

8-2015

aug2015

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**The material the mosquito  
dormancy of thought  
on morning island**

**the sea has not yet come**

**the trees pretend to sleep**

**I woke up and was the king of it,  
nobody home, body full of money,  
freed all the slaves at once,  
sent all the soldiers home, fed  
birds from my balcony.**

**2.**

**So things really are inside.  
You don't have to die  
just to cross the street,  
those houses over there  
are just the shadows of here  
or the other way round.**

**3.**

**Smetimes I see someone over there  
a tall grave woman maybe  
or fat little boy looking my way  
and they don't know who I am too.**

**4.**

**But all that is away  
and this is here.**

**A dove flew low and grazed my hair  
my coronation, silence, me complete.**

**This is what it means to wake.**

**1 August 2015**

=====

**If there's nothing wrong  
why does it hurt?  
But the doctor said  
that's common**

**that question—ask  
something smarter  
with numbers in it**

**stars on horizon  
money changing hands  
tired secretaries**

**hurrying  
in pale clothing  
home through the rain.**

**1 August 2015**



**I think that's what they want in there,  
more info from outside,  
guesswork and numbers and songs  
from out here, or as they  
think of where they are  
the even-further-inside-inside.**

**1 August 2015**

=====

**Trading places.**

**But what would I get for this  
nobler than is?**

**An island maybe  
but the way they murder language there,  
pidgin-Yankee, Creole-Mermaid,  
I wouldn't know how to begin  
let alone sing.**

**So here it be,  
the immutable perishable present,**

**your statue made of sea-foam  
lasts as long as a prayer**

***athanat' Aphrodita !***

**1 August 2015**

=====

**Nimble? Noble?  
Only the clown can decide,  
the acrobat  
with stars in the feet,**

**leap over me, lady!  
Let the horizon  
hurry to embrace  
your palest absence,**

**look back at me  
over your shoulder—  
is this really me?  
You are the only  
one who can tell.**

**1 August 2015**



## LYRICS

**Little things,  
so many little songs—**

**isn't there a symphony  
simpering somewhere  
opulent in front of  
a full-length mirror,  
all flesh and satin,  
with one dried orchid  
to remind us even  
music was singing once?**

**1 August 2015**

=====

**Never lose the sanctity of play  
in the regulations of some game—**

**let skin be your only uniform,  
make sure the never stay the same.**

**1 August 2015**

=====

Could the way there  
be someone known?  
Someone brown  
kirtled or leaf green  
hastening before?

You follow and find out.

There is a distance  
built into things,  
a tunnel of ordinary air  
through which you have to go  
to get even to this moment

here, still following  
the one you don't know  
no one knows,  
safe as trees in the woods  
or water flowing  
crisp clear over rock.

By now you think you know  
but you never really  
are sure who even  
the least of us might be.

1 August 2015

=====

**One thought  
cantilevered over  
a turbulent quiet dark —**

**Awake and almost  
know.**

**Precision  
is not far —**

**we try to know  
and confuse it with 'to go'  
there,  
                    through the dark,  
which is the same as being far.**

**2 August 2015**

== == == == ==

**Things are hard to know.  
Stars shine in them  
no Arabs named.  
They owned the sky once,  
lean desert air,  
the night.**

**But this dark  
is flesh opaque,  
resistant — still  
a gleam lets out  
and we can measure  
how far away a thing is  
from our outstretched hand.**

**2 August 2015**

## TO BE FREE

1.  
As of uncertainties  
mirroring the sky  
prompt to liberate —  
we are still Roman slaves  
“the language, the language”  
have no native tongue  
for what we speak,  
never mind the Vatican,  
it’s July and August and December  
measure us here.

WCW

2.  
I am the not-sure,  
waiting by the water,  
the one that moves south  
not the big one  
so passionately still.

3.  
Bird cry of course.  
Who else is up so early  
after the night games,  
the perfidy of dreams?

**O don't blaspheme,  
the dream is true enough  
if you stay true to it  
and take its measure  
through the day  
into the next night  
and find them there,**

**the Fates dressed as three Irish nuns  
the alphabet dressed as a kiss.**

**4.  
But they weren't nuns  
they were our liberators,  
sleek with darkness  
they come with rain  
and leave by dawn  
so all day long you  
try to remember their  
names you never knew,  
searching through old parish registers  
stuffed in the back of your head.**

**2 August 2015**





=====

**The lines grow shorter  
as we start remembering,  
the flannel shirt,  
the tiger skin —**

**our past is made of cloth,  
everything we took off or put on  
and the whole sky was canvas too  
or blue satin, and the weather made of silk,  
a child is corduroy and sweat,  
and please help me stop remembering.  
Sunlight in the trees is  
past enough right now  
the narrow breeze that sets the leaves.**

**2 August 2015**

=====

**It is our business  
to find an image  
and come home to it.  
By our image found  
we shall be known.  
That's why I keep  
mentioning the sea,  
waves crashing  
round my knees,  
the empty sky.**

**2 August 2015**

=====

**The undertow  
remembers me,  
tugs my innocent ankles,  
scoops out the sand beneath my heels.**

**Astragal. We are beauty  
by bone. Nothing  
takes that away.  
Every grain of sand insists,  
whirling in the wave,**

**count the molecules. The old  
comedian who had the same  
name as an epic poet  
used to grumble Everybody  
wants to get into the act.  
Shell and sea and skin and bone.  
And I'm here too.**

**2 August 2015**

=====

**These little songs  
for who to say?  
Some god some afternoon,  
some sophomore  
dreaming of something great,  
settling for this?**

**2 August 2015**

=====

**I give this to angels,  
they'll know  
whom to give it to  
or when to throw it away.**

**2 August 2015**

=====

**Woodpecker at work  
needs me to notice?  
Not. I am an interloper  
but so is he, so are we  
all, tourists in mind's  
palace gardens, Alhambras,  
Louvres Potalas,  
bare hillsides of Anatoba —  
at least we (as does he)  
bring back news of  
what we saw and even touched.**

**2 August 2015**

## **EVIDENCE OF ELY**

**She gazes up, he  
smiles selfie-style  
at the camera. Fille  
et père, seem  
glad to be there.**

**And gazes is the right  
word, her upwardness  
transfixed, could be awe,  
makes her look  
younger than her twenty years.**

**Behind them, far above  
a few of those great oaks  
are visible, tallest  
trees in England once  
here still if you know  
to look for them.**

**they have held up  
the lantern high above them,  
shaped a thousand  
years of light.**

**She is studying something else  
above where we would be  
if we were the camera,  
something to us invisible,  
over our heads forever,  
our only clue  
the dumbstruck beauty  
on her face,  
her father's reassuring  
smile — no fear.  
Whatever is up there  
belongs to trees too  
and stone and human thought.**

**3 August 2015**



== == == ==

**Too fast to be clear  
too slow to catch the curve —  
what a dilemma.  
There is a rhythm in these things,  
like walking on an empty road at dawn  
any way you choose.**

**3 August 2015**

=====

**Vigorous but in jeopardy  
that's me, he said  
to the working man  
he also was. By now  
he has been everything  
almost, I said. He said  
hermit and wanderer,  
loud and quiet,  
I've done what I can.  
What more can I do?  
I'll do that too.**

**3 August 2015**

## **REMEMBERING THE POST OFFICE**

**Mail-truck maelstrom  
even in those days  
we drowned in information.**

**3.VIII.15**

=====

**Better try hypnosis  
so I can see  
what I can't see,**

**touch the evening star,  
fondle the horizon.**

**3 August 2015**

== == == == ==

**Waiting in the trees  
no names  
a plastic armchair  
no one therein**

**just a little wind  
enough to keep from sleep  
where we could together  
make sense of this.**

**3 August 2015**

## **THOUGHT EXPERIMENT**

**Did Wittgenstein jot down somewhere a difference he had studied, experienced, between how we think when walking, and how we think when sitting down? And again between thinking while walking and thinking while standing still, as Socrates famously stood one whole night in a doorway, thinking it is said?**

**3 August 2015**

=====

**White for the waning moon  
I wear, and red for tomorrow.  
There has to be a reason  
for everything. That's my faith,  
cause, prom, persuasion.  
It's where I learn to dance —  
mid-morning the rooster crows.**

**3 August 2015**

=====

**Being close  
to another  
is being yourselfer  
than before,**

**cleaner, more water  
in the pipe, the pond  
clear of scum,  
your fish in health.**

**This is how  
it means to happen  
to the heart. The world  
follows meek.**

**4 August 2015**



=====

**Caught by the shoulder  
sun over cloud —  
I have to be honest, darling,  
I love grey days best,  
even black with stormclouds,  
maybe a shaft of your intelligence  
cutlassing through a near cloud  
to pierce a treetop  
with burnless fire  
then dim again.  
You are too strong for me.**

**4 August 2015**

**=====**

**The squawk of car by,  
music in the morning  
Doppler effect come and gone  
squeal — all words  
are shouts all raucous all  
reprehensible as rain.**

**4 August 2015**

=====

**Sun too much  
the worry  
girl gone  
lost in mind.**

**4.VIII.15**

=====

**Trying to consent  
I go against my skin  
it is as if a raft on the Mississippi  
drifted empty  
from Minnesota to Mexico  
and that's me.  
I wanted you on board  
with barrels of rain and crates of chickens  
but no,  
the empty raft alone  
knows where to go.**

**4 August 2015**

=====

Takes more than one  
prothalamion  
to grace a wedding —  
when two people get married  
we all get married too,  
sun brings her chilly moon along  
and grass nuzzles his yielding earth  
and all that sorry thing  
thousands of years yet, of us  
standing around kissing the birds,  
holding one another's hands,  
holding our breath,  
wiping away a tear or two,  
two eyes, two hands,  
all kinds of twos —  
every marriage is a bigamy I think,  
marriage infects us all,  
we carry home some of the joy  
this wonderful she and he celebrate tonight,  
it could be a fever, an opera,  
an act of will, two goldfish in a boundless bowl,  
left hand squeezing right hand,  
cloud becoming sky. The symptoms  
run through the crowd, we all catch it,

**Grace marries us all, sorry, Willis,  
but will is grace, will is wants us all,  
sorry Grace, you have to share —  
that's how marriage is different from love,  
marriage belongs to everyone. 4 August 2015**

## **FOR CALLS**

**I met Francesca there again,  
she seemed tired of not dying.  
But it is not death that keeps you young**

**I claimed to ease her, and you can pounce [?]  
your circle anytime you choose,  
a circle leaves you anywhere**

**it is not a road it is a will,  
another's will but can be yours,  
desist from wanting and have everything!**

**I promised, and she listened sagely,  
she has heard so much advice before  
so all my wisdom smiled on her lips**

**beautiful still as innocence lets anyone be  
but didn't answer me at first, and then  
will you too fall lifeless when you see**

**how willingly I am another's will  
and he is mine, and love**

**has nothing to do with time**

**or roads or wheels or getting  
anywhere, we always are —  
and being is a luminous agony.**

**4 August 2015**



## **FOR CALLS**

**So that's what the birds  
were saying all this while  
we are, we are**

**the people that you knew,  
we could not meet now  
if we had not met before.**

**4 August 2015**

## **OPHTHALMOLOGY**

**Every I is different.  
Who could this  
one belong to?**

**4.VIII.15**

=====

**Dream me in, Madame,  
I bring my little pail of fire  
no wonder I can't fit ocean in**

**Dream me aboard  
I want to travel with you  
to the land where shadows sleep**

**teach Egyptian in the polar regions  
dine on memories and sailor's chowder  
the captain's drunk, mate means make love.**

**4 August 2015**

=====

**Bless the moon that teaches wandering  
I want grown men to be our mothers  
while far ahead the women lead the way.**

**4.VIII.15**

=====

**Spaces in the world  
that let us in.  
Mostly they're *names*  
or *recollections*  
or *images* even, the three  
phases of, faces of,  
what we call *memory*  
and never understand,  
the stuff the mind is full of  
when it's not paying attention  
to *itself* or *what there is*.**

**Those thgree spaces are charming,  
they let us in over and over  
through the same door  
and never get anywhere but doorways  
hey all look different, lead  
all to the same exit from the actual.**

**5 August 2015**

=====

**But I love them  
sometimes they come to me  
in what I think is sleep,  
beautiful responsibilities  
I have to spell into my life  
to see what each becomes  
the streets of some city  
not Paris, not Berlin.**

**5 August 2015**

=====

**Telling as much as I can  
the lie lies in the untold.  
I write with a brand-new pen  
barrel mottled liked a century ago,  
the retro, smell of ink,  
clear inscription from the pliant nib.  
There. She gave it to me. There.  
What am I not telling.  
The tree tells leaves  
and everybody says  
o I know that story  
already. What though  
do the leaves tell?  
What is everything trying to say?**

**5 August 2015**

=====

**If I wore a crown  
at this point I would take it off  
and hand it to you, here,  
so heavy, no meaning.  
You wear it, or put it  
in a lowdown drawer  
with the dishtowels to keep it dry.  
There, is that what I  
in particular am trying to say?**

**5 August 2015**



=====

**I tried to escape  
without a single image  
but they clung to me  
like what I won't name.**

**I won't give them the satisfaction —  
but what if they never capture me again?**

**5 August 2015**

## **FLYTING**

**In the old days  
heroes would proclaim  
the names of all their ancestors  
before they clashed in battle.  
Now we have no ancestors.  
We know not whom we kill.**

**5 August 2015**

=====

**What then  
if the highest**

**bliss is  
kissing this?**

**5 August 2015**

=====

**If nothing happens in a line  
it isn't a line.  
A line is pure happening.**

**5 August 2015**

=====

*(Epigraph)*

**A call  
is what hope  
comes wrapped in.**

[

**5 August 2015**

=====

**Scandicus,  
                  ladder of sound,  
rising, falling  
                  here you are.**

**You are music, I thought  
you were an animal  
like me, nipples, fur,  
all the habits of feeling,  
feeding.**

**But you were some sounds  
happened to the air, the ear,  
the poor little atmosphere  
I bother by breathing.  
Yet it might love me too.  
Only the music can tell.**

**6 August 2015**

== == == == ==

**When I was a child  
we learned the names of things  
but not the things.**

**Now there are two worlds,  
thingly and wordly  
I work dawn and dark  
to love them together.**

**6 August 2015**

=====

**Osage orange  
only the unripe  
look alike.**

**Newborn in an incubator  
I think we are.**

**6 August 2015**



=====

**The pale conciliar rose  
given to each cleric  
as he cast his vote**

**soon faded. The pope  
they chose  
lasted forty years.**

**6 August 2015**

=====

**Causation should be the single  
definiendum of science —  
everything causes everything else:  
map the sequences.**

**6.VIII.15**

=====

**It was a ghost  
stood there in sunshine —  
one eye could see it,  
him, her, the other not.  
A sheeted specter  
it said in me, but she,  
he, it said nothing.  
Afternoon ghost,  
silent as sunlight.**

**I have to wake everything up,  
talk is a way of listening —  
who is she, it, what does he want?**

**6 August 2015**

## DOCENT

**Told as much as I can  
she said, the gallery  
is closed around me, all  
the images on the wall  
speak for me too.  
Hear then, leave me alone.  
At least as far as language  
takes yus. We have other  
obligations, chances, silences.**

**6 August 2015**

=====

Dew remembering rose.  
I gave you to the alchemist,  
she played you on the piano  
a big Bösendorfer, hard to keep  
in tune in this humid valley,  
could the name mean someone  
from the village of wicked men,  
of angry men? Rose doesn't answer  
questions made of water,  
she drank her fill this  
morning, thank you, now leave her  
to the sunshine and the bee.  
The bee means the alchemist,  
an alchemist is a man  
trying to be a woman  
without becoming one.  
Being and becoming, don't ask me  
if you can't tell them apart,  
go to a philosopher.  
Or better go to the rose,  
ask her to play  
the alchemist again, a flower  
trying to be a man,  
to leap thornless into your hands.

**7 August 015**

**[Coda to CALLS written this afternoon No. 192]**

**7 August 2015**

=====

*“And on the mere the wailing died away”*  
the line has haunted me for three days  
and today I walked into a storeroom I haven’t  
used in months, and my hand fell on a slim  
old book and there it was, Tennyson’s  
*Idylls of the King*, where the line marks  
the passing of Arthur, from this life  
and from the wintry shore, a barge  
the poet likens to a dying swan  
singing away into the cold distances.

8 August 2015



=====

**We have to tell what happens  
or nothing will. It comes  
so we can understand  
out loud lest each of us  
suppose he alone has that fear,  
that incandescent lust,  
that jealousy, that joy.**

**8 August 2015**

=====

**So alone I feel this morning — why?  
All the new students come today  
and it is good to be unknown.  
Today I'm just a man on his lawn  
responsible only to the light.**

**8.VIII.15**

=====

**Shock of your native language  
when it suddenly turns old.  
Where have I been all these years  
while it was sleeping, dreaming  
new ways to make me shiver or delight?**

**8 August 2015**

=====

**Rhonda drew the shadows  
that fell on the page,  
a huge sheet of leaf shadows,  
worked quick before they changed,  
and the whole sheet of them pale  
accurate, tender, like  
a man kissing a woman's back  
soft between her shoulder blades.**

**8 August 2015**

=====

**Titmice and chickadees  
your customers  
clamoring at the rail —**

**wake up and feed,  
we need the word  
you think is seed.**

**It all is language,  
it all sustains,  
wake up and word us!**

**8 August 2015**

=====

**Orderly perception  
could master the maelstrom  
of images, the whirl of whatever  
churns us round.  
One sense at a time  
the scripture says,  
leave old synaesthesia  
to the decadents —  
be pure as a crow call  
one sense at a time  
this fingertip Elysium.**

**8 August 2015**

=====

**Mind quiet for next task  
sturdy sun on lawn  
what leaf  
          shadows are writing there.**

**So many miracles  
(*miracula*, little things to gaze at)**

**Study me  
the shadow says  
I am what is left.**

**8 August 2015**





== == == == ==

**Walk with me she said I did  
the afternoon was morning still  
but the shadows were already  
creeping back up their mother tree.**

**We think of feelings as fugitive  
yet they last longer than weather does  
she said and I agreed, knowing something of what  
it means to feel, and go on feeling, lover, ever.**

**8 August 2015**





=====

**I will walk to the wood's edge  
and talk to the ferns  
my friends, so various  
in their sameness, like me  
preferring damp and shade.  
The world gives us also  
such beautiful companions,  
no wonder we stay.**

**9 August 2015**

=====

**If I wrote mostly at night  
you'd read less about crows and crow calls  
being interpreted. This is one  
of the million ways I am not Baudelaire,  
the great poet, *lui*, who still had  
to import from over here  
the sage bird he called his *corbeau*.**

**9 August 2015**

## **A NOTE**

**(Poe's "weak and weary" = drunk and exhausted, 'weak' a common euphemism for drunk, said of me — heard it in my childhood.)**

**9.VIII.15**

=====

**He gets literary sometimes  
in the morning,  
watch out for that,**

**he would be cured  
by the disease itself  
half-gladly he suffers from.**

**Now that I can't read well  
all the old books come back,  
reassorting, transporting,  
all the words and phrases  
left free again for love.**

**9 August 2015**

## COLIBRATION

Sunlight on a hummingbird  
*the green one red*  
as Shakespeare said.

Or things change colors —  
that's what color's for.

Places of Art  
eye makes  
of leaf bowers  
streets cornering  
a dogleg road  
meeting an oak.  
And you can too.

9 August 2015



=====

**I'm old enough to take  
everything personally.  
Especially information —**

**all of it fits in  
snug, articulate  
as our bones.**

**My arm around you  
is you changing me.**

**Every touch is contagious,  
every idea  
crosses the line.**

**All I am finally  
is what you make of me.**

**9 August 2015**

**=====**

**The potent will  
to be will-less —  
hard to get  
stronger than that.**

**9.VIII.15**

=====

**Paint a blue Egyptian  
wearing a loincloth of papyrus  
on which is inscribed  
themes he wrote  
and sums he reckoned in school.  
We wear those ever after  
but only the clever scribes of Thebes  
knew how to see and represent them.**

**What I have learned  
conceals me  
from you. I am  
an Egyptian too.**

**9 August 2015**

=====

**The grain of wood  
the frumious xylitol  
our commerce leaches  
from the pale innocence  
of the naked tree —**

**but I feel through the slop  
we make of it, of things,  
the grain persists.**

**The lines still lead  
upward and downward,  
holding our place in place,  
pointing towards a reality  
we still fear to tamper with  
except in dream maybe  
when up and down  
spring together and the heart stops.**

**10 August 2015**

=====

**How the silly classicists imagined the rules of classical prosody with their hypermetrics and their catalectic and their anacrusis — think what they'll make of me, of us, when English too is a dead language and wise fools try to figure out exactly why we write as we do. And hey will have new names for us too.**

**10 August 2015**

=====

**Strike while the iron is still cold  
lest you leave a mark on the wood.  
Does the world have too many marks  
on it already, or not enough?  
You decide. This decision is your soul.**

**10 August 2015**

**=====**

**Every person has a secret name  
he wrote, knowing not even one.**

**10.VIII.15**

**=====**

**We are guilty of giving  
more than we have.  
Turbulence and war,  
turmoil astir in every heart —  
why? why did we?**

**and yet we do again.  
Till nothing is left of giver,  
gift, the given to. Only  
guilt is permanent.**

**And there are so many ways  
of not getting what we want  
and we are guilty of all of them.**

**10 August 2015**



=====

**The lover's embedded  
in the beloved's liberty.  
We move through one another  
like wind through trees.**

**10 August 2015**

## DARK MORNING

1.

The wounds of want hover over waking —  
once I could have said it that way  
and you would have welcomed  
the song of it if not the sense.  
We make the bitter sweet, chérie,  
isn't that the whole point of it?  
Not sugar-coating it but by  
a deft switcheroo of signals we  
(and I mean all of us)  
let the wretched facts subside  
in a dream town somehow  
lingering. And that  
was the funeral of Hector, tamer of horses.

2.

The wanting lingers though  
so what to do?  
Bird cry woke me, and the rain —  
saying so seemed a spell  
lifted the sullen need  
to fill the mind with enterprise,  
temples, markets, souls  
alien to this  
curious animal who wakes.

3.

Anything could happen.  
The sun could come out  
Nausicaa trot up from the beach  
still slipping salty on the lawn.  
The phone could ring,  
alliteration win the day  
simply by saying something smart.  
Fat chance. My beauty  
is of another shape.  
A faltering style, an owl  
be-dawned in a tree  
waiting for mousey weather,  
just like Mu Qi.  
I mean you and me.

4.

7:37 and still dark enough  
to dim the words I think I'm writing  
but who knows?  
By noon I may have meant  
another thing entirely  
the words may themselves  
have guessed beforehand  
the way they do.

5.

Dark morning  
to be true to you.  
Cars slishing on wet  
asphalt please me too,  
the kind of truth  
sometimes senses do.  
I bless the road  
that brought me here.

6.

Every highway has a human name,  
did you know that? And byway too,  
and narrow alleys in Chicago  
running west behind the avenues.  
Because every road is a person,  
or thinks like one at least,  
and has friends in high places  
who guide their traffic.  
So a man walking down the street  
is an integer in an immense equation  
that means him well  
if it thinks of him at all —  
as the sun doesn't need  
to mean me to get  
warm in her effulgence.

**11 August 2015**

**=====**

**There is no news today  
so make it up.  
The Pope is a Buddhist,  
Africa is at peace,  
my walnut tree was blown down by a storm.  
But that was a few years ago.  
What else is new?**

**11 August 2015**

=====

**Looking everywhere  
for what we don't need  
the critical  
conjunction  
of Mars and Maybe  
all star-charts dread.**

**We call them planets  
but they're just chinks in the vase  
some unknown light shines through.**

**11 August 2015**

=====

**[...cantankerous friend  
who stood at the foot of the cross with me  
year after year watching the blood  
dry on our hands. Wondering still  
if we had done this] or were just witnesses  
or are they both the same.**

**Wake as automation  
perform the tasks  
you dreamt of waking:  
the words, the water,  
filling the vessels —  
as if sunrise had nothing to do with it.**

**Correct me if I'm wrong  
I spent a forceful, maybe  
even angry hour in the galley  
insisting on how long and why  
I had not liked that poet's work,  
citing lines and phrases that displeased —  
not by the proposition they chose  
to espouse or express but au  
contraire their failure to advance  
a single proposition to my mind:  
perennial greed for assertions  
sensible or otherwise. And my**

interlocutor, baffled by my stance  
or by my dislike of his fave poet  
seemed more incredulous  
than defensive. How could I  
of all people feel so indifferent  
or even hostile to the deft  
machination of word contra  
word of that rightly  
celebrated poet, was it *taste*,  
that slither in opprobrium  
I should long since have outgrown?  
Was it barnyard *jealousy*,  
one old cock belittling  
the comb and wattles of another?  
These insulting inferences did  
not estrange me from the conversation  
as well they might, because  
I too wonder at my distaste  
for his paragon's lauded oeuvre.  
To paraphrase another poet I'm  
not too sure of, what a strange  
dream for a little boy to have.

12 August 2015

*[Opening passage, bracketed, is as dreamt.]*



=====

**Since December 1960  
I've been reading poetry  
mostly my 'own'  
out loud around here.**

**It's a wonder the trees  
can stand it.  
Yet they seem greener,  
leafier every year,**

**and more of them.  
And I have learned by now  
how to listen to them,  
their better music.**

**12 August 2015**

=====

**A poet bothered by the price of ink —  
does he write too much  
or just have the wrong idea about *money*  
(pronounced as Pound did, castigating  
Yankee financiers), that fluent,  
greenish, never-ending river of *supply*.**

**12 August 2015**

=====

**Next morning still in love —  
a miracle!  
Wise men come next,  
hauling aloft their tethered star.**

**12 August 2015**

=====

**Adam couldn't have been Jewish.  
He wouldn't have settled for the first girl he saw.**

**Or maybe that's why the Rabbis  
invented (or discovered?) Lilith,**

**the fancy first wife who left him flat.  
Hence Eve, the second-best, born**

**from the ribs of Adam's experience  
(that's what the rib bit must mean)**

**O God we are a tragic people  
beautiful as some of us were and are.**

**12 August 2015**

=====

**Edging closer to some bastion  
that guards a sly encampment  
of our friendliest enemies, the angels.  
I know they're nearby, I can hear  
their narratives through the night,  
every word intact, unhurried, even though  
not always in a language I can understand.  
They talk about the living and the dead and the to be,  
confuse me with time's trick mirrors,  
but still learn enough to know  
their conversation is my nourishment.  
I have crept closer to their camp now,  
can reach out and finger the sleepy stone  
that keeps me from seeing what I hear.  
No man can look on them and live.**

**12 August 2015**

**= = = = =**

**The cloud loves me —  
this attitude  
has held me all my life,**

**it talks to me  
over Nashawena over Nepal  
over the Russia of blonddreams**

**over my house when I was five  
over my rooftop now.  
I belong to its apparencies.**

**13 August 2015**

=====

**What comes to mind  
is the exorbitant everyday,  
a page of Rilke in Chinese,  
a cup of tea I forgot to taste.**

**Cold or beginning —  
the ear's writhe-rhythm  
twists it, um,  
in. In is what I meant.**

**The character of act.  
I gave my privacy away**

**because one does,  
but the bear was in the trees**

**close at hand, listening.  
They all do. My thoughts too  
are obvious to the things around me,  
only people seem to tune them out**

**possibly by courtesy.  
O highest value in a trodden state!  
But civil imagination  
is not much help, are you,**

**my sweet consensus, all fur  
and feathers and credit cards.  
The way things are. Therefore  
I have instructed the dream**

**to interview far-off places  
and bring them home  
where I can hold them in my hands  
or play on the tabletop**

**pyramids and galaxies.**

**13 August 2015**



=====

**Close your ears a minute and think,  
we may be part of Earth's plan**

**and our depredations and maladjustments  
of surface and underground and weather**

**may be doing her work for her, faster  
than so-called natural process could do it**

**and we are her agents. Moving faster  
towards a goal that may not be our own.**

**13 August 2015**

= = = = =

**Or having said nothing  
it communicated well enough  
sometimes the river of sleep  
is empty, sleep is empty**

**sometimes images recede—  
thatis the strange time  
when the feelings they evoke  
are potent but the images  
are gone.**

**They have all  
gone out of the room.  
They took the doorway with them.**

**14 August 2015**

**=====**

**But I live by images alone  
he cried. That is why  
(the silence replied)  
the unknown unseen mind  
can bring you beyond  
what you think is living.**

**14 August 2015**

=====

**Are they laughing though  
the clouds, clowns  
sift out in pale?**

**Are we listening or just enduring  
subattentive to  
the cacchinnations we detect?**

**Does the ground talk?  
Do ferns ever sleep?  
I have walked this road alone**

**dark of the moon  
so many times  
can you wonder I sometimes felt**

**you moved beside me  
on an even stranger  
mission of your own?**

**Peace, peace to the darkness,  
together or apart we  
wait for its answer.**

**14 August 2015**

**=====**

**Loud music from passing car  
makes them think they're happy  
or keeps their minds off  
what they're really feeling.  
It is not good to feel while driving.  
But why does it make me  
so sad to see so?**

**15 August 2015**

=====

**Back when I was Penelope  
stretched out above my weaving  
busy to keep from knowing  
the stories my hands were telling—**

**we are all abandoned,  
cast into this island world  
to find our syories.**

**15 August 2015**

**=====**

**1.  
Asking the mother  
will it be cloud?  
Or the sung  
falter, wordless  
into bronze hum?**

**2.  
A bowl. Or dish  
one a step or not,  
a cup, a goblet  
silver. A glass.  
Find one of these  
and that is enough.**

**The vessel. Found.**

**16 August 2015**



=====

**It's not all history.  
History is fake,  
an impostor with dirty hands.  
You can tell from his nails  
he's been all the wrong places.**

**But he loves you. He keeps  
trying to be known, pretending  
to be relevant, hoping  
to be embraced as an authority,  
the father of your child..**

**16 August 2015**

**=====**

**I am tree or any  
living thing or stone.  
And I say everything  
and mean nothing.  
That is why I'm true,  
clean and good for you.**

**16 August 2015**

===== [1]

*Listening to Celso Garrido-Lecca's second string  
quartet played by The Harlem Quartet*

**Covert relation. Grapes  
tart on the late summer vine.  
Portrait of the artist's first love,  
white plate piled with lemons.**

**Tall dead tree, white cloud  
caught exactly in its branches  
equals springtime, tree  
full of pale blossoms.**

**16 August 2015**

===== [2]

*Listening to Celso Garrido-Lecca's second string  
quartet played by The Harlem Quartet*

**Apple, you are Eve  
yourself, no girl  
required, witchcraft  
of the pale fruit**

**spell of the spat-out seeds.  
Everything takes root.  
Everything grows.  
We are music**

**that is our heaven  
and our hell.  
Silence alone  
tastes like liberty.**

**16 August 2015**

=====

**Only the continuity  
of the other  
allows me to pause,**

**explore the gap,  
stare at the midday stars,  
no wnd, hot as Mojave,**

**talking to myself  
but not caring to listen.**

**16 August 2015, Olin**

=====

The gist was history  
memory stored  
inside some cell  
of a population, us.

NY 97 north  
along the Delaware  
into the never  
to be known.

I've been up there  
beyond it  
dozens of times  
but never *there*  
where that road river  
promised, it would have had  
to be on its stone and asphalt  
such Edens got entered

and I just came down  
from the north and east,  
how could it have been  
the place that only  
north could go?

And what adult could ever reach  
the place a child imagined?

**Especially that place,  
north, a father driving slow,  
dark pines showing the way.**

**17 August 2015**

**=====**

**As if the Lord  
made us out of ink  
so we repeat  
on paper what we almost know.**

**17 August 2015**



=====

**Be different, animal.  
A word that once  
meant having a soul  
or being one—  
then what are we?  
Everything sounds like rain.**

**17 August 2015**

**=====**

**(What would I say  
to the mother of my brother  
the unknown one  
can I come  
out of your womb too  
for the first time again,  
learn who I am  
from that luminous other?**

**17 August 2015**

## **AFTER CATARACT SURGERY**

**Or used to leading  
instead of needing—  
there are grasshoppers in Idaho  
know more than we  
about the gift of space,  
the wield of time.**

**I have heard and seen them,  
evidence of a sort  
but not convincing—  
if you believe your senses  
you'd believe anything—  
here, let me sell you  
the right to bathe in moonlight  
and I will accept  
only obsolete Austrian currency  
Mahler or Bruckner or Strauss—**

**is this what they once called music,  
swirling white light in the eye  
tinged with red and edged with blue?**

**Have I lost the shape of music?**

**17 August 2015**



=====

**(Waking in the night after surgery)**

**The imagination  
is a brittle thing.**

**I still can see.**

**In the dark wonder  
what dawn will like**

**or ask of me.  
Or make me remember.**

**18 August 2015**

=====

**The gloom of who  
I am — is that it?  
A family likeness  
to the unbegun?**

**I can go further  
from the thing I mean  
and still mean it—**

**blink the eyes,  
blink the world away,  
the little birthday  
in between.**

**18 August 2015**

=====

**Don't they realize  
there's no such thing  
as an unarmed man?  
Being a man is weapon enough,  
all that anger, resentment—  
a testicular time-bomb  
slouching through the streets  
suspicious just by being there.**

**18 August 2015**

=====

**Thou discernest in me  
the quivers of anxiety  
speaking as word.  
Or whatever this is  
I set down in black  
on the innocent candor  
of some poor white plane  
can't protect itself.  
I'm trying to say right now  
ordinary fear, the deep  
thing in us, as once the great  
Mallarmé reported, fear  
*mal tû par l'encre même.***

**18 August 2015**



## THE TRIPTYCH, OPENED

*I saw a triptych  
gilt wood  
on the morning shelf—  
what would it see  
to open it?*

**Red. Every percept  
every human event  
has three phases,  
faces. Find them  
define them,  
there is urgency here.**

**The color red  
beneath which  
(inside which)  
in the spectrum  
there is only flesh  
of beast and human  
animals.**

**The color  
inside red  
is the unsaid,**

**But the central panel  
means us too.  
Explicit deity:  
typically visual form  
the man of Nazareth  
or his mother  
or her earlier  
interview with the light  
itself. Or some regal  
personage on high—  
some image the beholder  
is meant to be  
ultimately utterly  
embodying compassion  
and contagious innocence.**

**19 August 2015**

**=====**

**A change is coloring the sky  
the native softness  
into which the sun  
rising seems to prong—**

**why is nothing simple  
long, or linger what it is?**

**Mercy must be like that too,  
the finally falling asleep.**

**19 August 2015**

**= = = = =**

**Spend a lifetime  
living down  
youthful anger—**

**child's anger  
at not being someone else  
heard of or seen**

**but only this tiny sacred self—  
pray the child chooses  
that sacred almost-absence**

**until kindness and humility  
burst into flame:  
celebrity. Efficiency. Identity.**

**19 August 2015**

## ALCHEMICAL EMBLEMS

*for L.W.*

1.  
Break  
the stick short  
to delight  
the campfire.  
Stir the embers,  
leave the instrument  
to become  
part of what it  
provokes. *Bring  
fire to the fire.*

*Michael Maier*

2.  
As the pint of chocolate  
chip ice cream  
melts on the picnic table  
how do the particulates  
—‘chips’— settle down?  
The flow from above.

Things happen  
at their own time—

Time is the language  
objects sing.

3.  
Being far away  
from the closest things—  
the little trick  
you need to learn.  
It teaches itself  
all round you,  
you hear it  
with your skin.

4.  
The statue walks in the garden,  
passes two young lovers  
cuddling on a marble bench  
  
and smiles. Call this operation  
Smile of a Statue  
and live a very long time.

5.  
This is important.  
Reach down into the bucket  
and finger out  
a little wodge  
of something thick and sticky.

**Someone tells you what it is,  
how long it has been there  
waiting for you, just you,  
all the places it has been  
and all that happened there.  
Now the firm but delicate  
smell on your finger means  
you do not have to go there.  
It has come to you, all of it,  
all of them, they are here  
now, on your fingertip.  
The scent will never go away.**

**6.**

**A hand on your hip  
a lip on your lip  
as if we had nothing  
to tell and nothing  
to give one another  
but here I am.**

**7.**

**What a strange  
gospel is this,  
a girl with finger  
to her lips  
shushing someone**

**who isn't even there.**

**8.**

**Cloying smell in the lab  
after the chemicals have gone to sleep  
the technicians have gone home.  
What is it in the air?  
The smell of Time  
trying to forget humanity,  
its mortal enemy.**

**9.**

**Sip from a goblet  
and remember.  
An ice cube  
bobs against your nose.  
Nothing is simple  
in this world—  
every vessel  
has a sea of its own.**

**10.**

**Over the mirror  
in gilt lettering  
already peeling:**



**You are the rule  
not the exception.**

**11.  
Look down the well—  
an eye looks up at you,  
not yours, a big one,**

**an eye in a well  
sees right into you.  
You want this.**

**That is why you come here,  
that is why we have wells,  
that's why there is water.**

**12.  
Were you here  
when the cloud people came?  
They were quiet themselves,  
all I could hear  
were empty barrels,  
maybe, rolling around.  
Then they were gone.**

13.

Of course it was yellow.  
You opened the pot  
put the lid aside  
and peered in  
and there it was, soft,  
smelly as cheese  
but not cheese,  
smelled a little like skin—  
your own skin on a summer day  
after you went to pluck  
spearmint in your garden  
then hurried in from the sun.

Yellow. It did nothing.  
It never does.  
Everything is up to you.

19 August 2015

**= = = = =**

**Love is interesting  
as long as it doesn't  
come too close.**

**It's a thing to read about  
or pray to in church  
or wrote articles about**

**how it represents  
in current cinema.  
Not to have beside you**

**an unknown person  
in the uttermost  
dark of your bed.**

**19 August 2015**

**A GALLIARD BY MR. R.K.**

**Always something  
left waiting  
to happen.  
Event is inexhaustible,  
the future is  
already past  
and we're still singing.**

**19 August 2015**

## **SNOW GLOBE**

*for KL & VB*

**Kim is going  
to Chicago**

**every artifact  
demands an explanation**

**this is called  
the dream of matter**

**Chicago is home**

**to so many,  
it is a great city  
to be from**

**how else  
reverse the flow**

**what does it mean  
to go home**

**in the snow globe  
a maternal or paternal**

**elder penguin looks  
caringly on a chick**

*grey feather grey feather  
when will I grow old*

**sex f birds is hard to tell apart  
(sex is hard to tell)**

**they stand on represented snow  
inside a globe**

**sustained by more faux-  
snow outside below**

**summer light  
bathes them on my window ledge**

**and there they stand  
at rest, snow and globe and beasts**

**but au contraire  
Kim and Vyt are going to Chicago**

**that city will take care of them  
cities do that**

**if you give them half a chance**

**by being there**

**on the rocky base  
a little penguin looks into the globe**

**but can't or won't go in  
or hasn't yet**

**a globe shelters but confines  
the outside one is free**

**a little bird is free  
to grow and be**

**so why do I think of you  
Kim and Vyt leaving**

**we will be outside one another  
looking in**

**where we are inside too  
anything is possible in poetry**

**inside a beautiful  
perfectly transparent**

**globe made of pure distance  
in this famous world of ours**

**where it's also hard to tell  
going from coming**

**home from here  
or here from everywhere**

**when I pick up the globe  
and play with it**

**it starts to snow inside  
at first the snow falls upward**

**towards the little sky inside  
and then sifts down**

**it's snowing in here this August day  
then it calms down and the snow stops**

**we know it's waiting for you in Chicago  
waiting for us here on the east**

**bank of the river under prevailing westerlies  
(mild 'lake effect')**

**but we're safe  
snug inside our globe**

**as we all are  
inside this other one**



**knowing and loving and nameless stuff  
that lights us home**

**holds us together far apart  
but we'll still miss you**

**as if you were gone.**

**20 August 2015**

=====

**Take notes  
write down the present  
to make it simply  
stronger.  
There is no future  
to read them again.**

**20 August 2015**

=====

**Wave yet another flag  
incident before any possible war  
“metaphysics”  
a footstep in desert sand  
wind sifts away  
the traces, the metaphysics  
of our being here.  
The ocean secedes from the shore.  
What worries me is the part  
where the bird flies away from the sky.**

**20 August 2015**

=====

**People in movie theater  
enthralled by the screen  
yet still able to nibble  
snacks from sacks  
open loose on their laps.  
Up there the hungry images  
are starved for total  
control of our mind—  
but this chewy half-popped  
kernel saves our souls.  
This thing, this very thing  
distracts us from distraction.**

**20 August 2015**

## NEEDED ON THE VOYAGE

1.  
It has to be long  
has to say itself out loud  
no mere shy insinuation  
lurking by heart gate  
maiden meaning sly expressed  
by moue of repression, no,  
the whole thing, ice cream, salt,  
barrel of herrings, national debt  
whatever that is.  
Whatever you dream up.  
Five in the morning, a soft  
piece of cloth in your fingers.

2.  
And be dark enough  
to truth the tell—  
you are bronze for a reason,  
metal man,  
I hear your fingertips drumming  
on the unstrung mandolin  
just like the old country.

## Vienna? Vanilla?

3.

Of course every *place*  
is a question.  
How could it be there so long  
and not have  
doubts to resolve,  
something to demand of you,  
prince charming, princess bold,  
every child a Socrates,  
a banker in your bed,  
immaturity in ever flavor,  
austerities of state and church,  
asparagus do best in sand.

4.

So a little breeze for once  
sifting through the late night rain—  
there, that's ordinary for you,  
anybody could say or fathom that.  
No mysteries, we're all friends here,  
or only one, but why.

5.

Now I don't hear the rain.  
Is it them or is it me?  
That's what poems never know.  
The missionaries are all asleep

**the old religion snuggles in our laps.**

**6.**  
**Each part is called a *voice***  
**each sound a *letter***  
**one from home.**

**A child**  
**walks through a minefield**  
**of other people's meanings.**  
**As I once in East**  
**Germany as it happened,**  
**my mind on the sea**  
**safely fixed.**

**7.**  
**Or does it, it,**  
**get tired, it**  
**of being seen?**

**Ever-object**  
**seldom says?**

***It acts in us***  
**I think I heard.**  
**Mysterious longevity**  
**of a single moment—**  
**write a book,**  
**it all fits in.**

**The rain again,  
the beautiful humdrum,  
divine anything.**

**21 August 2015**

**= = = = =**

**The sky begins  
to tell me something  
but will I listen?**

**Love sound of rain  
cool wafture—**

**what kind of word  
is that to speak  
in a sleeping man?**

**21 August 2015**



**=====**

***[written on a old blue scrap found today:]***

**1.  
All I remember  
is what no one said.**

**2.  
Small poppy  
afraid to blossom.**

**3.  
I see in the dark  
I am a stone.**

**(21 August 2015)**

=====

**Using words nearby—**

**are they the woods  
I'm lost in?**

**Aren't there others,  
on the other side  
of the clearing, trees  
unknown to my  
meager science?**

**Come, pronounce  
yourselves to me,  
make me leap  
to guess the meaning  
of your sound, each one  
greener than the next**

**as I, here,  
make you  
bend to fetch mine.**

**21 August 2015  
Poughkeepsie**

**=====**

**The usual  
over Palestine  
sun of our valley**

*don't try to own  
your experience*

**give it back  
to the sky**

**where others, the others,  
will find it,**

**we will be theirs  
and they our own.**

**21 August 2015  
Red Hook**

## THE PROJECT AT HAND

1.

All this you chance to  
embrace or touch or just  
survey is only an experiment  
a world on the way  
to be itself — a hollow  
earth laughing  
at the surface — how  
could a world have  
a self or not-self or who  
talks to us about these things  
as honestly as I do, I  
the thunderfaker, the ballroom  
dancer in a wheelchair,  
the spotless heifer, the third  
part of the moon broke loose  
and sailed around the sky  
over Martha's Vineyard,  
swear it on a bible but whose  
translation? mother ducks  
and baby ducks and grey sky  
in which we're comforted  
as by the skilled if careworn  
hand of the amah, is that  
who I mean, the plump woman  
in calico sari who took care

**of all us children of the Raj?**

**2.**

**I am not exactly human, you know,  
I guess you've figured that out  
by now, what with all the wings,  
claws, fangs, feathers, monocles,  
walking sticks, guide books under  
could this be my arm describing  
the customs with maps of every  
conceivable country, o a map  
is a terrible thing, all blotches  
and squiggles and meaningless  
remarks ('rome' 'lumpur' 'ohio')  
and colors, who knew colors  
could hurt so much, borderlines  
scribbled in blood, you poor  
humans who live this way  
like me. Where I come from  
(where do I come from) things  
are otherwise. No countries  
no states no lines even, except  
staves to write music on  
like poor Thomas Tallis who was  
(did you know that?) one of us.**

**3.**

**One of what, you ask,**

and well you may. As others  
in this busy time have gone  
beyond the genders, we  
(there we are again!) have gone  
beyond the neuro-anatomical  
monstrosity they call a man.  
Or woman for that matter. We  
are the transhuman, all one  
or two of us here and there  
trying to make sense of having  
senses and a whole planet  
to spend them on. Just like you  
in other words but ah! the difference  
as the Poet says. As the Nineteenth  
Century sought *no God and no Czar*  
we T.H.s seek No mother and no father  
no childbirth and no death. It is what  
we always wanted: to be the other thing.  
Whatever that is. Don't ask me.

4.  
But since you insist  
I'll quote Yeats  
and put your skeptic  
selves to sleep—  
to be *out of nature*, to  
take the form of no  
*natural thing*. There.

**Don't know how he  
came to know it, probably  
getting old and sad  
and missing pretty girls  
or more likely just  
being Celtic, pale blood-line  
of the Cro-Magnons, last  
Atlanteans, all those folks  
who made us up then shuddered  
at what they had done  
and looked away. Some  
of them look back now and then  
and give a word or two  
to guide us from the mess,  
interesting as it is, of human  
loves and human laws and  
human wars, out into a new  
world we barely can imagine.  
But we imagine. Here we are,  
I stand in the street and cry,  
come listen to my song, pack  
your gear, hurry, come and be me.**

**21 August 2015**

=====

**Of course I'm afraid of the night  
I'm sane and have senses.**

**And I was born at noon.  
Poor mother. Poor women  
who suffer to be the gates  
through which, through *whom*  
we all come in.**

**From the dark out there.**

**Cool now, I could  
wander around in the shifting quiet airs  
but the trees are there  
and people in them of all kinds,  
some born from wombs, some not,  
some not born at all.**

**22 August 2015**



=====

**Waiting for a better  
way of being me.  
It's not out there.**

**At night in the woods  
he's left alone  
with what he's become —**

**no need for other monsters.  
Touch me, I tell myself,  
say I am real,**

**safe, a part of reality.  
But when my hand  
brushes my thigh**

**who knows really  
who is touching whom?**

22 August 2015

=====

Pallbearers stumbling along  
handle empty coffins.  
To graves undug  
they bear some flowers  
a woman gave them  
saying Where  
their petals start to fall,  
dig there, and dig him up,  
the child who's buried in the woods.  
In the woods,  
my only son  
he is like the trees  
but he can walk,  
can talk like you or me  
even before he's born.  
When and where the petals fall  
listen to the ground and hear him tell.

22 August 2015

=====

**(Sitting in the pre-dawn dark  
reading reviews of books  
I've never read, never  
want to, just glad,  
glad I can read again.  
A simple paper, newsprint,  
my native language.)**

**22 August 2015**

=====

**Town I used to be  
now sudden sense —  
name me for your boulevard,  
I run as fast as I can  
between where other  
people actually live.  
I am a contradiction,  
as we all are,  
but I know it. And you  
know I do.  
Here, let us have  
no secrets from each other,  
President corner of Nostrand,  
biker bar on the corner,  
a subway gapes.**

**22 August 2015**

**= = = = =**

**A high chair  
is that not apt  
for my condition  
childish in dazzle  
with no grasp of policy?  
Once on a carousel  
I swung out for the brass ring  
that earns another  
cycle of go-rounds  
and caught it! and here I am  
turning around you,  
you, my orb and primary  
I satellite by day and night  
would be one  
way of putting it.  
Do you want to be one?  
Want to be the one?  
How somber to be the Sun  
and give all your light away!**

**To me, your mortal nuisance  
clad in Obsolete Vocabulary  
reborn as speech.  
A word, as they say, in your ear.**

**22 August 2015**

**= = = = =**

**Pretty obviously  
a love poem and yet  
(turn the page)  
who knows who  
that flower-maiden is  
who scatters listless petals  
on someone else's wedding?**

**22 August 2015**

=====

**We can't be too sure.  
We must be sure.  
*Lincoln freed the colored folk*  
*I wish he'd free me too*  
the soldiers sang,  
we have to change the words of it  
but it's still the song we need to sing  
the *victim chant* against the state,  
to be released from the system,  
be rinsed out pure and thrive.**

**22 August 2015**

**=====**

**No, that's not the way.  
There is no way.**

**No road  
and still we go.**

**That's the miracle,  
the summer snow.**

**22 August 2015**



**A tree fills  
*all* of its branches  
with leaves.**

**Why do we  
so few of ours?**

**22 August 2015**

=====

**Not to arise  
after a fall  
but from  
the prone  
condition sneak  
forward to  
the newly  
opened goal  
revealed  
through every fall.**

**23 August 2015**

=====

**Whatever the doctors say with their chromosomes and cells, it's the psyche of the mother tjhat determines the gender of the child. Women at peace with their own femininity, their own sexuality — and then, thus, at ease with, enjoying, the knowledge of relations with men — will tend to have daughters. Why has it taken me so many years to learn this?**

**23 August 2015**

**= = = = =**

**Waking the wanting  
morning six birds  
out by one hibiscus  
quick. Call this  
music or religion.  
Your pick.  
It matters  
less than I think.**

**23 August 2015**

== == == == ==

**Seeing the people  
who aren't there  
is easier sometimes  
than they are.**

**They present  
more to mind  
than eye.  
they hide**

**but not from mind.**

**That guy  
sees everything,  
especially your  
  
glittering absences.**

**23 August 2015**

**= = = = =**

**Trying to be scrupulous  
or just get it right.  
Sand bags on the levee  
and no word from home —**

**steam whistle from  
noon factory have to make  
do, sidewalk packed,  
people reading Plato**

**furtively in bed —  
if it rains the river  
misbehaves, they all  
want to come**

**close to you  
darling, that's all  
numbers are good for,  
climbing the lattice**

**to your window  
like a long sentence  
from the Psalms —  
who's that**

**looking in? Or out?  
you're asleep  
by now, you'll  
dream the answer**

**the square root  
of something is at play,  
the boat left long ago  
there was no mail.**

**Prime numbers  
will make it rain,**

**come home, butterfly  
or whatever you are**

**land on my wrist  
the way a shadow  
from the church steeple  
falls on the street**

**pointing yet again  
to the real religion  
counting by twos  
right through the only gate.**

**23 August 2015**

**=====**

**After two years or so not being able to pick up a book  
and read with continuity, with mind only in the text,  
and now being able (-3!) to read again, I realize what my  
soul has known all my life: reading is praying. Not yoga,  
not practice, just prayer.**

**23 August 2015**



**Find something  
to write with —  
a kimono,  
an autumn flower**

**23 August 2015**

**STAR**

**Is there anything  
I should not forget  
the star of vision  
in a young girl's palm  
that makes me see  
how much she'll see  
as she wanders**

**through her mind  
and lets it. Lets it.**

**That's all it needs  
to be able to speak,  
the quiet looking away  
from the unseen  
where the voice begins.**

**I saw the star,  
it drew its lines  
all over her hand,  
not the lines  
of the palm  
but the vision's  
lines themselves  
floating above  
that shallow grail  
her open hand.**

**23 August 2015**

**= = = = =**

**Curious silence of light  
in the morning  
                  today's daytime  
tells me nothing  
yet, it must be  
my fault (everything is)  
for not listening**

**the right way,  
the way my blood listens  
to a woman's hair —  
we are biology —  
or language listens to  
rivers best  
and learns all the verbs.**

**24 August 2015**

## **EPITAPHION**

**Am I hearing  
myself think  
or is some other**

**mourner at the funeral  
making up the alphabets  
we use to label experience?  
Did you ever wonder  
whose words come  
out of your mouth?  
And who are you anyhow?**

**24 August 2015**

**= = = = =**

**The itch to see  
is made of flowers**

specific ones  
New York asters  
soon, tiger  
lilies gone  
weeks now.  
Or if not flowers  
Maseratis,  
tugboats, the sword-  
belt of Orion  
swinging loose  
in a glittering sky.  
We dissolve in metaphors  
and wake in silent light.  
The light says  
Be specific  
it is your only chance.

24 August 2015

=====

What would the sky  
look like

**if our blood were green?  
Would we be  
heavenly home then  
or just slower here  
like trees? I think  
of all this red in me  
(go to an autopsy  
if you don't believe)  
and wonder color,  
why color, and why this?  
The same inside  
everyone. Only our  
faces lie.**

**24 August 2015**

**= = = = =**

**I don't know  
anything anymore —**

**I have to make  
everything up.**

**That's why I'm  
good for you.  
Doubt my data  
(means 'givens')**

**but not my gift.  
Here, lick the skin  
on your right wrist,  
taste the shadow**

**of a pear tree in Vermont —  
cool, ripe fruit,  
see? How could  
either of us be wrong?**

**24 August 2015**



*The Muse comments on this morning's poems:*

**Too talky  
too timid.  
Lasso a star  
and drag it down,  
scorch the page  
with it and smell  
a million years  
of light all at once  
then read the mark  
it leaves behind,  
tyour so-called word.**

**24 August 2015**

**= = = = =**

**A celebrity  
does one thing  
spectacularly.  
We adore him  
for his limitations,  
our adulation  
is a form of pity,  
poor shiny fellow  
made all of news.**

**24 August 2015**

**=====**

**Wish were a better name  
to call by  
the wanted.**

**Hummingbird feeder empty,  
squirrel on the chain —  
not much use  
to say.**

**But to call!  
And be heard!  
And then happening  
all over again,**

**heart in hands,  
happening ever,  
silent at last.**

**24 August 2015**

**= = = = =**

**Being towards the end  
we called it natural**

**we had a little rain  
and called it a night**

**someone had a notion  
and called it us**

**so we were.  
And still are?**

**No, we did.  
The same  
we that made it rain.**

**25 August 2015**

== == == ==

**It's still wet out here  
an intermittent wet  
arrival, 'drip.'  
Which also meant  
'annoying person'  
once. But not now.  
And this is not.  
It is a kiss  
from another condition,  
a quiet physician  
making the rounds through sky,  
our most reliable  
of all hospitals.  
Hospices. Our house.**

**25 August 2015**

=====

1.

The crow wants to know  
why I haven't learned  
to answer yet. Unless  
this is doing so  
even now, by saying  
And he says yes it is.

2.

Comforted, I resume  
the frail thread of my remarks  
left here by Ariadne herself  
asleep upstairs.

3.

She was leading me out of a war  
out of a love story, a short  
story, out of all stories  
to that silent monster  
snug in the den  
at the core of language.  
And there something will happen

**4.**  
**to each other, it and me,**  
**and when the crows [?] are quiet again**  
**she will wake**  
**and things will be true again.**

**25 August 2015**





## **CIVILIZATION**

**is gastronomy.  
We dine on leftovers,  
one another.**

**And when the painter  
has seen enough  
we build a wall  
to hang her seeing on.**

**25 August 2015**

## **CROW**

**Try to hear  
he cries,  
I try.  
It's not my words  
I'm hiding he  
says, my cries  
mean only  
to wake you  
to your own.**

**25 August 2015**

== == == ==

**I hold my breath till the end of the line —  
the keyboard helps, it has no lungs  
but only the time my fingers breathe.**

**25.VIII.15**

=====

**Just under the tree  
the driveway's dry.  
I thought to mention it  
with something like gratitude  
welling up quietly,  
as much as I love  
all kinds quiet.  
Maybe I'm thanking  
anything for being different.**

**25 August 2015**

**=====**

**If I had a plaster  
cast made of my head  
I could talk to myself  
and finally listen.**

**25 August 2015**

=====

**Say more here  
so the rats of silence  
don't gnaw through the hull  
and sink this little ship  
of mine, all the while  
wind dislodges it  
on the moveless sea.  
I talk to keep  
the ocean company.**

**25 August 2015**

=====

**Strange life of *venir* / *aller*  
*je vais dormir* — future  
*vient de paraître* — past.**

**'to come' holds future and past.  
*le livre à venir* future.**

**So come is always past, the future as past?  
And to go is always only yet to come?**

**26 August 2015**

## **SIRVENTES**

**What the sun doesn't say  
as it gleams on the cars  
eve of the festival  
that is always tomorrow  
coming forward to shout again**

**five means fight  
today is *tijax* day of the knife  
day of getting things right  
flash of teeth, obsidian blade,  
dragon on the cellphone.**

**How long can it last  
this horror of being me  
as if a down comforter slipped off  
a naked infant perishing in cold,**



**identity identity.**

**Bombs exploding over the harbor  
sink the sea  
make the air illegal  
we did it all wrong  
opportunists of the fall**

**one and all, decency dead  
recency only the life of corpses  
live TV my hand lets fall  
the all-powerful remote  
silences the world**

**my aim is off  
gunshot reveille  
all victims every one  
called absolvent nature  
to witness our deploring**

**why do we do it  
we do it  
kinder than Jesus?  
Who took our nature on  
just long enough then took it off**

**took off into the blue sky  
we're watching still  
that everlasting ascension  
smaller and smaller He seems  
till He's tiny enough to slip into our hearts**

**O Friedrich pray that day will come  
come means to be from and be here  
at once, tail lights at night  
lead me to dawn  
for an hour the only woman in the world**

**why I called it Eos  
and went there  
as close as I could get  
hands on the shoulder of a rock  
bounded through the sea**

**are you listening to me  
have the weasels come  
pilfering hens eggs from the stable  
where percherons keep poultry  
(they call this a college)**

**the water carries to the horses  
O I was once a thoroughbred  
but now a cart bumps me forward  
heavy-laden with all I ever made  
the gold I gave you, I kept the lead**

**26 August 2015**

***[Two scraps of dream]***

**“.. and when you’ve seen  
a young man die inside you  
then you know  
the world is old  
you are its only hope”**

**\***

**“graveyard of illusions”**

**27 August 2015**

**= = = = =**

**am not beautiful  
because I am a word  
and you are sometimes**

**but mostly you have  
the wings of the morning  
to lift you out of the book**

**out into the practical  
region of skin and wheels  
secret motivations,**

**parties you should never  
have gone to but here you are  
and a man is a bird with one wing.**

**27 August 2015**

**= = = = =**

**So often not thinking  
turns out to be ballet  
one lifts another  
gossamer in limelight**

**body trying to be  
and speak at once  
a leap into meaning  
all your shadows moving too.**

**27 August 2015**

**BALLET**

**Bodies trying not to be bodies,  
trying to be letters  
of some alphabet  
stranger than Slavic  
so as to flash —  
carve, sketch? —  
letter by letter  
a word wedesperately  
need into the air  
of our own Neverland.**

**Each leap leaves lust behind,  
each fall back to earth  
is one more spring.**

**27 August 2015**

## **UNKNOWN OPERA**

**Other language  
listening to a story  
I don't understand  
can't follow  
out of time  
and far away,  
don't know who  
is telling me  
or why, yet I**

**am compelled to listen.  
This is music.  
It will not stop  
until the story's done,  
all the unknown beings  
are dead or married  
or ready to sing  
something else again.**

**27 August 2015**

**CAWUK**

**Didn't rain on rainday.  
Does this knife cut?  
Does this string  
stretch out along a line  
if we pull it taut?  
Who are we?  
Is physics just all our accidents  
considered together?**



**Isn't science slightly paranoid,  
always blaming distant specific  
causes for perceived effects?  
It's all conspiracy anyway,  
like sunlight on a white wooden wall,  
no doubt about it.  
Or a chunk of amber in your pocket,  
souvenir of Latvia.**

**27 August 2015**

**EROS**

**Eros is too precious  
to waste on other  
people or yourself.  
Only the work  
is worth his arrows,  
his emptying quiver,  
his disconcerting little smile.**

**27 August 2015**

**=====**

**(Between writing and the finished text  
the purgatory of typing it out.)**

**27.VIII.15**

## **DRAMA**

**Plays would be really wonderful  
if nothing happened.  
All talk and no action!  
And the event, deed, *energeia*  
would all be inside us.**

**27 August 2015**

== == == == ==

**Tired of people  
he went and consorted  
with the archetypes.**

**They live in what  
our ancestors called Fairyland  
when they still believed  
in fairies and feared them.**

**Now we have to say  
they live in Otherland,  
that region closer than here.**

**27 August 2015**

## **NATURE OF THE CRIME**

**The black-clad assassin at the corner  
turned out to be a kid on his cellphone  
walking in circles in a world all his own.**

**27 August 2015**

## **NINE OF SWORDS**

**A man sits in front of a mirror  
as at an old-fashioned vanity.  
Most of him is reflected.  
Past the left shoulder  
of the man in the mirror  
we see a dim shimmery form  
of another person  
who is not visible in this  
world outside the mirror.  
The name of this card is *Sorrow*.**

**28 August 2015**

== == == ==

**Watching the shuttlecock  
fly across the empty room  
it is natural to wonder  
who's playing badminton now  
indoors, room empty,  
not a sound? Not even  
the faint pock of the rubber  
beak as it meets racket  
and sails back. Wonder  
is natural enough  
at all times, but you  
know what nature is like.**

**28 August 2015**



== == == == ==

**Meditate:**

**The member and the implement,  
the woman painting  
the image flows out of her hands  
onto the panel. The image holds.**

**28 August 2015**

## **EVE**

**Is that how she first made us  
imag[in]ed a world  
outside the Garden  
and flowed us into it,  
flowered us all,  
Children of Eve?**

**28 August 2015**

**Was Eve the early scientist who made us be?**

**Eve of Atlantis  
disfiguredd (disguised  
for her own protection?)  
in a Book.**

**Take the story back  
and tell it true.**

**It all amounts.  
To telling, being told.**

**Tell her finally anew.**

**28 August 2015**

=====

**Density as destiny?  
Be thick and you abide?  
There must be less to it than that.**

**28.VIII.15**

=====

**A storm cloud saunters over.  
This must after all  
be the Holy Land  
since everything is here.**

**Here we reach the ending of the story,  
eyes are in the leaves,  
the trees see us.  
As once in Eden  
they watched and spoke.**

**Who else has loved us so long,  
stood by our side,  
made themselves into houses for us,  
occasionally fell to put us to sleep?  
And birds live there too.**

**28 August 2015**

**=====**

**La peau, l'écriture de Dieu —  
lisez la peau, et comprenez.**

**Sur elle les maladies de Soi**

**28 .VIII.15**

**=====**

**A beetle on the patio,  
a man with a cigar.**

**28.VIII.15**

= = = = =

**(Sin as improvement over stasis?  
no. Newspapers  
are designed to sadden and depress  
so you'll go out and do and buy  
the things they advertise  
to cheer yourself up.  
(Travel. Watch. Experience  
as commodity, the *thing*  
of passing time  
one way and not another)**

**28.VIII.15**



**= = = = =**

**They have left me  
to the lingering,  
a ball of wax  
sculpted with  
fingerprints of  
all who made me.**

**28 August 2015**

**=====**

**Being long  
and belonging.**

**Why? The huge  
distance you  
have to cross  
to be here.**

**28 August 2015**

=====

**Union is absolute  
demand. Contingency  
is angel. Angels  
are of my orders,  
colors, languages,  
lineages. Caress  
is the human  
approximation of  
messages. The kind  
that union brings,  
the strange old infant  
art shows between  
bride and husband  
hand in hand.  
We have known them  
from the beginning —  
but there is no gender  
where they are —  
transgender may  
verge on angeldom**

**28 August 2015**

=====

**Years later I can come back  
and see how small  
this house is  
you lost and grieve  
for still. But the size  
of a room is really  
what happens in it,  
all the deaths and  
legislations, learnings,  
all the things you touched  
everything you own.  
The little room  
at the head of the stairs—  
you can only  
get there by thinking  
about steps,**

**door down,  
door into the other  
rooms where real  
people slept,  
sat about  
looked out windows.  
You were in  
between, you have always  
been between,  
the staircase  
is a contradiction,  
you will never  
get out of this little house.**

**28/29 August 2015**

=====

**It is changing.  
I only call  
when I want something.  
I want less  
from you now  
than ever,  
Why? I have learned  
to live in a certain  
poverty, a lack  
built into all  
the experience of much  
love and tenderness.  
Or I have drained  
the feelings into words.  
Something is changing —  
I am a selfish  
man, I have used  
up the experience  
of knowing you.  
Anyone. Or else  
all of you  
have fed me  
enough at last.  
Anyhow it is**

**and is changing,  
a kind of cool  
gratitude in me  
like the fresh  
breeze from a  
closing door.**

**28/29 August 2015**

=====

**And then all the new 'children'  
out there arriving to be known.  
Can I know them just by showing them the way,  
so they need to show me  
nothing but the *work*  
that is the way we share,  
the only way?**

**To be there for them  
without being here for them —**

**? es possible?**

**28/29 August 2015**



**4 AM**

**Cars going  
to be anywhere.  
Baudelaire.**

**28/29.VIII.15**

=====

**A book tonight refused  
to be taken from the shelf.  
My angel warned me  
using my oafish fingers,  
could not pry the book  
from its neighbors.  
After a while  
I grew wise  
enough to leave it  
there. And made  
up for myself  
whatever I had thought  
I needed to know.**

**28/29 August 2015**

**=====**

**Or I have transferred you  
from the phenomenal  
to the noumenal  
where you are safe  
from illness and aging and touch.**

**28/29 August 2015**

## **SIX OF COINS**

**A woman rising straight up  
out of a bare field,  
her arms half-spread,  
a cluster of flowers at her groin,  
roses. She is hip-high  
out of the earth. And  
in the middle distance, trees,  
hills, weather.**

**The name of this card is Fertility.**

**29 August 2015**

=====

**In a simple blue sky  
one vast cloud,  
*mackerel*\* as we used to say,  
and strange to say now  
forming the shape of a huge fish.**

**(\*Dozens of curved stria of cloud  
separated from one another —  
who could have said such a word?)**

**29 August 2015**

= = = = =

I'm retreating  
inside but the roses  
are still out there,  
more work for hummingbirds  
pink, on the old tree,  
blue flowers on the newer —  
they make me  
talk this way.  
Things do, I'm not  
much more than a  
mouth for them, *spokes-*  
*person* we say now —  
always, how can I  
take responsibility  
for what they make me say?

29 August 2015

=====

**Friends coming.  
Crystal ball clouds.  
Friends leaving,  
clear skies in there.  
We linger  
in the *de* of *dedans*  
wondering why love  
lasts so long  
and gives so little —  
so why do we sign  
our mail with x's, xo's  
when all we really mean  
is vaguely wish you  
well, stranger?**

**29 August 2015**

**(5:30)**

**=====**

**Twice enough is a pale religion  
he said coming  
out of you can't call it  
a dream where there was  
nothing there,  
not even the dark.**

**30 August 2015**



## **FIVE OF SWORDS**

**A celebrated tenor  
stands near the edge of the stage  
singing his great aria —  
it could be from Massenet's  
*Werther* or Mascagni's *Ratcliff*  
his back is turned  
to the actors and  
all the action of the opera's story  
he seems to be singing  
only to the audience  
vast, dark, unseen.**

**The name of this card  
is Arrogance, or the Aggression of Art.**

**30 August 2015**

== == == == ==

**The sky begins again.  
That huge opportunity  
to know something  
outside ourselves  
including ourselves.  
Blue happens.  
What else is on  
our way now  
in the dark, trees.  
Way up the road  
a streetlight  
like the final  
words of an ancestor,  
resist, persist, insist.**

**30 August 2015**

=====

**Is anything true?**

**Stones in her pockets  
she walked into the out of us**

**VW**

**the stories we tell**

**But they don't end  
Finally enough to worry  
hairs on my thighs.**

**30 August 2015**



**=====**

**In leaps again  
it at us  
apparition:  
                  seeing  
anything is a miracle.**

**30 August 2015**

=====

**Triptych  
keeps telling  
compose such a three**

**one thing that opens to be three  
so such an everything  
is really 4  
her favorite number**

**no wonder she permits the world!**

**30 August 2015**

= = = = =

**Surely those are not my thighs  
hairy, blue-veined, never  
seen them before, name yourself  
thigh-man, identify some self  
even if not your own. What is truth  
as the man said. I have seen  
the full smooth snowy thighs  
of Snegurochka, the rough uneasy  
pale skin between my knees and me.  
But *jamais* your hairy habit,  
black hairs too who are you?**

**30 August 2015**

***(In dream I thought these thighs my own)***

=====

**A little strip of rust  
on my green table  
seen close up  
a landscape of its own.  
Rust just means turning  
from one state to another,  
from the great plains to the Rockies,  
the change.  
We live for the change.**

**(Water rushes from our hands)**

**30 August 2015**



=====

**The way she bites her speech  
white-dressed white-stockinged scholar  
with such teeth. Bette? Babette?  
In country now, come hike with me  
and veering slowly through the courtyard did.**

**(dreamt) 31 August 2015**

=====

**Everything approximates a Tarot card —  
not a major trump,  
that's only us —**

**but my situation is a coin  
and every motivation is a sword.**

**31 August 2015**

=====

**A word of light  
slipped through the slightly  
parted lips of the curtain.  
Dawn. Exchange of sources.**

**31 August 2015**

=====

**Deep fog:  
The eyes delight**

**glad to see it before sun swoops it away —**

**or breaks it into —  
what *does* she do?**

**31 August 2015**

== == == == ==

**Being wrong  
is one of the last  
pleasures of the intellectual.**

**31.VIII.15**

**== == == == ==**

**So many me's left to be —**

**open the morning door  
again and again.**

**Time has to help —  
that's why we pay it so well  
with our machinery, our prospects, one skin.**

**31 August 2015**

**= = = = =**

**Let sleep discover me anew  
a top that spins  
to say a single word**

**31 August 2015**