

**It was still dark
in me
only the sky was growing light
In Balance Tide,**

**no one needs me.
This minute you can tell blue from black.
They promised snow but all I see is air.
Ode-form, advertising a cure for doubt.
Open the door. See what rushes out.**

1 April 2015, 6 AM

=====

**The shadow of my own house
falls across the public road.**

**Isn't that what language does
when I speak or write things down?**

**The me of it sprawls out
where it darkens your path**

**or deepens it, or you can walk
right over it or dwell in me.**

1 April 2015

=====

**Trying to be legible at last
I think I'd better use no words at all—
so I shall set out to dance the silences
before your tepid eyes and rouse them
to see right through the silences — terror
of our condition: I am the same as you.
No one can tell us apart.**

Hypocrite poète, ton semblable, ton frère !

1 April 2015

=====

**Symbols of wingless profusion
blades of grass**

**the old grass yellow as memory
and the new not speaking yet**

**o come up, semaphores of springtime
be many, be me.**

1 April 2015

=====

**Wooden rail fence white in sunshine
dry blue sky unoccupied
April Fool but it all still loves us.**

1 April 2015

=====

**A kind of defilement
like weather when you're thinking
when you set someone else's letter
down on your table and still try to be you**

**reading it. You can't. Her voice
is louder than your thinking.
You wonder, you may even want her
or what she says. Needs differ.**

Aometimes it just isn't raining.

1 April 2015

=====

**The straight line is the hardest—
from silence to silence
a plausible interruption
or sweet sense, as of fragrance
of a person passing
dawn shampoo or first
spring rain a field away,
a line like that,
meaning nothing,
part of you now
a second or two of that
then quiet again**

we're always waiting.

2 April 2015

=====

**Very black the letters on a white ground
long ago we decided that's how to make sense
but now they print poetry in grey on grey
sissy, timid, terribly tasteful, hard to read —
book designers know that verse is trivial,
decorative, not meant to be read, faint smell
of language, vague music in a distant room.**

2 April 2015

=====

**When you live among trees long enough
you begin to taste wood in your mouth,
that slight fierce lignin sweet maple,
the quiet chew of oak deep in the jaws.
And you begin to learn about shape,
how things shape themselves and what and how
shapes mean. And you can do that too,
hastate habit of your words, powerful, slip right in.
Listen to them talk out there, tall
in their quiet synesthesias, masters,
mistresses, your primeval vocabulary.**

2 April 2015

=====

**We know what's going on —
we must want it to.
The morning mores
but sleep speaks
behind my eyes
a veiling of light,
 movie screen
of absent images, far
off shape of a sound,
shadow of a bell.**

2 April 2015

=====

**Thinking about someone
keeps them away.
Love comes
always from the unexpected
quarter.**

**That part
of the sky behind your head —
the occipital region
fertile teeming personal unknown.**

**And you can't swivel around to see it —
it turns with you. They taught
you that in school, the sky
wheels. The sky is a wheel.**

2 April 2015

=====

**When I was someone else and grass was green
and Eve was Miriam with a swoop of spine
and no more snow, Eden under new management,
rust-free Hebrew grammar, pineapple trees
and coconut bushes, and I am all the Adam
you'll ever Eve, weave, wake at dawn
with canticles of sugar, drumbeats of kiss.**

2 April 2015

=====

**The wind blows me to an empty page —
mysterious island
with grammar of its own,
white syntax
bare as snow,
crystal lexicon
no one can read.**

2 April 2015

THE TRUTH WILL OUT

You brought that nice Greek salad home from the diner, yet now you shove it in the microwave, and for two whole minutes — why is that?

—I'm Irish you see, and we don't hold with raw food, especially raw green stuff that comes up out of the dirt.

But why is that? Isn't lettuce better raw?

—It is not. We cook all our food. Even our water we distill with care from mash of grains and such, or boil it earnestly and sieve it through dry leaves.

That would be tea?

—It would.

But why this preoccupation with cooking everything?

—It is our nature. We Irish invented fire, after all, and we love our bright little friend, and trust fire to cure the sheer strangeness of food before we dare put it in our mouths.

I thought Prometheus invented fire.

—So we did. My father was Prometheu, and his dad before him, so on, so forth, and I'm Prometheu too, so we are all Prometheus.

But what about Zeus and divine punishment and all that. the crag, the Caucasus?

—Ah, there you go, that's the tragic part. Those Zeus up there were vexed with the first Irishman for inventing fire, and banished him from the nice farmlands of what you call Central Asia to a smug, shallow, lump of a green island we called Cows-Cause-Us, because the green stuff was apter for cattle than for ourselves. And the cold sea all round us, but with at least a salmon or two in it. And there we abode, pinned to the land.

But Zeus sent an eagle to prey on Prometheus' liver. What about the eagle?

—That would be the English. And not just our liver.

2 April 2015

=====

**I'm part-way
up the mountain now
seldom get back down
to conjure with you
the shared magic
of reality,**

**and the young
man whose name
I forget is getting
married soon,
the show goes on
the shone goes out**

**I live in the dark
and call it dawn.**

3 April 2015
dreamt as such, 6:20 AM

== == ==

**Saving the mountain
from its climbers
hear the dæmons of the mountain
shout,
 a voice
like a horn lifted
saying always one same word
and you fall
or fall back.**

**No Zarathustra
on these slopes,
in these caves are
bears at best
or tigers, little
demons, trolls.**

**There is no woman
in a mountain.
Smash your lute
and hurry home.**

3 April 2015

== == == ==

**My eyes are feeble—
come, flowers, be big and bright
I need a crocus big as a tulip
a tulip big as a tree.
And the dandelions on the hill
must have real manes, and roar.**

3 April 2015

= = = = =

**Acknowledging the obvious
he knelt down and touched
his forehead to the ground.**

**There is a kind of ecstasy
he found in doing this, lap
of a stranger, lawn of mother's house**

**the one he left so long ago
it took thirty years for it to find him.**

**Love too comes on you that way
as if it were the simplest thing of all.**

4 April 2015

=====

**That big thing moving in the woods
is a speck on the window as I turn my head.
True on false. History is this.**

4 April 2015

=====

**I know it's Saturday
the joggers come
assailing the morning quiet
with gasps of pure Aryan will.**

4 April 2015

=====

**Who am I
not to say
what it says?**

**Where else
would language
get it from
but I don't know?**

4 April 2015

=====

**Small things, small things
dancing all together —
what could be bigger
than all you see?**

4 April 2015

=====

**Our river flows two ways
one from the mountains to the sea
the other when the ocean
prongs its way into the land —
wide, wide the tide,
salinity three per cent still at Kingston
under our bridge,
your ocean
invading,
 at winter end
you can see chunks of ice
drifting north and
moving fast south at once,
that must be me coming to you
and you coming to me.
What else could a river mean?**

4 April 2015

THE DANCER

As if it couldn't be other, the brokers
wind up the clock and steal the watch
what can we do with our waiting
wailing on street corners with music?

she looks down between her legs
and sees everything yes that is
the ground down there, the earth
is all there is and she sees all of it
what fire and steel still leave on earth

this blue place! this exactness!

2.

She sees all that and all of us and then—
we never know what happens
when white meets blue
eyes flutter closed the dream begins
even before the back hits the mattress
o god the one she slept on in the hallway
o god the hallways and the mirrors the lamps
with burnt-out bulbs in corroded sockets
but when she moved in the sacred dance called
Getting Up from the Table At Last
and Walking Across the Room all the delegates
swooned the swoon of hips the swoon of hair

3.

**She danced in other words for the harrowing of hell
when Christ's body slept in the tomb but his Principle
danced through the underworld waking the sleepers**

**I mean a dance for Easter a dance for Passover
a dance that delivers us from captivity.
from the authority of money and government,
yes walking across the room *can* change the
yes the world yes walking even two steps sets
yes the clock moving again and the brokers are banished
and all that's left is ourselves our failures our loves.**

4 April 2015

THE MYSTERY

is alive is inside is animal
it lingers between worlds
as when Christ-Jesus-Joshua
broke down the walls of hell
and let the holy ancients out
to be free in the world again
to do charity and art, giving
and giving. And always
between any this and any that
the mystery pervades. Between
is its homeland, and love its practice—
bring all together, be a moon
to every midnight, be an empty room
where I can meet you and we can be
any people in the world, numberless
identities, ipseities, all of us found.
The link is all. The link flows out
between, it is the milk of mystery,
we drink it from time's chalice—
this is what I hand to you here.

4 April 2015, late

LAMENT

**Forest of Teutoburg, here
we broke the Roman legions.
Here we lost ourselves
from people into national identity.**

4 April 2015

=====

Voices in the midnight street.

**The gaps between their words
make a strange music
of pure interruptions—we wait
for the next silence
like choristers anxious for their cue.**

**But now out there is almost quiet.
They're smoking cigarettes
on their doorstep as if their house
inside had no breath for them at all.**

**O the secret lives of unseen people!
Miracle of all we don't have to know!**

4 April 2015, late

[RONCHAMP]

**Maybe that's what Corbu really wanted—
a young woman come inside his empty chapel
when all the silly priests and sillier
art historians had gone home for supper,**

**a young woman ,who stood alone inside
this light-starved crooked dome, this
concrete skull around a Stalin's brain,
cold, too cold for her to take off her clothes
but she dances. And dance is always naked
and summons all things to decent nakedness.
The faithful body tells its story to the world
so everything answers with its naked meaning.**

**She danced to bring light back into this place,
light the builder tried to block with tiny windows,
make light from friction of her body with the air,
real light, not scraps from those gouged squares
more wounds in darkness than daylight speaking,**

**danced because that's what the place itself
begged her to, dance enraptured human presence
as David once pranced before the Ark, dance
here in this godless chapel, dance herself**

**to the old god the builder wanted to keep out
of this bare bone, this anguished pleading place
that wanted someone to come talk to it,
this faux-rock tomb yearning to make life
happen , bring light to art and art art to life. Corbusier,
far away, fluttered about by architects and acolytes,
maybe her dance brought him some Easter too.**

**5 April 2015
Easter Sunday**

=====

**Asking answers to be questions
is like going to church in the trees—
you know you're in the right place
if you just pay attention, *deus adest*
god is present. So many gods,
all lurking in one answer. An/swer:
what you swear to. Spring but no
leaves yet. No asphodels on the hill.
Planting is one thing, answering another.
I swear they will come up soon, Yellow
you made them be. And all around
the little squills they call blue-eyes grass.**

5 April 2015

DEATH

**Running out of bread
and all the stores closed.
Running out of milk
and no cow at all.**

、 5 April 2015

POWER

**Kick your shoes off
and feel the road
the road is power
the road is you
the rough the smooth
the road is me
I feel you walking
along my thigh
up my back you walk
into my skull my skull
exact size of the earth
never doubt it
I am the same as the earth
the same as you
the smooth the rough
the road is power
the power flows up into you
from every touch
your feet your hands
the earth arising through
you you are the earth
you know yourself
in the rock the road
is mirror the road is glass
the road is a color you can't name
color is power
color is what the earth turns into**

**when you sleep
you sleep in me
don't you know that yet
you sleep in me
your skin is the night sky
I am the other side of the sky
all power comes from you
you walk along the road
until I come to myself
locked in shadow
a shadow also is power
everything we can't see
is power, everything we see
the rough stone presses
gently underfoot the road
the road is everything you feel
I mean everything you feel is the road.**

**5 April 2015
Easter Night**

= = = = =

**I am a good bookkeeper
I keep all my accounts straight
every word a separate account
but don't trust me with numbers
numbers have nothing to do with what I do.**

6 April 2015

= = = = =

**Things aren't what they mean to be
but what I am**

**isn't that what any flower says
when it's still beneath the ground?**

6 April 2015

=====

Do I have to explain everything?

Do I have to be me?

**Do I have to rain in April
and make shadows in July?**

**Isn't there an opera
where all this happened before
but did it right, with bassoons
and sopranos? Aren't you**

**just waiting for me to do it
even though the famous key
is still in your own pocket?
And do you keep looking at the door?**

6 April 2015

=====

**I met Shakespeare
in a mirror—**

**You too, he groaned,
impersonating me?**

**Go ahead, none of her
will believe you.**

They barely believe me.

6 April 2015

=====

**When a car goes by
with a bike on top
I marvel at the wheel
and stay inside.**

6.IV.15

=====

**Sunlight filtering through clouds
needs another Goethe to decide**

*we walk upside down on the sky
that's why we fall in love at all—*

sun-gleam on passing cars.

6 April 2015

=====

**Amortize means kill the debt—
bring obligation to conclusion.
Latin words, Latin words
all about culpability and punishment.
And every once in a while redemption:
buying it back, pawned pocketwatch
or human slave redeemed. But mostly
Latin makes sinners of us all.**

6 April 2015

=====

**A dancer
can't hide her grace
it happens
to the air around her**

**the space changes
and we are helpless
before its agenda
all the things that must be done.**

6 April 2015

=====

**Walking the tightrope
over the tide—
the straight line
beneath our drunken feet**

**to cross the street
or far out on the ice off shore
every footstep an affront
to gravity, my sober mind**

**at risk of tipsy members—
a tower is built
not to reach heaven
but to fall,**

for this is heaven when we stumble and wake up.

7 April 2015



**This star
I call my horse
I ride it round
and round itself
rodeo angle
turn and turn again,
I will be master
of this light
or die tonight.
O horse I never !**

7 April 2015

=====

**Grey light of maybe
pale god of midmorning
teach me what everybody's thinking
so I can come true
to the center of myself
which surely has to be out there
beyond the passing cars.**

7 April 2015

COLD APRIL

**Bare branches still
shiver from the wind
in an orphan world.**

7.IV.15

=====

**Why are girls named
April May and June
(I knew a March once,
Avery) but why not
my favorite month October
or December when the light comes back?
I'd name her Lammas for high summer—
sad, all the names I'll never get to give.**

7 April 2015

=====

**Not exactly rain.
Road glistens softly.
Every gift implies
an obligation.
How can we live
in all this beauty?**

7 April 2015

= = = = =

**Thirty-six degrees and wet and yet
the first hint of
a shimmer of green
along the field —
but no leaf set.**

8 April 2015

LYRIC FOR KURTAG

**Listen to the light
rain dim speaks softly
as a friend would.
I catch the sky
looking at me.**

8 April 2015

== == == ==

**Babylon means captivity
Red Sea means deliverance
the actual geography
has vanished into our dream.
Words replace the mountains,
and only in ink do we drown —
religion is the mystery of mystery,
a story told about a story
about a story they will never tell.**

9 April 2015

=====

**Sounds like American music
the one thing we can't make
no matter how much of it we make.
It all comes from Africa. Germany.
Ireland. The real sound of America
you can hear still in Nebraska, the wind
moving through the grass from north to south.**

9 April 2015

=====

**Let the remark
be liberal — the left
side of anything
has yet to come.**

9 April 2015

ENDURE THE LOSSES

1.

**Turn them into gains
how — inspect
the middle of next
week or Dawn
in the Grisons. Art's
deceptions heal.**

2.

**When the imagination's
broken, fix it by touch —
that sense never
goes away, heal
it by ice or autumn
wind. It comes
in you again
alive. The loss
is too specific
to be personal.
One foot at a time
march in Paradise.**

3.

**The smell of heat.
The sound of sunshine —
it has to be together
because there's no place
for it to be separate.
The log laughs.
The sparrow explicates.**

4.

**So here I am in a lost world
10,000 BC in Anno Domini
the old words, the Christian words
baptized by cartographers,
the weighted keel, the schooner on the rocks,
the more it changes the more to forget.**

5.

**I was reading Greek last night
explaining the meter to a class
of two or three whose teacher
stood skeptical abaft the door
wondering what I was up to —
I thumped the rhythm**

**on the tabletop, explained
the first three words, the class
such as it was looked baffled,
impressed, annoyed.
Tolerant. Or was it Hebrew?**

**6.
See these are the things
we'll never know —
the manuscript unrolled in dream,
the Sappho forgeries,
and what became of all those souls
you used to know,
who from afar defined for you
what beauty meant, or crimson desire.
Teach me a dream is just a dream
we dream. And what isn't?**

10 April 2015

=====

**How can we help it
we are carved from the sky
by the hands we once had.**

10 April 2015

== == ==

**Think of a secret
let it press you
to dissemble —
explain yourself
in timber and livestock
hawk in a tree
a book you open to find
the page is on fire.**

10 April 2015

4.
along the knee-side
a trickle of stone-sweat
our atmosphere.

5.
Say to the stone
Wait for me.
Barred window
of the museum
traps the art
safe from changing us.
Say to the stone
I will never remember.

10 April 2015, Shafer

=====

**Better than sunglasses
walk in the dark.
The only dreams I had
were waking five times from no dream,
no stimulus, no need,
just awake in the dark
the ordinary can be a nightmare too.**

11 April 2015

ORDINARY

**Anything from banal to the bishop
of a diocese but mostly
it means just here and now,
things as they're seen
as they fall. Called ordinary
because it orders our lives.**

11 April 2015

A LEXICAL

**Would be a book of words
where word after word
is considered deeply
until it seems poetry.**

11 April 2015

=====

**Alert as the sword tip quivers
it's all a movie after all
words by themselves I hurry to repeat
sparrows at breakfast
how peaceful when we sleep
image a gold plaque around his neck
St. Jude with flame atop his head
bearing the image of Christ —**

**the attributes mingle,
St. Death holds a skull in her hands
not hers, hers intact, huge black eyes
under her hood seeking us**

**but she knows her moment we do not
we smile at her half hoping half forgiving
and light a candle to guide her away**

**what does an eyeless skull still see?
So the movie grinds on, the little
man from Oaxaca teaches us
a word or two of Spanish
the sun comes out after a week of rain.**

11 April 2015

SPRING

Facing the heart of the sun

asking, letting

her tell me how to be.

12 April 20`5

=====

**We run out of numbers,
now the fun begins—
we have to know the name
of every single living thing
when we barely know our own.**

**And everything is alive!
No hope of hiding our ignorance
in dozens and decibels — any
sound has its own name and address,
You are a person and everything
you see is a person too.
That star in Orion's sheath,
the little nearby cloud that hides it.**

12 April 2015

=====

**Content with what one has—
a miracle — star
cast out of ice, ice
from mountain water formed—**

**we are always near
to the beginnings, close
to the behavior of the very first star—**

**and this one only seems to be so far—
it happens in your eye
no elsewhere could hold it,
no maid with it in her hand
but this one here
shouting in the window.**

12 April 2015

=====

**Orchestration of silence
requires a master—
Bruckner, Emily Dickinson—
to know where the mind stops**

**and what happens there
then, when there is no then
exactly but only the wind outside
waiting for her permission**

to move, to touch our skin.

12 April 2015

=====

**What would a moon be
doing in a tree?
Yet there it is,
4:37 A.M. in April
not a leaf yet
to feed on for it
and all the birds asleep,
a moon out on its own
and only me to see it—
I feel privileged
by this mystery.**

12/13 April 2015

=====

**Sunshine on
a suspicion of green
grass, at last.
A time to wake
or take the air
as they used to say
back when the air was
a little different from today.
Am i grieving or rejoicing?**

13 April 2015

=====

**Reaching for it
over the rim of the raft
the water that bears us—**

**I see it that way,
a quick-moving sort of stone,
a long love story
with an absent friend**

**moves us but we never
touch. Landslides
on either bank but the river
knows. Grasp it
as it goes.**

13 April 2015

=====

**We run too quick
over the must track—**

**seize the moment
from behind—**

**liberty means laughter
mostly, moon in sky**

**ice cream spill on lapel,
dead light bulb in live socket.**

Even vanilla stains.

13 April 2015

=====

**I paint this
whole picture
just to try out
my new brush.**

**Every masterpiece
is lying in wait
for its proper
instrument—**

**how else could
the mind find it?
Now I drop my
sable and withdraw.**

13 April 2015

=====

**Of course I'm hungry—
hours since I've eaten,
I don't need my body
to remind me of that.
Be at peace, epigastrium,
jejunium and all your kin
leaping at me from within—
I'll eat when the weather
or the mind changes—
sky knows me better than you do.**

13 April 2015

OUR BODIES OURSELVES

**Not. Please not.
Your bodies can be
if you're Catholic girls
temples of the Holy Spirit
or if you're Jewish
chosen vessels, vectors
of ethnic continuity.
But not selves.**

**Your self is a stranger.
Your self is a traveler
trapped for a lifetime
accidentally on purpose
in a miracle of meat.**

**Your body shelters you,
bears you, feeds you
immeasurable
paradises of sensations,
pleasures you, hurts you,
minds you while you sleep,
yes, your body is your mother
and your motion and your means
but not yourself. Please.**

13 April 2015

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**Some other kind of mammal
one that talks lucidly
and spends hours at the water's edge
trying to be a member of that flow.**

**I have seen one once or twice
in summer shade by flowering mallows
but often and often in my dream—
for I permit myself the luxury of sleep,

for I am a mammal too and need delusion.**

13 April 2015

=====

**A map the size of
the heart of who holds it,
a map all close detail
and far ridges lift
between the paper and the skin.**

**Sleep now — distance
is kind to us,
lets us love from far off
and rest from love.**

**Roads go there
and let those clouds come here
we call our friends.**

13 April 2015

=====

**It's been a long time
since I've gotten
to sit out somewhere
in sunlight
just fishing from the sky.**

13 April 2015

=====

**Panning
this stream
for gold
it comes
why not
from sacred
hills up
there where
I have never
been and so
conclude
they must be rich
with troll
pilferers, goddess
tresses, nuggets
of the first law
when all there was
was singing.**

14 April 2015

=====

**How have I dared
touch thee?
being quick, quick
as the water
you take the form of
when I arrive
bend down to reach
her element not my own
I pray to night
after day to say
what you mean
so I can hear.**

14 April 2015

=====

**As if I heard
someone lightly
hurrying down the stairs
or something falling
softly and at length
in another room.
Did you know
that sunlight could
make such gentle
sounds? Not all
drumbeats, sobs,
climaxes.**

14 April 2015

= = = = =

**Being sure at least of this.
Head at a window.
No one at the door**

**J'ai lu tous les livres
and they all talked back.**

**A little cloud, a little
sun. It has begun.**

14 April 2015

====

**Irrigate the obvious
and up will sprout
harvests of transcendental wheal.**

14 April 2015

=====

**I keep waiting for something
to crawl out of my right ear
and spread its wings and flutter
loud around the house crying
this is what you've been
listening to all these years
for I am music and a living thing
dangerous and beautiful and
who knows what else I bring?**

14 April 2015

=====

**(Like many performers
you confuse the search for sex
with the search for art —**

**art implicitly public
sex implicitly private**

**you are doomed to confusion
early grief and bitter letdown**

**you have to make art
all by yourself —**

**everything else is playing in the schoolyard,
bullying, competing, weeping**

**Not opinions, not “views” — reactions —
which are worse, less discussable, uncontrollable.**

**Where am I going
with all this?**

What am I carrying?

**Could she write her body
she would be the odyssey**

at least I have not yet become.

At least I am not saying this.

**The word fell through the paper
into blankness, the land before —
millions of years before a word was spoken.
They told us. Devonian, they say.
Permian, they say. Primary shield.
What we say depends on, fueled by,
that long abstention. Don't call it
silence. Silence was invented
just after speech.**

**If you had not spoken
there would be no silence.**

**Writing without formal result —
loud praises of no deity
the Atheist's Mass,
as if a painting by Balzac**

**I know what I'm talking about
but not what I'm saying.
I only hear what it really means**

**extravagance of sunlight suddenly,
when will I begin?**

At least I'm not using language.

At least you're not listening.

**Nothing yet has been said.
I wasted the morning
by writing not writing.)**

15 April 2015

=====

**Sunshine
says it all
away.**

**Spirit recoils
from desire —
the inperson
rejoices to be known.
Turn inward,
voyager —
you are the only
one there really is.**

15 April 2015

=====

**Being sad in Penn Station
I stand in the crappy
souterrain full of litter
and commuters and remember
the Baths of Caracalla
vast-vaulted, brave
columned, that once when
I was already alive
stood above this pit.
We let a state
conquer the real
yet again —
a great sign
vanishes from the city
we scurry in a trench.**

16 April 2015

=====

**From what dimension
do you come
to be broken on the wheel
of earthly gravity —
to bear the weight of bone?**

16 April 2015

=====

**Asking me again —
manual adding machine
old Dictaphone
ballpoint pen from Hitler's
table in the Sperl —
what does an object
demand of the hand,
heart, head of a man
like me who picks it up?
Or the world is haunted
and we are its ghosts,
moving cruelly
among the innocence of things?**

16 April 2015

=====

**Trying to work out
the limits if any
of sentience. There is some
difference between object and animal
but I'm not sure that mind is what it is.
Mobility? Motility? Desire?
Does an object live in marigpa?
Or does it exemplify rigpa itself?
Unpersoned, compassionate, at peace?**

16 April 2015

THE EMIR OF ANY

1.
The Emir of Any
waits on his throne
in your empty room.
It's made, his chair,
of acacia wood, inlaid
with turquoise, a lion's
head in malachite
with golden eyes
forms the backrest.
He sits forward
so you can see it
stiff, holding
the lank strands
of mermaid hair—
greeny-yellow as new
elm leaves — loosely,
emblem of rulership. He
to whom the mermaid
has given even one
of her hairs gains
power. See how potent
this one is, made all
the greater by waiting.
It is not good to be alone.

2.

**Doves and sparrows
(nobles and commoners)
flutter round the room.**

**A carpet from Wajudstan
pools out at his feet,
a long one, and the birds
walk safe on it.**

**The birds are the only ones
who know how to speak.**

3.

**What a thing it is
to be alone. He thinks
with satisfaction, *No one
is alone as I!***

***The more wives in my
seraphic harem,, the
more alone am I.***

**From time to time
one of them comes in,
shimmers across the room,
smiles, waits, is clearly
enrobed within her own
mystery, then is gone.**

4.

What is real?

The book or what it says?

He has consulted
the authorities
now he waits.

Waiting is potency,
dread, achievement.

*I wait better than
all the world —
all their waiting,
endurance, suffering,
is just a shadow of me.*

5.

All day he sits there
honest and calm.

Now a different bird
flies by the window—
a crow this time. *Come in*

the Emir cries, so
in sails the crow,
wings glistening
with news of all
the places it has been.

And a crow sees everything.

6.

It's in the sheen,
the sheen, he thinks,
it's what we think
when we see
deep in the stream,
faces, figures of men
and women, battles,
animals, digits
of mighty numbers
tallying wealth,
keeping count of the dead.

7.

He is alone again,
evening swept the birds
away, the wives
content in their
mysterious apart.
He sways the hank
of holy hair,
playing with it,
no more imposing
than a child
playing with
whatever comes to mind.

8.

**This is when
the music starts.
It blends right in
with the carpet
at his feet, colors,
shapes, densities,
abrupt angles,
quiet surcease,
oboes mainly
and a sad little drum,
heartbeat of a dying man
stumbling into Paradise.**

9.

***Come out, you music!*
he calls and silence falls.
The natural consequence
of all that loveliness.
It is good to be
just where he is.
A lapwing pretends
to have a broken wing,
only pretends
not to fly, he thinks,
so many birds,
so many ideas!
*I am the world
I think, but who are you?***

So long he has been thinking.

10.

But not so fast!
he calls to his departing breath,
the union of mind
and matter eludes me not,
I have sat here
on my throne until
everything is evident,
every breath I take
remakes the world—
that's what I meant.
Now you can go.

16 April 2015

=====

**At last the beginning—
the ballet endures
behind and beyond
the exhausted dancers
fainting in midair,
the music carries
the audience's eyes
up into the willful spaces
where dance must
first have happened
before it comes to us.**

17 April 2015

== == ==

**Too many or late the nib
scratches the skin the scribe
laments in Tocharian
seeking a mother tongue the rest
will come to know**

**there is no answer to his riddle
(blue ink the sky, black ink the soil)
(white for the water, word for the women)
because everything is motherlode
of all the rest or at least some other**

**listen to me gallivant in prose
pretending the sweet interruptions
that make verse, the lordly intermissions
when what one line has lied to us
slowly truths itself that silent instant
before the next one speaks**

for nothing is silenter than time.

17 April 2015

= = = = =

**Pour water in your lap
or wine or milk
to baptize the Place
from which all days come.**

**18 April 2015
(dreamt)**

=====

**Everything is easy again.
One thing is another
and we're done. The chill
is off the sunporch, the gloom
perks cheerful in the coffee pot—
the Other People smiled the night away.**

18 April 2015

THE OTHER PEOPLE

**The Other People
we call them fairies
though they are not fay, not fey,
not frail, not gossamer.**

**Or Little People we say
though they are not little.
Leprechauns too,
though they are no more Irish than you.**

**2.
They are the Other People.**

**As we have a culture of work and amassing,
they have a culture of play and dispersion.**

**Just as even we can play a little now and then (though
we feel guilty about it fter it, or even during)**

**so the Other People sometimes work a little as a lark,
carving or drawing or writing or building strange
devices—**

**but they are suspicious of work, and like to tease us at
our jobs we take so seriously.**

They are suspicious of working for money, and suspicious of money and property—all the things that lead to war.

For of all things, they hate war most.

3.

It is said that they have the power to will people or animals dead, to kill by will alone. But it is also said they never do it, never, though sometimes when they see or know that one of us is about to die, they give a hint, a sign, a token to warn us to be ready for that hange.

But life is precious to them, and they never take it.

4.

You *know* they're there, here—but you've been taught to deny it, ignore them, talk about life and death and history as if we were the only ones in the room.

But we are seldom alone.

If you let them, the Other People will play with you. They make good friends. They are music in silence, wildness in quietude.

With them, it is always beginning.

18 April 2015

WAKING

I wasn't sure how many
joints my legs have
for the walking.

 The blue
sky woke me
unfamiliar to myself
and to this place.
Peril of sleep in daytime—
you come too far
from the land of truth
into this maybe.

18 April 2015

=====

**Month is moon is *man's* measure
come back to my argument
only the sun can warm us or can burn.**

19 April 2015

=====

**I fight tradition
because it is the poet's
tradition to do so—**

**Ashtoreth not Baal!
A stick upright on a hilltop
is greater than the tallest statue,**

**the shadow it casts
points straight to the heart.**

19 April 2015

=====

**Take the chill off—
morning splendor
plus a little heat
from the unit
and we are now.**

**So late this spring
the trees are thinking
still — what an
immense decision
to put even a single
leaf out into the air.**

19 April 2015

=====

**We choose our weather
by mindset virtue and sin.
Choose wind and rain—
weather is the only
democracy we share.**

19 April 2015

FAITH

**True conviction—
only praise
is licit, praise
with fervor
opens the door.
O please slip in
and be in our midst,
be the best of us
in the dear
silence of the actual.**

19 April 2015

= = = = =

**We know the names of things aloft
but when things snuggle under earth
the first things we lose are their names.**

**Fly with me! say to the rose or the salamander,
everything is up here with me,
be with me aloft, stop hiding,
where the grace of love shouts your names
earthworm! chipmunk! bed of gravel!**

19 April 2015

WISDOM

**does not need to be
enthroned in some temple**

**Wisdom wants to rest upon
her throne inside your heart**

**Wisdom does not enjoy pomp
does not trust institutions**

**Wisdom likes directness, subtlety,
quiet, loud cries, solitude,
joyful crowds, the sea**

Wisdom has green eyes.

What is Wisdom's actual temple?

You, walking around.

20 April 2015

EXHORTING THE POPULACE

**A flower comes up
out of rain
the famous violet**

**girls' names of the past
her middle name was Rose**

her name is Rose

**How could a flower be old-fashioned?
violets gardenias peonies**

**In the blue hydrangeas on Batty's lawn
she caught the wide sea—**

sky is one vast permission.

20 April 2015

REFUGIUM

**Away from the living
into the dream**

we falter when we desire

**it hurts to walk
on that hard hard road
the ground—**

**and wood rebukes you
and every stone denies.**

It hurts to go.

**That much he knew,
stars burn your fingertips
(Orion howls for ten thousand years)**

**as if he knew where he was going
before the event
before anything at all was possible**

the cradle cracked beneath his cries

***Out me to the stars!*
it streamed across his bassinette**

but he did not know he didn't know

my desire lost among the pilgrims
he thought,

**and the girl
who brought him to the sea
left him there
and with her hair-streaming wild
vanished her white body into the waves.**

20 April 2015

UT SUADET

1.
Every family own language
Seminole? Or St John's River
where I understood the Delius

lingers in the child's mind
another music? For I was
a child yesterday.

Plover, rhymes with lover,
has a broken wing (not)
we win love by lying

by our weaknesses displayed,
our dirty pick-up trucks, sad
sweatbands in our caps, our stains.

Othello. She fell for all
that happened to him. We do.
I boast my failures, my heraldry

Gules, a sealed book proper, never read.
So pick me up tonight,
open the story and change the light.

2.

**Celebrate my measly trick, so kind—
it all fits together, sprawl on the roof,
have no neighbors, the rain is cold.
God's mercy and we may never meet again—
that's the theory— in this life, and you'll
not have me but always what I said. Say.
This is all I own and now it's yours.**

21 April 2015

BRIGHT RAIN

**The glisten on the road
is the listen to the light—
all our senses quietly connive
to catch the moment self
in the inmost ear
where it's all Remember Me
and How like you this?
The shining asphalt on River Road
reminds me of everything
that seeing does, a fruit it is
divided among children, sweet,
unfamiliar, almost permanent.
Eat one you'll never eat again.**

21 April 2015

=====

**Stark as the light soaks
into the wet earth
I celebrate absence at last.**

**Nobody! I am a cave
in time, nobody home,
tumbled tocks are
beasts enough for
who is me? Stark
absence, tender light,
earth forgiving, grass
upending, signifiers
everywhere, so
I can keep still.**

21 April 2015

=====

**It is never warm enough
never cool enough
because it is it. Not us,
not ours, not me. Not me.**

**It is it, and rules the world.
It rains. It comes and goes.
It is the nature of things.
It's natural. It's only natural.**

21 April 2015

=====

lila

**Education banalizes knowledge,
stifles curiosity.
But I hate games
even more — games
stifle the spirit of play.
And only play can save us.**

22 April 2015

UNAVOIDABLE MORNING

1. Scholars mine the floor.
2. A floor is wood and always wants to be more.
3. Resistance is fertile.
4. To bondage in a yellow bus.
5. Never mind the door, just go in.
6. There is a gold ring on every human finger but it's hard to see.
7. We are married to so many, so many.
8. Bees tumble out of the carcasses of dead beeves the ancients taught us, and respectfully we wait their stings.
9. Land of Goshen who are you.
10. Problems of memory—memory is mistaken for identity.
11. There is a question for every answer — find it.
12. Every percept is an answer.
13. *La Ronde* — coming apart together.

14. The problem is having suddenly an instinct to connect. Let them be separate! If they choose. In heaven there is no giving in marriage. And this is heaven. Honey. Milk. Lick the name off her skin.
15. A verbal proposition is merciless.
16. Evening comes before morning — a warning.
17. The crows were upset I think by me.
18. Always another till the last, and even then.
19. Where do they spend their lights?
20. Framework of a house should be the pattern of everything we make. Every poem, for example, should have a dining room, a bathroom, a bedroom, a porch.
21. I imagine the sky.
22. I imagine the sky and then I marry it.
23. Is there enough sleep to go around?
24. Trends and patterns you find in history are all shadows of you. artifacts of inspection, headless horsemen leading armies of ghosts.

25. **Belief is a rusty wrench when you keep a keen bright blade, knowledge.**
26. **But what a job it is to distinguish believing from knowing.**
27. **A blue flower is a commitment. (Hence hydrangea, morning glory, squill)**
28. **Nothing left that's less than.**
29. **Don't give your magic away — offer a clue maybe, but not a cloth.**
30. **Properly understood, marriage is a gateway to the Other Kingdom.**
31. **It is at the exact intersection of people with the Other People.**
32. **Being sure of something, like a highway cut through a syncline.**
33. **Vague meant wave once meant quivering with light meant beautiful meant hard to hold meant hard to grasp meant fugitive meant uncertain.**
34. **O water, the things they claim in your name!
The things they blame!**

- 35. No island is big enough to support a flag.**
- 36. Sometimes hard to tell nervousness from
deepest calm.**
- 37. A silence machine! A radio that absorbs sound!**
- 38. Where am I? The water still swirls clockwise
down the drain in the sink so I know I'm in the same
hemisphere where I began.**
- 39. I'm halfway home at least.**

22 April 2015

=====

**There is something waiting
as if a broken bottle for a naked foot
the wee catastrophes of every day
a farmer and his athlete's foot
a mariner with rope burn, tell me
a story with no pain in it, tell
a story with talking animals
who know what they know
tell me a fox and a marten**

**a ditch and a delver, a maid
and a mattress for I am weary
of eel-broth and would lie down.**

**So it gets to be old.
The glass is dusty
but the water's cool**

.....

22 April 2015

TRANSPARENT OBJECTS

**impinge upon sleep
or rise in sleep
slower than breath
to assume location—**

**in most lights, most
dreams you can't see them
but you have been you think
in this city before**

**with copper domes and meek
steeple barely touching
the sky, your sky, you brought
it with you from foreign land**

**and the objects too, waiting
for you on the horizon,
afloat on picturesque canals
only moon glow says they're there**

**but transparency has a way
of talking you know how to hear,
it frightens you, like the roar
of a beast far off on the veldt**

**but it could come near. Objects
are seldom quiet, you knew this
from childhood on, they whisper
all night long, no wonder**

you can't stop dreaming even now.

23 April 2015

GIRLS ON RADAR

he imagined, looking over
his rimless presbyoptics
to see if anyone at all
was really here. Near.
There, like the moon, one
fat sliver of it in the oriel

but no girls. Why do we
live in houses, or at all?
Wouldn't one moment of pure
perception, reception,
welcome into the sheer
otherness of the actual, just
once be enough? Why all
these days and years—is it
just to get it right at last?

But what *is* it? That too
is nowhere to be seen
in sky or house or lawn.
Maybe wind in the lilacs
leafing now but no blooms
yet. But no one he knows.
No one he does not know
and longs to know, it would be
someone worth a life to meet.

23 April 2015

THINGS I DON'T WANT TO KNOW

**he keeps telling me
that man in the moon
or the mirror, anyhow other
enough to be scary
and my father taught me
the other always knows,**

**what they mutter to you
at the bar makes more
sense than any Bible
is what I carried away
from years of barely listening**

**but then that foreigner spoke up
so loud I couldn't listen
and had to shout myself
to drown him out, though
it turned out we were screaming
the same ridiculous message.**

23 April 2015

=====

So tell me as much as you can
window. Sycamore on the next
street see over nobody's house.
Who? Always who. A street
in an unfamiliar city, going there,
going away. Taste of things
left on the plate from somebody
else's meal. Call her a painter,
they still have those. Or a friend,
rare bird, a cuckoo clock, say
over and over again the same
hour. When we are. Are most
if not together then adjacent
pieces of paper, printed, words
even, as if in a book. In a book
where also no one lives. No air
in there. A tin can from Italy
with tomatoes pictured on its flank,
tall brushes standing in solution,
clean. Art even at its worst
is so clean. How can we live there
too? Ask her. She knows. Up
to you to persuade her to tell.
And I don't think you can.

23 April 2015

=====

1.

**Cancellations possible
only as of stamps
on old envelopes
names of cities their
little post offices
their times of day
far away in every sense
except here it is in yuour hand.**

2.

**So nothing is altogether gone.
Shadows. What Asia calls *karma*,
the germ of future consequence
in present action. The work
of what you do.**

3.

**Any one.
Falling, of course, things
take time,
we measure what is not ours,
we divide the day
and pay for it.
He is paid by the hour**

**another is paid by the year.
The difference. The doubt.
Of that hour how
many minutes are yours.
Salary. To be worth one's salt.**

**4.
But is it ever enough
just to say these things?
Can't they too leave
tracks in consciousness,
in conscience. So having
heard this somehow
onbe is changed? But
maybe the speaker
least hears what has been said.**

24 April 2015

=====

**Hammering
heard at morning,
more a tapping,
almost gentle,
a tender-hearted
Wallachian putting
a vampire to sleep.**

**A hammer
can be anything,
it does what time
does only quicker.
Or makes this house stand.**

24 April 2015

=====

**And the sun
she shines
what do we
give in return?**

**There must be
some veiled reciprocal,
something dark
offered up, from us,**

**our talk, the tumult
of our will
to mend her ardor
so she sleeps with us.**

24 April 2015

=====

(In memory of Emily Caigan)

**She died last Sunday
as a consequence
of a prolonged alchemical
experiment called life.**

24 April 2015

=====

**Human life as an alchemical experiment,
our meat the base matter, the bone,, the narrow.**

**24.IV.15
on the way to KTC_**

=====

(on Billie's plan to make us a quartet)

**I want to be the cello
round and full and usually slow**

**I will say my piece
beneath the stridulous
hysterics of the violins,**

**gaze from below
up the skirts of that sultry
contralto the viola**

**I will keep time honestly
and move the show along
just humming quietly to myself.**

24 April 2015

INTELLIGENT DESIGN

**No cerumen
(ear wax) ac-
cumulates
in my deaf ear.**

25 April 2015

=====

**I'll catch up with myself
inside the hollow skull**

names in there, not things—

**arteries, foramina, sulci—
we know the worst.**

**We are said to be made of parts
but the truth is unity,**

the thing is hollow.

25 April 2015

=====

**I have listened to the wind
too long. Time for the trees
to tell me what I missed.**

**Everything lives, it all goes on.
The deft manipulations
of a practiced mind
persuades us this is today.**

In fact we are never.

**Always in being
and never becoming.
Just listen to your
old wooden fence.**

**25 April 2015
[End of NB 376]**

=====

**Could it be another wing
except the bible one we read
about but never feel?**

**Nor should we feel it—
best protected are we
when ;east we notice.**

25 April 2015

NUMBER THEORY

for Tisa Pusnik

In El Iskandariya a gnomon
that let the sun read
how we divide the day
she gives us, she laughs
at our categories, the heat
pours down

but in one lost book of Diphantus
we read of a young woman from the Fayoum
who came north to measure
the stars at the bottom of a well
at midday in that latitude — theory
has nothing to with it, she reasoned,
and wove long strips of linen
with numbers on them to record—
but then she looked up and decided
such digits were better for contradiction,
meditation poetry —

but there was nothing to contradict,
nothing to predict, nobody bothered her
and so play was born, *lila*, divine play,
imported from India

**where the stars are somehow different.
We do not describe, she said, we know.**

**And then her father came and blamed,
hammer is to spoon as hacksaw
is to the west wind, he claimed.
All claim is blame, she said, with the lucid
arithmetic of paranoia, the name
psychologists give to the accurate
perceptions young people have of the old,
old people, old world around them
when they come in, nothing in it
they can really trust,
nothing but number alone.**

**25 April 2015
(28.IV.15)**

=====

The *situation*

**where anything is,
sparkle (your word)
on lake scrim
of Pan's theater.**

song-doing

melodrama

**we peer though
to see 'the natural world'
presented to our gaze—
owls have world too, and lionesses
hungry on the veldt,
just say field,**

**why don't you just
say place,**

**this is the place
where things (means everything)
happen to happen,**

**appear to appear,
call out to us in passing,
impinge on what we are.**

**Like the old woman selling roses at Fugazzi's
or my blind singer strolling in the Thirteenth,
words take us only so far,
your hand, for instance.**

26 April 2015

NULL WEATHER

Even

**your enemies
have forgotten you.**

**Your friends
have done enough
for you already.**

**Not a word
from anybody.**

**This is not
deliberate, it's
nobody's fault,
it's weather,
just weather.**

**It is your own
day at last, all
yours, joyful,
alone at last with
your empty mirror.**

26 April 2015

= = = = =

**Nightfall.
Along the highway
all the tall stones
turn back to trolls.**

**They'll spend the dark
cavorting, trolls
and trolleses,**

**mkoon religion, stone
religion, fragments
of Moses's smashed
stone tablets,**

the dance.

**26 April 2015
(along 9G)**

the distances are built right in—
brick again, ruddy rhombs
baked from earth and straw,
each one a *parasang* folded in upon itself,

we still use Persian measures—
newer measures trick us
into thinking we know what they mean,
what they measure.
What we mean.

How far away are you?
Will my car get me to you
with a lot of walking to be done
maybe, is there a door
on all these little streets
to let me in?

Who's 'me'

you ask, rightly, all these words
carry visas of their own,
you can never tell who's talking
just by the words they say.

Sing like shop windows
full of art, the intricate
imagination of strange
folk spread wide

into the fading light.

**So then it gets dark.
Unlikely outcomes gleam
on grill chrome, cars
pursue destinations
their headlights project
onto the specious reality of
(as he said, our joyous voice)
night!**

**This leaves me.
I stand on the sidewalk
of this bijou city
moodily licking ice cream
in some weird artisanal flavor
(maple macadamia; pine-nut mousse)
content to watch the lights change
red into green like one-trick mephistos
or like spring coming home
again and again
 or just this one last time,
who knows,**

**You bet
I'm lonely — to be in the body
is already crying out loud.
I just have to make sure**

I never said this before.

27 April 2015

=====

**Don't get too specific,
I still have hopes.**

**Truant expectations
infest that neighborhood—**

**the teeth of a hope
are jagged and infect.**

**Once bitten you keep
looking out the window,**

**keep feeling up the door.
No pair of shoes on the planet**

**will bring you ever the one
you almost have in mind.**

**A street is empty by design,
and the moon himself a watchtower**

**ovcer your beleaguered city.
Check the bible on this though**

I may have the gender wrong—

some days I cant stop thinking

**about Miriam Herzl eating a mango
on the polished dark wood of**

**a subway station bench — the mind
scar itches, the train never came.**

27 April 2015

=====

**The egregious
by number sum
elicit Dragon Pond
tesserae to fletch arrows
with pure cubes!**

**Number me next.
The coral lipstick
of a vagrant teen
smudged a missive
out of a mirror Go
with me or never know**

**she said, and the sawn
cracked slowly
over the Aleutians
crushed butts ashtray
few enough to be sordid**

**I am by myself!
she said that too
but I was listening**

**so that I understood
ne touche pas
this marrying lady
brass ring off the carousel**

**ride me again
meet me in that logging camp
where the blue tin percolator
bakes under ashes . . .**

(27 April 2015, Shafer)

**so now we know
who's talking,
spade-tongued we excavate
word by word the gifts she gives us
word by word,
in the reliquary of sound,

noun by noun we dig up
the lost city of the first approximators
and see where they went wrong,
their formulas, rebuses, apothegms,
cowbarn, granary, the room
hip-deep in precious oil

where in our dreams we still long to sink.**

28 April 2015

=====

for Sarah During

**The long neck I knew you by
pale in the spring sun—
spring in your selfie
further along than ours,
tyro leaves on your branches
when we have none,
even what looks like a leaf
fallen on your blue knee
from another season. When
are we, really? Touchless
lovers, father and daughter,
mother and son, all one
in the new sun. Time
makes us everyone at once.**

28 April 2015

“NOBODY READS POETRY ANYMORE”
for Ella Scott

**They also serve
who stand around in the rain
carrying blank signs**

**protesting the inescapable
promoting inscrutable causes
weeping and laughing**

wet just like you and me.

28 April 2015

== == ==

**At least I tried
on the way to the roller rink
where nostalgic characters
endanger their bones
wheeling around on noisy wood
to think good thoughts about them,
about all of us entranced
by this and that, the past, the future,
that slim personage slipping past
as we flâneur along our way.
But it's hard, hard for me to feel
for folk who put wheels on the heels
and noise around in loops, how loud
wood is! I stand outside the place
undecided. Should I go in and watch
or turn my back and make my way
to the diner next door, Eveready
Diner they call it, *ewig Deiner*,
I think, I am eternally yours.
But who am I talking to?
And I wonder are you listening?**

28 April 2015

=====

A quiff of hair
above me
when I wake,
grey cock's comb
of my father
every when he woke—
the only *sign*
he left in me,
that and his green eyes.

29 April 2015

ANY

**bird in a bowl of sky.
Don't look
too close, any
word will do,
just let it out,
your karma and its
will catch up,
It will be exactly
what you mean,
whether the weather
is blue or not. Leaves
start to appear—
spring's late, I thought
you'd like to know,
deep down there
in the future where
you can read this
and a bumblebee comes by
you hear (you almost hear)
a good sign though
it's annoying a little
isn't it, like music.
As Prof. Klotz observed
in his sententious way
Irritability is the
surest sign of life.**

29 April 2005

LIVING SYSTEMS AGGREGATE

Olam. The world. Any.
Every.

**If you can think it,
it's in the world.**

**It is the world,
the *where-else-is-there?*
The *Who, me?***

29 April 2015

WRONGNESS

of cars. How weird we were (fated by our ancient habit) to have cars and drive cars. Instead of posing a root question — how to move from A to B — we fiddle every time with the last sad technology around. So in a little over a century we have replaced the horse. Can now get there three or four times faster than before, after several trillion dollars worth of roads and infrastructure good for nothing else but these same cars. And trucks, yes. But we should have instead examined the root problem afresh: how to be in A and then be in B. Wake the mind, coax the mind to change the world, get there by mind. The worst invention of all was the wheel.

29 April 2015

=====

What is the English word for chair?

What is the English word for maybe?

What is the English word for she sits on her throne?

There are answeres everywhere.

**Just now cloudless blue sky fiercefriendly sunshine
on the day the Mayans call *Rain*—**

I ask again What is the English word for now?

29 April 2015

====

**Castigate? Well, yes.
The oil tanker down the river
(used to be up) bringing
fuel to Inland America.
That place across the river,
all religion and anxiety—
what else can you expect when
you raise up people to think about
Hell? Makes them vote Republican.
On this side we have
only heaven. Some money, trees,
history, despair. But despair
is clean. We give up easy.
We lost the Civil War and think
we won—how weird we are,
can't recognize the new fashions
in slave economy. In what sense
are those men and women, jobless
young men, homeless young women,
in Newark and Ferguson and Baltimore
free, exactly? Explain tit o me.
I'm looking across the river.
Don't keep me waiting.**

29 April 2015

APHRICA

**Realtme he said
as if even being alive is
a distant township
one the moon looks
down on seldom:
hidden in the cleft.**

***Klooft.* Speak
in that continent
no one knows,
the sun-kissed, the blest.**

**What other languages
brought to torture there
to wipe out knowing
of all who live there.
Even the moon knows more.**

29 April 2015

WHAT STAIRS TEACH ME

**I goi slowly down the stairs,
stairs are a very thoughtful
place to be, each step
a threshold into thinking,
a new vista, fresh
perspective of the world
below, above, eyelevel
of the cautious eye.
I stand and stare.
I must look a little drunk
or crippled, linger
on some step, one
foot lower thsn the other,
look at the top of those books,
Icelandic sagas, top shelf,
German encyclopedia,
a car passes in the street below!
Doesn't matter how dumb I seem,
the stairs are my thinking place to be,
new formulations all the way down.**

30 April 2015

=====

**If after all these years
I decide to count
the steps in my staircase
do I count the top step or not?
It's not a separate
step like all the others,
just the upstairs floor itself
that comes to meet me.
What possible number
could account for that?**

30 April 2015

=====

**Emergent Vitalism
or buy a new
religion every day
to keep spirit away.**

30.IV.15

=====

I thought I was close to beginning
but who was I? I lost
interest in that question
and just kept flying as they say
by the seat of my pants.

To Elsewhere. *Ailleurs*
of the French mental travelers.
The steamship with no smokestacks
oozes across no ocean. The moon
with no wings. A five-year old
accountant. Good things
certainly, but far away.
Or there that spotty mirror is again—
immaturity has its advantages,
its blessings, it's not all unpaid bills
marmosets frisking in your hills,
swallowing pills. Thrills.
And then I am old again,
marveling at Socrates,
his composure as he quaffed
the lethal hemlock, smiling
as if he was going somewhere,
a place he knew already
or thought he did—
because we are all born with that knowledge
we do our damndest to forget.

30 April 2015