

2-2016

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**Inside a phial  
of your perfume  
*Yseult*, inside  
a spinning top,  
a pigeon landing  
on the riverside,  
a single essence  
reigns. Hear me  
in your sleep.  
in every step.**

**1 February 2016**

=====

Indecisive day.  
Rabbits uneasy,  
warm for the calendar  
at least. Keyboard  
music left over  
in my head. Debussy.  
How can hands so  
irritate, so soothe.  
Unplug the Casio.  
Let MacNeice's  
"Bagpipe Music"  
start up again.  
language can be  
so cynical, like  
reading Heraclitus  
before breakfast,  
dubious milk,  
illusory bread.  
I want the Greek to mean  
*Politics brings out  
the worst in men.*  
There, it's said.

1 February 2016

## **POETS I HEARD AT N.Y.U.**

**Edward Estlin Cummings  
speaking calm yankee prose.  
Louis MacNeice chanting  
Belfast uptalk askeptic  
lyring song.**

**I was trying  
to learn American  
in those days. People still  
ask me where I'm from.  
As if I knew.**

**1 February 2016**

=====

**The sun is out  
and smiling fast.  
Tomb robbers  
slink away  
with empty hands  
but something  
lingers in us  
after, soft  
words of a corpse,  
a crack of dream.**

**`1 February 2016**

= = = = =

**Oh but you're just beginning,  
don't put the tools away.  
Bring all your workforce  
to the chosen site, nail  
the morning shadow to the ground  
and vbuild up from there.  
You've got all the wood in the world  
to work with, water and stovepipes,  
insulating foam. No desert  
for a thousand miles and a bus  
every hour. Build! Exalt  
your secret vocabulary, Mage!**

**1 February 2016**

== == == == ==

**Random music of a winter sky,  
pallor, genesis, Armenian trumpet,  
something buried near the Syrian border  
sickens all history there thereafter.  
Everlasting warfare, swift beheadings.**

**We must unearth the invert pyramid  
but shut your eyes tight when those  
ancient unknown colors gush out  
to stain the air, pray to Saint Gabriel  
till the wind disperses them so we  
are snug and actual again. Or some  
good god. Bad magic makes murderers.**

**1 February 2016**

=====

**Wipe the eyes clear of music  
before you begin to sing.  
The soft curtain wafts  
behind you, touching.  
Shivering of overtones.  
Alone in a dark room  
back to the window  
your best song. Only  
the words remember  
but they hold on.**

**1 February 2016**



= = = = =

**I watched a video  
of me giving a reading  
a woman beside me  
signing what I said.**

**She made a flock of birds  
fly out of my poem  
and swoop around her head  
just with her bare hands.**

**Maybe all words  
really have bare hands,  
try to reach out,  
sometimes to touch.**

**1 February 2016**

=====

as if they were raindrops  
or the audience waiting to begin  
so desperate to begin the story  
so that it can end and everyone free  
in their own lives again  
and no story anywhere! Wells  
in front of old houses. Trees  
on Brooklyn streets — c'est tout,  
ça suffit. Something like that  
if I had words in my own body,  
the difference between the skin  
of the belly and of the back,  
Tremendous. Means making us  
shiver with feeling, who knows  
what name we'll give to that  
luminous trembling fills me  
looking say at your skin. No one  
notices, the story won't let go.

1 February 2016

## **THE SMELL OF INK**

**is something like  
the hope of liberty.  
Of clarity — from which  
in turn one begins  
to guess identities.  
Yours, mine. The news  
is never good, but  
new things mostly are.  
As long as the books  
keep writing themselves  
all will be well. Doesn't  
matter if no one reads.  
The inscription of language  
into the noosphere suffices.  
Scriptum manet. Whatever  
is written remains  
even when the books are gone.  
Ashurbanipal's whole library  
alive this minute in your head.**

**1 February 2016**

=====

**Spinoza forgot about the stars  
as evidence  
of our hopeless I-itude.**

**But there they are  
clustered by greedy us  
into implausible identities  
unknown to themselves.**

**The way I tell myself stories  
about the people passing in the street.**

**2 February 2016**

=====

**It never happened before—  
woke up from the subway  
into the roar of actual train,  
loud freight train a mile away  
never heard it so close. Dream  
as handmaid to waking.  
Dangers of clarity. Fall back  
into the nowhere of the night.**

**2 February 2016**

=====

**...to use me as an instrument.  
And I consented. Blue sky  
October 1958. The settlement.  
It is good to have some things  
clear. Have problems galore  
(an Irish word) but never doubt.  
To doubt myself is the same  
as doubting the world. And so  
I fitted exactly into my space  
down to where the action is.**

**2 February 2016**

=====

**Action, the despair  
of consciousness.  
Do something  
is never a good idea.**

**Resist performance.  
Negative path. Relax,  
money always wins.  
Silent prayer resists.**

**2 February 2016**

=====

**And we walk or climb  
at last up into the secret  
that opens before us**

**like the gleam of sunlight  
on brass or even gold,  
*into the gleam***

**It behooves us to vanish  
for an hour or  
forever, who can say?**

**2 February 2016  
“ Listening to Bartok’s  
*A Kekszakallu herceg vara***





=====

**Now the now begins  
and all the absences fill in  
the way water quietly  
invades anything it can  
or animals creep under  
porches and your summerhouse  
all winter long. Soprano  
is how it sounds, Middle  
European, throaty, alluring  
as much as opera can. Tenors  
hurry to seduce her in vain.  
Tenors are not enough like  
water, more like tree-bark,  
rugged, vain. I was the bass,  
villain or father, depending,  
are they different, I usually  
get in the next to the last word.  
Which is how i know how  
close we are to the end already.**

**2 February 2016  
(first comp. on new HP)**

= = = = =

**As if a rectangle. A vanity  
stands close to the door.  
A woman sits among mirrors,  
plangent weather out there,  
rain and wind. She complains  
to her three faces but enjoys  
what she sees. Three me's.  
Mixed feelings. What humans  
are best at: a game for one  
player, chess inside yourself.  
No sides, all middle. Endgame  
every moment. Strategy of *nihil*,  
like Yugoslavia, Deseret, USSR.  
Birds rare in such weather. She  
forgives other people easily.,  
harder on herself. Nice nails.  
It would be sunset if here were sun.**

**2 February 2016**

=====

**Suppose everything I do is wrong  
but the day is right.  
Rain comes on time,  
Wednesday's child wakes up wise.**

**And all the jabber in the street  
sounds like gamelan  
each voice a part of music  
they make without hearing it.**

**Maybe I'm not as wrong as I think.**

**3 February 2016**

== == == == ==

**Watch the children  
cross the mind.  
I was one of them  
eager for all I could take in.  
The feel of place!  
The wood of booths  
polished by so many bodies,  
soda fountains, restaurants,  
sea foam, scallop shells,  
bicycle. All of it in books,  
books and bread and cheese.  
The senses just tiny  
footnotes to reality.**

**3 February 2016**

=====

**You know perfectly well  
that when I talk about myself  
I'm really talking about you.**

**That's the nature of the beast,  
rules of the game. I  
is your name too.**

**Everything depends on this.  
The texts I speak  
come from the secret**

**places in your life  
using any words that fit.  
Remember this.**

**3 February 2016**

=====

**Raindrops in the drainpipe  
woodpecker on the housewall—  
sly percussions of compound words  
fitting me together quietly  
almost till I am day.**

**3 February 2016**

## **CROW CAW**

**Analyze a single sound  
until it's hollowed out  
and we can walk inside  
at home in the cavern  
of a sound though it is  
quiet down here. Silence  
of everything said, truth  
known, work all done.**

**2.  
A single sound  
is the same as sleep.  
Then the angel  
of the Other  
wakes us. Duty  
begins with the  
first word said.  
A word is the most  
complex silence of all.**

**3 February 2016**



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*(first take on a Barbara Leon collage)*

We come from the after.  
Looking for things—  
for us a rock might be enough,  
a one-hand-stone say  
wet from a running stream  
flows down from the hills  
lead mines silver mines,  
but mind is the only gold.

We put things together (Earth).  
We think about them (Air).  
We give them to one another (Fire).  
and we sleep (Water).

The whole earth is complete  
every time you look.

I love you for your cave  
the man says, and you for your  
water she answers.

Water is always the answer.

She sat there on the rock and said  
I have made the whole spectrum  
from one color alone.

**3 February 2016**

**= = = = =**

**Can it speak  
from simple pleasure  
and every government  
tries to silence it**

**it seems to simple to say  
but that is what rulers do  
they strike us in our pleasure**

**they rule pleasure, they  
take away from us  
the ordinary splendor of the world**

**[old typed note]  
3 February 2016**

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**I don't know how it ends  
it begins by itself  
and wants to touch you  
maybe because touch  
is the beginning of holding on.  
Is it to comfort  
or be comforted?  
Such simple questions  
you'd think I knew  
the answers long ago.  
But answers are endings.**

**3 / 4 February 2015**

=====

**Every night at three  
thirty the freight**

**sometimes when the air  
is clear the noise  
travels half a mile  
wakes me.**

**I stare  
out the window a while  
watch nothing happen.**

**Where is it going,  
carrying what? Camel  
bells jangling  
in the desert, caravan.  
The real is imaginary.**

**3 / 4 February 2015**

=====

**Children learn balance  
by spinning tops and riding bikes.**

**How do men forget these things,  
fall down in hallways, rule governments?**

**3 / 4 February 2015**

=====

**Let me sleep again**

**the night is on my side  
*in somnio veritas*  
you analysts suppose**

**wherefore I lay my  
head in your lap  
and compose myself.**

**2.  
Now you tell me  
if this is dream or not,  
the stories I witness  
turn into me I guess  
where else could they go?**

**3.  
A hard goat cheese from Spain  
with rind of crushed rosemary  
I nibbled before I went to sleep.**

**Dream has porous borders  
patrolled by lazy wolves.  
Somehow I have slipped across.**

3 / 4 February 2015

= = = = =

Being with you—  
that kind of medicine,

action at a distance  
thought-propulsion—

we'll get there yet,  
our table in the wilderness,

build our little city up  
on a flat rock with *nada* on top

till our breaths mingle  
seamless in the wintry air.

3 / 4 February 2015

=====

**All poems are love poems,  
a ship broken on a reef.**

**All poems are prayers,  
rocky beach with no one there.**

**All poems are silent  
but the vast world hears.**

**3 / 4 February 2015**



=====

**How high is the water in the well?  
Will I get home in time?**

**Under the arches the harlots ply  
and so to the city we came**

**to understand the real meaning of language  
that in the desert says only you and me**

**but here says everyone, like money,  
and under all this cloth is human skin,**

**pores and dimples and creases and folds  
all of it shouting all day long.**

**3 / 4 February 2015**

== == == == ==

**I can wait  
for another time  
but can you?**

**The animals all  
ask each other  
this in the zoo.**

**Now is the rarest  
time of all.**

**3 / 4 February 2015**

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**Offering inky fingers—  
is that enough?  
Writing you onto my lap  
see,s tpp selfish a wish  
with all those stars  
out there to conjure with—  
be at home in melody  
like a queen on her throne  
simple as Eypyt, wet linen,  
smooth red stone.**

**3 / 4 February 2015**

## **CATALOGUE**

**Sulky girls in clothing ads  
selling sadness to the middle class.**

**3 / 4 February 2015  
End of Notebook 385**

## **FEBRUARY AUBADE**

**1**

**Comes with the gleaming  
as if an ax long  
stuck in a tree stump  
still bright a thousand years.**

**Viking light. Æsir light.  
And the Wanæs are rushing  
to simplify the soil  
with all manner of seeds**

**so that it speaks.  
History is the story  
of gods abandoning the earth  
then coming back again**

**to bless and bleed.**

**2.**

**It's all locked away  
loose in our etymologies.  
Our creeds.  
Open and read.**

3.

**The color of your cloth  
must match the day.  
The night was warm  
the morning cold.  
Not a sound. Silence  
woke him, and he had to fill  
the dark with language  
no one heard, No one hears  
him say or write down  
*The gods live in our quiet skin.***

**4 February 2015**

=====

**Is there space  
in moving or in staying**

**such that deer  
will not take fright**

**from your presence  
standing there?**

**Find that space,  
inhabit it, sky**

**far away soft  
under some bird.**

**4 February 2015**

=====

**Testing language  
by you—**

**Pythagoras  
understood  
but didn't say.  
The gods drank  
coiffée in Africa  
called it *molu*  
to rime with  
what no one said.  
There is a mixture  
of fact and whim  
called personality  
Heraclitus understood,  
*Daimon*, the driver  
allotting to each  
moment its fated act  
my whole life chose  
to do this minute  
I never knew.  
That's enough  
Greek for today.**

**5 February 2016**



=====

**The song board  
a bird pecks on,  
she tells me  
about parrots,  
a crow calls  
outside, I feel  
like a stranger  
in this story,  
wingless, random  
thinking, thank  
god nice neighbors.**

**5 February 2016**

## TO HOVHANESS'S SECOND SYMPHONY

Trying to do it  
just the being with,  
everlasting Lent  
sweet fasting saliva  
on your tongue tip  
I hear the taste  
from years ago  
not too many not  
too furry with time  
the taste touches  
my hand too  
when we were you.

Quiet now  
no despairing,  
so much caring  
then turn away  
just to see  
the stars again  
no smoke no  
liquid no solid,

van Helmont  
was it named *gas*  
from *chaos*  
same sound in Dutch  
was it, we put  
it in our cars  
even now a century  
later, I remember  
your eyes especially  
since they alone  
gave themselves to me

and all the rest of you  
wrapped in that distance  
called difference,  
miles and miles and miles  
the people of just you.

Little pounces  
as if an animal  
in your pocket  
needed your hand  
to nibble, not  
to get out, music  
never wants to get

**out, always in, in.**

**So it's like a stream  
going by, bare woods  
day after rain  
a lot of water fast  
relating histories  
I neglect to read  
thinking instead  
about the far away.**

**There is a temple there  
that looks a little bit  
like you, the eyes, the towers,  
pleasure gardens, chess  
pieces human size  
to move around by servants  
when I say Rook  
Takes Knight and you pout  
and all the servants snicker.  
The pool is lousy with lotuses,  
children are ankling around in there  
annoying the red-golden carp,  
but we go on with our game.  
It feels like praying. It feels  
a little like crying. Tears  
are salty, I remember**

**the taste again of your mouth  
fasting from so many words.**

**We are in a country we never were  
and there is no winter, the birds  
are such I cannot name even one  
kind of them, perhaps as well,  
maybe I have said too much already**

**and the musicians have come out at last  
twiddling and plucking and bleating  
bothering us with beauty all over again.  
You are pressed against me, I think  
it's through my body that you're listening.**

**5 February 2016**

=====

*You have no enemies*

**That's hard to hold onto  
but once you have it  
all your anger — your great  
pure luminous anger — is yours  
for you to use, creatively,  
intelligently, to learn  
exactly, and *to heal*.**

**Focused anger knows how to heal.**

**I was a red-head, I was Irish, I was anger.  
Somehow I turned it round  
and all that energy was mine to use  
to use for you.**

**One word. One person at a time.**

**5 / 6 February 2016**

=====

**Animals are drawbridges.  
At any moment  
they can withdraw  
your passage to one another,  
you and the beast.  
*A beast is permission.*  
Be patient as it comes and goes.**

**5 / 6 February 2016**

## THE ROAD WHAT IT CAN'T

Specify.  
Otherwise  
unspoked wheel.  
Riding on rims.

The road always knows—  
that is the sense of it  
going where it goes.  
It worries me  
that I would rather tree.

Stay here, bare  
in cold mist  
alluringly *in*,  
always in, away  
from going.

Because going  
is always *there*  
but this is in  
itself present  
at peace ungoing,  
  
the road ungone.



**5 / 6 February 2016**

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

**Read your nice  
Egyptian book  
until you hold  
her hips and  
fall asleep.**

**5 / 6 February 2016**

=====

**Preaching  
to a peach**

**be sweet  
my soft,**

**allow my teeth  
to meet**

**and rest deep  
in your calm well.**

**5 / 6 February 2016**

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*for Normandi*

**Egypt is upside down.  
Turn it right side up**

**by word and in**

**perfect darkness  
no more sun**

**you'll see.**

**What we see there now  
are negatives, empty molds, shadows  
of what the *night side* knows.**

**We live in the opposite.**

**5 / 6 February 2016**

= = = = =

**It's never too dark to see.**

**Pilgrim images  
marching through our sleeping minds,  
chanting the strange  
liturgies of where they've been.**

**(The pope's staff has flowered again,  
the old man finds he can fly—**

**we live by sleep and die by waking.)**

**Or we live on the holy mountain  
they call the ordinary day.**

**5 / 6 February 2016**

=====

**How come we don't have  
two of everything?**

**Say two smart brains  
talking to each other**

**et cetera. Why  
do some things come in ones**

**and some in twos  
but never three**

**except reality?**

**6 February 2016**

=====

**Losing by listening  
but what vanishes  
whose sound says?**

**Worry these things—  
arbitrary enemies!**

**The Grail carried on horseback  
home in whose hands?**

**Tell the story yourself  
without hearing what you say—  
that is the way.**

**The cup, the gold, the gleam enough—  
who knows who holds?  
It could be anyone, and is.**

**6 February 2016**

=====

**If we had a temple  
who would pray?**

**Torments of spiritual  
weather drive them in,  
everything is a message,  
the rock, the mouse  
on the rock, the hawk  
that takes the mouse,**

**all signs from the not-us.**

**No wonder we shutter the chapels,  
bury Göbekli Tepe twice,  
dread the sound of bells.**

**It's frightening enough to be all by ourselves  
but what if there were someone else?**

**Every prayer really says Leave me alone.  
Every church a hollow stone.**

**6 February 2016**

=====

**In time to see angels  
rush across the road  
like deer or shadows**

**the armaments of dream  
are made of devious steel  
exploding silently**

**or is that my own cry  
that woke me  
wakes me into seeing**

**the not-here, the fleeting?  
They are angels  
because they're gone.**

**6 / 7 February 2016**



## **IF I MAY — A PROLOGUE**

**Ill-starred, all genesis  
lies before us, folks,  
dressed as kids in love—**

**what answer can I give  
to all your newspapers  
archaic transmitters**

**of partial information  
more war than beauty  
more money than war**

**will never stay in mind  
but these are real, they think  
real thoughts in their bodies**

**thoughts of a kind at least  
that keep them busy  
with emotions real or mere**

**responses to expectations  
of the other — oh other people  
what a nuisance**

**the life of the mind. *Si puo,*  
*si puo,* let me draw  
a curtain over this sad emprise**

**watch the play play out  
two hearts in no time.  
My prologue is complete,**

**please leave the theater now.**

**6 / 7 February 2016**

== == == == ==

**Waking from nightmare into language  
is like being hit by a train in the subway—  
fierce wind out of the tunnel then steel  
your head a word smashed off its sentence,  
tile walls, slick with the blood of speech.**

**6 / 7 February 2016**

## LA FILIACION

*after Goya's engraving*

To whom do I belong?  
Tall conifer, spruce maybe,  
facing my window,  
takes the shape of the road  
it blocks my view of,  
dwindling in uphill distance  
green,  
do I belong  
to shape or to color.  
You tell me, you who know  
the chemical composition  
of reminiscence, blue  
of the calendar, the Land of Nod.

I usually think I belong to you  
"whoever you are," as Whitman wrote,  
but that's a little too easy,  
there may be no one there at all  
listening. Just winter fireflies,  
just the mermaids' daughters  
laughing in their ocean crèche  
until the mirror breaks.  
Then they belong to me.

7 February 2016

## **LETTER FROM AN IMAGINARY FRIEND**

**You know me by my shade.  
Have you ever smelled a shadow?  
They smell a little like rain,  
I'm like that too, but colors  
get into it too, the smell of blue.**

**You have never really understood me  
for all our make-believe conversations.  
I tried to tell you but you, you wouldn't  
listen, so eventually I too forgot  
whatever my message or meaning was.**

**Despite all the times you spoke to me  
you never thought of me those times  
you found yourself looking in a mirror  
or crumbling Greek cheese on your toast.  
You seldom fed me, only weird soirees  
in Vienna or Samarkand, exotic stuff  
whose taste we never tasted what with  
the dancing girls and busy dragomans.**

**Mornings though you often knew me,  
smiled, walked with me up the meadow  
almost as real as your hallway, the one  
that leads to the great window with forest  
in it, with bears and deer just a little bit**

**realer than I, I think you thought.**

**And so I am a shade again.**

**Don't worry, I'm not leaving you,  
this is no letter of farewell.**

**On the contrary, know me better.**

**Come, I am closer to you now  
than I have ever been, dear friend.**

**7 February 2016**

=====

**The sky makes me sad  
it's so far away  
the sky cheers me up  
it is so bright blue.  
Just like you.  
You must be the world.**

**7 February 2016**

**= = = = =**

**Stagger  
under the weight  
of silence.  
Barely  
make it home  
to the next word.**

**7 February 2016**



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**Sunday morning  
they're all  
in church  
the church  
is all in me.**

**7.II.16**

## FUGUE STATE

**Blue Note and blowjobs  
blur. history  
in one hand,  
a half-yard  
of hard plastic  
device, disco-  
red and digital  
holds all.**

**I woke with that  
in mind, device  
full of histories  
not by any means  
all of them mine,**

**destiny, music  
before birth  
into which we grow,  
savage emptiness  
of memory  
vanished games.**

**8 February 2016  
*(first 4 lines dreamt)***

== == == == ==

**Men working  
the poor trees**

**work fast  
up there**

**cherry-picker  
power-pruners**

**crash of clipped  
branches down**

**cleaning the air.**

**8 February 2016**

=====

**New moon  
old year ends**

**Monkey tomorrow.**

**Sounds ltoo much  
like haiku,**

**banana peel  
dropped under oak.**

**8 February 2016**

**“IN TALKING A LOT YOU WON’T ESCAPE SIN”  
SAYS SAINT BENEDICT.**

**If you say little enough  
it will get heard**

***in multiloquio non fugies peccatm*  
but is much-hearing even worse?**

**We listen our way into despair—  
too many songs.**

**When the heart needs only one.**

**8 February 2016**

=====

**Then one day it was over.  
The one I thought I was  
no longer had to be.  
But there was still a sky,  
some trees, men working  
in the street, not one  
of them was me. It was done.  
So I had done what I had  
to do, or failed to do it  
and I was done. But here.  
All the skills I thought I had  
were for what had been done.  
It is strange to be someone  
when there is nothing to be done.**

**8 February 2016**

== == ==

**In my earliest childhood  
after infancy  
I carried a blank sign  
around with me everywhere**

**later I learned to write SIGN on the sign  
so people would know what I carried.**

**And then there was nmy face  
which also said nothing.  
This is as much as I remember**

**plus a vacant lot on Nostrand Avenue  
with a big billboard on it  
and behind the billboard also one ould hide.**

**8 February 2016**

## **ASKING**

**of the night.  
Those steps in Vienna,  
who sat halfway up  
facing me like a wheat field  
daring me to be  
a bird again, a  
crow if I could?**

**8 February 2016**



=====

**Wishing  
on a star  
that isn't there**

**political animals  
heads lowered  
to graze.**

**9 February 2016**

**ARS P.**

**The plan is to take  
time. Take a long  
time and use it,  
stretch it,  
make it speak  
out loud in words  
so it doesn't know  
it's passing.**

**9 February 2016**

=====

**So many words about words—  
I am an aviator  
falling from his plane  
chanting in several languages  
the word for parachute.**

**9 February 2016**

== == == == ==

**Snow outside  
it has so many  
meanings for us  
only one for itself  
the thirst of spring.**

**9 February 2016**

=====

**Dark enough to read  
I thought of flowers  
unspecified**

**as in**

**an easy poem  
left to the reader  
color and fragrance  
if any,**

**not all  
flowers have a smell  
and there is one  
without color too  
waiting for you  
to close your eyes.**

**9 February 2016**

=====

**Engine in Wyoming running  
I can hear it from here  
bare pastures west of Laramie  
I think it's the stars.**

**9 February 2016**

## **NOCTUDE**

**Little sentence  
fragments to  
capture the night**

**slippery flanks  
of darkness  
worth a try.**

**9 February 2016**

## **THE THEOLOGICAL VIRTUE CALLED HOPE**

**I don't mind  
standing here naked  
with only my own  
words in my mouth,**

**no blissful authority  
no privilege  
of captured information,  
just what says itself**

**despite my ignorance.  
If only you knew  
what an idiot you're listening to,  
or maybe you do and don't mind**

**listening to what I don't mind saying.**

**9 February 2016**



=====

**Slowly thoroughly  
like a sheep eating grass  
we interpret  
this given world.**

**9 February 2016**

=====

**Living in the body of the other—  
that;s what bodies are really for  
to live a time another’s life  
another’s world from inside out,**

**to be the living witness,  
to bethe self of the other.**

**9 February 2016**

== == == == ==

**Time is, as, particle.  
A little like light  
but motionless.  
We move, it abides.  
We move through it.  
We sare light rays  
passing through a quiet forest.  
We are eyes taking in  
the great mosaic one  
tile at a time. So time  
is us, not anyone else.**

**9 February 2016**

=====

**Trying to get close  
is easy,  
in is easy  
but out the other side  
is difficult,  
so difficult**

**suddenly to find yourself  
in the hinterland of the other.  
Because only the other knows.**

**9 February 2016**

== == == == ==

**we try to understand the distance  
as if we had some measure  
in our pockets that could sing  
out some numbers and they would please  
the Muse of meaning  
and we wdnt be back in Algebra again  
suffering from a red book.  
We would be right here at last  
close by the proximate you  
of our current dreams.  
But distance sings louder than any this.**

**9 February 2016**

=====

Always being somewhere else  
new snow lacing slim trees  
lines, cables. Yelp  
of ambulance goes by,

mysterious combo of late  
Netherlandish grisaille  
and 50's-ish TV all white and grey,  
only color if a tail goes by.

End of description, deliberately  
vague, leaving out Ash Wednesday,  
looking north (where else do I ever?).  
You don't need to know.

Look at he picture and speak.  
School psychologists at play,  
TAT, Arnold Böcklin's phallic  
dragon in a cunnic cleft—

I will not see what you propose,  
I see a macaque swinging on a vine  
the way they do in comic strips,  
cartoons always tell the truth,

**fall asleep watching Tom & Jerry,  
the mouse always wings because they don't,  
o the raptures of trivial evidence!  
By them I live as Dorn once did**

**live by the augmenting light  
that christened its way up his veins  
and made us one of him.  
Poets appropriate the reader's I**

**and take s it out for a spin  
my father would have called it  
to go along an unknown road  
with no goal but the going,**

**there, that's the place I meant.**

**10 February 2016**

= = = = =

**Someday me and my friends  
will open an agency that rents out  
living bodies of other people  
to be occupied for an hour or a day  
by your mind, wishes, insights,  
you, the customer, always right,  
while the original owner's mind  
sleeps safe and undisturbed inside  
while your will rules. You will own  
otherness entirely. And that  
will be the end of poetry.**

**10 February 2016**



=====

**Nobody needs to know—  
that's what the snow  
keeps saying.**

**I am adequate  
for all equations,  
contour is my middle name.  
I aim at birdbaths, phone lines,  
mountain tops, everything  
welcomes me the same way.  
Let me become you, let me  
take your body for my own,  
your architecture will be my mind.**

**10 February 2016**

=====

**As a swine  
before whom  
many pearls have been cast  
I confess  
myself chastened  
yet bold.**

**Wealthy with pearls  
and all the wisdom  
words can give  
I need never leave my wallow.**

**My world is full  
of unlikely gratitude.**

**10 February 2016**

= = = = =

**We live in a place  
where it rains all the time**

**generous morals  
nourishing plants**

**and wisdom comes walking  
down from the hills every night.**

**10 February 2016**

=====

**I don't need to do this anymore  
this morning and this evening venture  
this shield of feeble consciousness  
through time, that living animal.**

**There is a moment when  
things are easy to believe  
then the door slams  
and you're all alone again.**

**The room reminds you—  
the walls are your own walls,  
the pictures stuck up on them  
are the few that you remember.**

**If you even do. Things are far  
now, and you are here—  
it must be where you intended  
to be from the beginning**

**and it's the only place there is.  
No one know how to sing  
that song but you. And you  
have almost reached the end of it.**

**So shut up and sing.**

**11 February 2016**

**=====**

**Too late to make sense.  
Have to let the senses  
take care of us. See this,  
touch that. Taste the light.**

**11 February 2016**

= = = = =

**Once it was all images  
now just grammar  
touching you,  
twisting the vagus nerve,  
bothering the hippocampus.  
Untranslatable stirrings  
of consequences. Vines  
looped round (say it)  
the heart at last.**

**11 February 2016**

== == == ==

**Black on white  
is the only right.  
In them abide  
all the colors  
except one.  
Can you name it?  
Out of sight now  
over the crest  
of the hill the  
absent color  
is the castle  
where we live  
safe from everything  
but change. And  
change is what color is for.**

**11 February 2016**

=====

**Things we think about  
along the way.  
Where were we going  
when we began?**

**And where is now  
exactly? I watch the train  
pass at the crossing  
behind the mall,**

**maybe somebody watches  
me watching. Things  
like that distract us  
from the journey.**

**Who is she? Who  
are they? Am I plural  
too, just a poor town  
along the tracks,**

**chapel, diner, shacks?  
I have lived here  
all my life and don't know  
the name of the place**

**I carry with me wherever I go.**



**11 February 2016**

**=====**

**Awaking guilty  
as from a crime  
whose only evidence  
the counting numbers  
in their Sanskrit form,  
especially 4.**

**Legerdemain of light  
to whisk away  
those traces, leave  
sunshine and calm streets**

**only far away  
like half-formed  
clouds on the horizon.**

**The Sins of the Fathers:  
that is, the self in dream.**

**12 February 2016**

=====

**Passing through  
and leaving things changed,  
unnoticed miracles,  
blue hat on a fence post  
I'm talking about  
feelings again, about feelings.**

**12 February 2016**

=====

**Consensus  
is a radio  
blaring  
in an empty room.**

**12.II.16**

=====

**I want to get rid of this guilt,  
this never-ending sense of wrong.  
I want to bring it to you  
and spill it into your lap  
in the form of yet one more sin.**

**12.II.16**

## **WHY ONE GOES ON WORKING**

**A top  
instructs us.  
It is upright  
only when it moves.  
To stop even for a  
second is to fall.**

**12.II.16**

**= = = = =**

**Sometimes  
dangerous  
to look at things.**

**A fallen tree.  
Sydney Harbor  
full of sun and ships.**

**Sudden vistas  
break the heart  
no matter why.**

**12 February 2016**

=====

**Odd ways the snow melts  
showing where the earth holds heat**

**go back and dream some more—  
it's only now**

**you're not due on deck  
till then, another island**

**on another sea.**

**12 February 2016**

**=FORECAST**

**Ominous sunshine  
to look ahead,**

**but now is simple  
as bread, one  
taste, one texture  
at peace. Complete.**

**13 February 2016**



## **IN WORKSHOP**

**Help them write  
the long  
poem they are.**

**13.II.16**

## **ANXIETY**

**1.  
dreaming  
another place  
to be  
and still be me.**

**2.  
Anxiety seizes  
pain before it comes,**

**3.  
Worry uses every evidence  
like a determined  
detective, or prosecutor—  
that official Greek law  
called the *diabolos*—  
from whom our word *devil*.**

**13 February 2016**

*for Charlotte, on St Valentine's, 2016*

**How cold it is  
for Valentine's,  
just to make  
the heart work harder,**

**the meaning  
strive out of the chill  
ordinary thinking  
to the real,**

**the real Ides of Love,  
strange, unusual,  
beautiful, like you,  
and like you different**

**from all other weathers.  
On this cold Sunday  
I refuse to look ahead—  
you are springtime**

**enough for me, warm,  
growing the light  
like flowers, magical,  
earthless, everlasting.**

**13 February 2016**

**= = = = =**

**A word waiting  
in the dark.  
Then it was day  
and who could hear it?**

**I tried, I pressed  
my ear against the light  
and let it listen.**

**Is this what I heard?  
Or did someone say it  
just out of sight?**

**So many voices  
lurk in brightness.**

**14 February 2016**

**= = = = =**

**When Ahab turned  
his body from the sun  
he does what the earth  
does every night.**

**There are no heroes  
there is only us  
in cold and heat  
turning and returning**

**shouting out names  
we guess or hope  
are finally our own.**

**14 February 2016**

=====

*Make sure we have stains  
for the waters to wash away.*

**Live long enough to be glad—  
it is so hard being young.  
Everything is your aunt's vase  
ready to break, and all  
they give you is some stupid  
flowers, not even a kiss  
that lasts longer than this.  
And you don't even know  
what to do with a kiss.**

**14 February 2016**

**= = = = =**

**Wall in time  
to lean on  
your soft against  
its hard, cozy  
wall like love  
always firmer  
than you, tough  
as you are.  
A wall waits.  
Walls wait in time  
for our soft  
shoulders, all  
our little doors.**

**15 February 2016**

**=====**

**I don't mean to be shallow  
it's how streams are  
running from myself forever  
trying to cover as much  
distance as I can. Language  
is just me hurrying past.**

**15 February 2016**



=====

**Assuming, just this once  
there are enough of us to go around.  
Even in front of the ceiling fixture  
it's cold in here. We expect miracles  
to come *in boxes* and they come  
laughing more or less at me.  
Who else is there to ridicule  
in a world of trigonometry,  
mitochondria, easy virtue?  
It's hard to be well-behaved  
in a school that never ends.  
And in restaurants always asking  
for more napkins, more water,  
sugar substitutes yellow or blue.  
I want too much my mother said.**

**15 February 2016**

## THE RESIDUE

knows more than I do.  
It's here when I'm gone  
so it knows a way  
of not going. Anywhere.  
Abiding is a chemical  
reaction, a little animal—  
gerbil, bunny, white  
mouse— that loves you,  
so hangs around.  
Learn to be centripetal,  
oMensch, learn the deep  
well your shadow is.

15 February 2016

=====

Earth tilt love the seasons  
learn from the younger  
what you still need to forget,

forsythia, the smell of subways,  
Samson recovering his sight,  
strength I mean, eyes in his fingers,

let me touch your stone, ice  
trying to last but not much does,  
seaside escapade below the boardwalk

ordinary Coney Island millions  
come each year to watch  
you strut through sunlight hours.

What if it happened all over again  
would the dog still bark?  
It is a white world as predicted

colors maybe coming later.  
Where was I again?  
People do what they can

but the world goes on.  
Smell of gardenia. Sometimes  
I wish I were even dumber,

**could just hold onto this bard  
silvery bar of slippery soap  
in one hand, feel its nice sleaziness**

**and hope. Nope. No soap  
we used to say, just that way.  
And don't ask me why.**

**16 February 2016**

= = = = =

**I'm always talking to  
someone as little smarter  
than I am, yet also  
gullible, someone I want  
to love me or at least  
put up with my advances  
verbally, someone who one  
day will tell me all  
I need to know, stone  
by word by song by  
sound by the pale  
shadow under the tree.  
But that's me guessing—  
someone knows better  
than me, maybe even  
more than that tree.**

**16 February 2016**

=====

**Whatever makes me talk,  
we'll go with that.  
That insidious drug called Other People—  
one dose makes me sing  
like an orange crate in a campfire  
all crackle and truth and smoke in your eyes-  
I need to believe that you make me do it,  
you glamorous and demanding Not-Me's.  
Can't get away from your demands.  
Don't want yo. Give me some more.**

**16 February 2016**

=====

**It is a matter of metabolism  
I guess, how much one says  
of what one knows, or confesses  
all the crimes of ignorance  
we cover up with guesses.**

**And why not? We're all  
allowed to be wrong,  
that's what clothing means  
and ads for watches in the *Sunday Times*  
and skid marks up the berm.  
And I love the shirt you didn't wear today.**

**16 February 2016**

=====

**Try to take hold.  
Emerald fastenings  
discloak snug galaxies  
and we se. We see  
colors we are or were.**

**Kircher's obelisk  
uplifted— he knew  
what we would find  
because he thought  
of it — there is only  
one Imagination  
and we are it,**

**grammar  
of the universal language  
every child's born knowing.  
Forget Hebrew Sanskrit Greek.  
Things pronounce themselves in sleep.  
Theirs or ours? We'll never know.**

**17 February 2016**



=====

**Every Sunday almost  
we drove out Jericho Turnpike.  
We gave bible names  
to decent local places  
that deserved their own—  
now how can we hear  
what they call themselves?**

**White people move in  
to a neighborhood  
meaning no harm, but they take  
the colors out of every  
natural thing, try to claim  
Here is Somewhere Else.  
This is not here. :Land,  
forgive them. Land,  
forgive us for not listening.**

**17 February 2016**

=====

**He gave her his black mirror.  
Onyx or agate maybe  
or volcanic rock, obsidian  
from Mexico. Or like Uncle  
Edward's shewstone,  
polished coal,  
anthracite from Lancashire  
now strangely missing from  
the British Museum. But his,  
hers, smaller, a ring  
he gave her, to wear  
darkness on her finger.  
Now she can see everything  
in it and say what she sees.  
A black mirror tells everything.**

**17 February 2016**

=====

**No, I never saw it rain in the desert—**

**you have to imagine some things  
just to get through the alphabet  
I mean the years.**

**It must be fabulous,  
all that thirst suddenly quenched,  
the will overwhelmed by what it wants.**

**Have to imagine us there, then,  
the sounds of words  
just before language.**

**17 / 18 February 2016**

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

**Something fine  
out of stone.  
Garnet crystal  
pried from schist.  
Song sung  
from a long bad dream.**

**17 / 18 February 2016**

## TENTACLES

asleep. Or of sleep.  
The sound  
so similar—

but who is it  
who speaks?

If I could write  
this word again  
what would it be  
then, and where  
would meaning  
lodge, in what  
it said or what  
I meant?

Or this? Any line  
is long enough  
to reach  
across the river  
like the iron chain  
at West Point  
once to keep out  
warships of the enemy

whoever they are.  
Who stands

**against us?  
*Inimicus*, the  
non-*amicus*,  
the not-friend.**

**Etymology  
is the thief of sleep.  
Hand to the heart  
pledge allegiance  
and call it dream  
long before dawn's  
ordinary rapture.**

**17 / 18 February 2016**

== == == == ==

**I thought of Amen  
the god, opened  
one volume of Budge  
at random, dictionary,  
first word I saw  
was Amen, 'the hidden  
god.' What is happening?  
When things speak,  
and the hidden god  
shows himself  
in the American night.**

**17 / 18 February 2016**

=====

**All the forms of who I mean—**

**language is the great  
song and dance around  
a single pronoun.**

**17 / 18 February 2016**



## **RESPONSA**

**The nibble of the midnight mouse  
validates the cheese.**

\*

**Imbecile lust, to crave what one possesses.**

\*

**Flesh is continuous. It pervades.**

\*

**A bus starts and stops so people can come and go.  
Something else is like that — what?**

\*

**You say it again to hear it the first time.**

\*

**These sare all answers to questins artfully hidden in the  
ravine between sleep and waking.**

**18 February 2016**

## **HISTORY LESSONS**

**In those days  
everything was waiting.  
They had to wait  
because there was no  
now for them to happen in.**

**In those days cat and rabbit  
were the same, cops and robbers,  
head and tail, rain  
came from the sun  
and I was everyone.**

**Lictors carried fasces  
or had servants carry them  
in front of them as they walked.  
I have no clear idea  
of what of those,  
these, words mean.**

**Yasnaya-something  
train station where Tolstoy  
died. Relationship  
of railway travel and**



== == == == ==

**Will I ever get it all written down  
before they go away?  
Before they take me away  
back into themselves?**

**18 February 2016**

= = = = =

Ready to be ready to begin  
it took a long time  
sitting on the bench  
wishing the grass green  
and waiting for the crows  
to come possess the offerings

but that's how it is  
to be in the world,  
the first-person-indicative  
governs only what the speaker  
can do or make happen—  
I read that in a book,

I can sit, can wait,  
I can want.

Then the magic  
part begins,  
the Work of the Other,  
the beautiful black crows.

19 February 2016

## **EYESIGHT**

**Thought it was a towel  
dried his hands on a rabbit.  
Thought it was a snake  
chopped the head off a hose.  
Thought it was a doorway  
walked into the mirror  
and nothing ever seen again.**

**19 February 2016**

[ *after a painting by Colin Radcliffe* ]

The heart is a Persian garden  
but the garden is not a heart.  
A garden is a man behind the gate  
watching, always watching  
*in the cool of the evening*  
when the wind is a deck of cards  
telling a young man's fortune:  
you have too many columns  
to be a temple, you are a woman  
and a man, a secret part of an animal  
still present in the world but rare.  
You are rare, the blanket of infancy  
dissolved into language. Beware  
of cats who seem to be asleep,  
willow trees, the color sandarac  
so few understand. Inside us  
only ropes stretch through jungle  
quiet though, beast-free, a boy  
drinking water from his sailor cap.

20 February 2016

=====

**Wind in the yew trees  
it will be a short month  
a busy mouth  
                  a tune in your ears  
a crow on your lawn  
your car needs gas.  
The urgent pastoral  
of things as they are.**

**20 February 2016**



=====

**Always stop when you're behind  
let the other runner  
get there first.**

**Who knows  
what's waiting at the goal  
or just behind it  
in harsh morning shadow—**

**let the other discover.  
Sit on the rock and consider,  
considering is what you do best,  
o Mensch, *think along with the stars*,  
sit here. or at the window  
in the gloaming, full of quietness.  
in the heaven of sheer  
watching nothing happen.**

**20 February 2016**

== == == == ==

**From this blue sky  
some answer comes.  
Now match it with  
that question, your heart.**

**Quiet transmission—  
bird shadow, silence.  
Now it is complete.**

**20 February 2016**

## **LES JOGGEURS**

**Suppose they were running to me  
or after me or away from —  
three interesting alternatives.  
But as it is, they're just  
parts of what passes.**

**20 February 2016**

=====

**Leave everything alone  
just as it is.  
That way tomorrow  
is sure to come.**

**Try to avoid that slippage  
called history  
when things keep happening  
against each other**

**and thousands of us die..  
Be quiet, a tree,  
let wind rustle in you,  
pass through and be gone.**

**20 February 2016**

=====

**Cock tempest  
the sky inside  
moon shadows on my hand  
the skin the  
ordinary leprosy**

**the other ailment  
of Moses's sister  
(was she? or another  
function clever,  
faerie consort ever after?)  
was beauty,**

**this moonlight now was then.**

**20 February 2016**

=====

**Wait as one  
as if  
yet come  
salmon to spring**

**to find the hazel  
that knows all differences**

**the grey path between  
knowledge and wisdom—**

**you can feel it in your fingertips  
but can't say it easy,**

**you can feel it in your gills.**

**20 / 21 February 2016**

=====

**If the dark would let me  
I would see a different thing**

**the true shape of matter  
without the intrusive sun**

**what we'd be really like  
if she weren't around.**

**And it is a male thing, this moon-  
stricken countryside**

**dark people of a sort  
we will never meet by name—**

**dark blue they move  
and vanish when we see.**

**20 / 21 February 2016**

**= = = = =**

**Let the word come  
(the way skin heals  
all by itself)  
after the gash of silence.**

**21 February 2016**



## **LOVER'S COMPLEYNT**

**If I were music  
you'd listen to me.  
But I am flesh so  
why aren't you in my arms?**

**21.II.16**

=====

**Wise little chip  
off ancient stone**

**or human arm  
snaking down the column  
at Göbekli Tepe**

**bird across the small  
sky of my window.**

**Scraps of meaning,  
meaning enough.**

**21 February 2016**

=====

**A day to be small  
like the sun  
lost in those clouds.**

**21.II.16**

=====

**Blistering history  
and hers  
what happens  
when the boys club  
gets hold  
of an idea,  
                  the solo sym-  
phony of all ideas  
that do not walk  
the glad agora,  
marketplace  
with all of us  
whoever we are,.**

**22 February 2016**

= = = = =

**Get back to city pastoral  
allthose hot sheep  
yearning to divest their wool—  
not like Schleicher’s fable.  
Now the sheep has no horse  
to interrogate or be wised up by,  
left alone in sensuous presence  
*owis*, her charmed life— as long  
as we have grass we’ll  
have poetry.**

**22 February 2016**

=====

**There is a black well  
into which a person's  
guilt can be lowered—**

**left there drowned  
or later hauled up  
out again all clean**

**of the personal,  
turned to civic energy  
to benefit the other.**

**22 February 2016**

= = = = =

Why couldn't I do this too  
a milk stain on a blue sweater  
sister, yogurt really,  
come back from the Antipodes  
(four syllables), come back  
with small sea-shells  
matted in your otherwise  
clean hair. I'm always after  
something, now it's shells,  
or always, since first some  
Roman, I mean some woman,  
probably my mother, held  
a fat shell up to my ear and I  
heard! She said it was the sea  
and so was I, ever after. Look,  
I'm not really asking so much,  
just to be perfect, the way any  
and every single thing is, Thing  
I say, the object in its prime,  
complete and ordinary. That's  
what perfection is, being — won't  
say yourself, who knows what  
a self is, if it is — but just being  
here. As if with me. As if me.

22 February 2016





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**Time to try something else.  
Tried learning the piano,  
had a fine master but my fingers  
have no ears. Tried Greek  
and all I could do with it is  
read more books. Watchmaking  
would be fun, half-God and half  
petit Suisse. But poor eyesight  
would make a mess of that.  
Bowling is easy but the alleys  
are all closed, home-brewing  
is neighborly but I don't drink.  
Suppose walking won't do very  
much harm—I'll wait till spring  
and learn to tie my sneakers on.**

**22 February 2016**

**= = = = =**

**Endymion or who  
wherever weather  
moon plain in Virgo  
where that full Man  
stands he wants to be,**

**all our linguistic  
sagesse genders him  
tells us what myth  
don't or won't. Dark  
of the day he waits  
to gimmer in before  
She bares her breasts  
in morning meaning.**

**22 February 2016**

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**It wasn't the place I heard  
or was it?**

**I thought it was people,  
those boys who write history,  
Homer Hesiod Herodotus  
but maybe it was the island  
itself, the mountain, sea,  
broad plains quiet with sheep  
with wolves— no story  
but the ground itself. Maybe  
that's what I still hear.**

**23 February 2016**

## HAYDN CONCERT

As if I had not been there  
or had heard  
only the motions of my own heart  
that animal we talk so  
freely but shyly of,  
an unkempt wild  
thing with sharp teeth.

But I was there,  
I heard the cello nail  
Jesus to the cross,  
heard the viola try  
with all her might  
to lift him up  
against the drag  
of wood and weight  
and earth down there,

gods knows what  
the violins were up to  
skittering like sparrows  
low and high, busy  
with their own agitation,  
no song in sight.

23 February 2016



== == == == ==

**My heart is beating  
and you know why  
I'being literal  
it could be a doctor's  
office, we could be  
machines at one  
another's service**

**measuring the long  
sincerity of blood  
the fickle breath  
that comes and goes  
and comes again,  
who knows what all  
this is for, why so  
many processes churn  
forward all at once.**

**By my hypothesis, you do.  
What a weight on you,  
what a restless animal  
to carry in your arms.  
And not just in your arms.**

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**23 February 2016**

