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**Morning. Look around.
Make sure it's all here.
The lime tree, the fern brake,
count the blades of grass.**

**Luxurious arrival of
another way, day.
Already you belong
to each other, volatile
gospel of any touch.**

**The breeze. The bees.
Everybody with the same
identical story.**

1 June 2016

=====

**The E at Delphi
pronounced in pure
Old High Canadian
tells the story,
the kindest question.
Who do you think
you are, eh?**

1 June 2016

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**No reason to go,
everything is here.
Then why is there
a Gate, and a road
runs from my heart?**

1 June 2016

=====

**I don't have to quote Hammurabi
to prove something wrong with the system—**

**no laws will stifle greed.
Greed will always bring war, injustice, poverty.**

**One heart at a time
is all we can charm
into sharing and caring,
one heart at a time is all we can talk to,**

**one word as good as a bible.
Love your neighbor as yourself,
love your neighbor and everyone is.**

1 June 2016

[from yesterday's blue scrap]

**Where things come from
pale and quick
as if we too
are part of the sky.**

1 June 2016

=====

**Lessons in holy moreness:
against the thought of sin
the sin of thoughts,**

**the succubus of logic,
incubus of fact —**

**there is a plain
stretches out into forever,
no Jordan to croiss,**

**every land is the promised land
as long as you stay right here.**

2 June 2016

=====

**Looking up into the sky
I'm always
praying to the biggest cloud
come shelter me
bring rain, bring the part of the sky
that can touch us.
Rain is the fingertips of gods.**

2 June 2016

=====

**Caught, and trying
to begin. The new
waiting for the old
to shuffle yellow
off into the unseen
where children
used to play whenever
they could, and didn't
even have to close
their eyes to dream.**

2 June 2016

FRITILLARY

for Lori Chips

**Fritillary,
red
cups pour down**

**a captive essence
only they distill—**

**full
of joyful emptiness.**

3 June 2016

RIGGING

of a boat with no sails
but spiderwebbed with lines and cables—

the air needs something to play with,
play on,

the sound we hear
and like patriarchs choose
to distinguish it from music,
the thing we make,
the thing we sell.

But here the intricacy
unfolds up into the air
from *Lady of Fatima*
at her berth in New Bedford,
a fishing boat,
feeding us,
a mistress of music too.

3 June 2016
at the ferry dock

=====

**Not missing. Orpheus remembering
all too well —
poetry
is how to unmake memory—**

**She is well wherever she is
but he... but he, ever speaking
never spoken.**

**Quiet, not at peace,
like the Prince Consort of a dead Queen—
shadow of a seagull passing over.
The wild wind brings no rain.**

**3 June 2016
New Bedford**

FERRY

**Everybody on the boat
that hasn't budged from the dock
keeps talking about how long
and hard it was to get here.
Weather, traffic, the distances.
Getting anywhere on time
is something like a cathedral
hundreds of years never finished
but you can still come in and pray on the floor.**

**When one woman speaks
in her small voice
everybody pays attention.
She's the youngest, with
an older man, everybody
waiting for her to make a fool
of herself. Listen close.
Someone else is thinking
what are we doing on a boat
of all the weird ways to die.**

3 June 2016

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**So many ways of running
away from memory. Talk
is best.**

**Say anything,
everything. it sweeps
away the past and leaves
a film of grease
behind it we call eloquence.**

**3 June 2016
New Bedford**

=====

**Sun sifted through tissue
clouds over Point Judith,
headland, horizon.**

**Everybody has a name
young man, old rock,
fritillary.**

**Get them right
or illuminatingly wrong—
Nausicaa wrote *The Odyssey*.**

**3 June 2016
On the ferry**

=====

**Being here and not there
the inscrutable
otherness of anywhere**

**again, pure by sea,
amiable arrivals
in no-street-lights dark**

**a Chinatown of the mind
can't read the signs
can't read my own thoughts,**

sea air, island in an island.

**3 June 2016
Cuttyhunk**

REASONS TO RESIST

First a flame emerging
from the tip of a raindrop

then a swirling congeries of flames
in the shape of a woman
dancing through air, gone,

dark again
as it ever was.
We live here now
adored by circumstance

gulls like old white men
toddle along the lawn
dawn.

Because sound does show the way
or a way

 or just away,
lusting all the livelong day
for other places,

 Go
where the sea goes,
always come back.

*

Honestly

**there is a residence in air
if you can find it.
Here, not there.**

**Images recoil into dream space
grizzled sky over neighbor island**

**should the Sun make bold to shine
what we allow
glamorous weathers**

**(sly craftsmen coining fake doubloons
o the counterfeiter is the quietest thief
and with his waxy heart makes brass play gold)**

(for money is a wether too)

**Always room for revision—
you decide.**

**Because you're here too,
just out of the corner of my eye,
I can almost feel your hands.**

**But why is a bright seashore
like the pocket of deep woods?**

Lostness is anywhere

**come with seeing, hope in being,
loss is a cordial thing,**

**lost my way hear
carrying the burden of hope,**

**lostness is in fashion,
a colony revolting from the fatherland.**

***Lady of Fatima* at the dock,
lady of fire, dream cult dream cast,
gull on a lawn, man on a hill.**

**Everybody here except Caesar
you have to impersonate the emperor, yes, you
each of you for yourself,
Caesar does not come so easy
to our small polities.**

**Fish fry
in the sky.**

**To be an island
you have to do it all yourself.**

yes, even me.

In truth, Grail is an anagram for *a girl* ...A girl. And not just any girl. The high quest of the Holy Grail is not a pursuit of the maiden, or the matron. It is not ventry. More akin to veneration. One special girl, sixteen years old. In summer, among her beloved ferns or in the orchard, her skin has a greenish tinge, as Andrew Marvell guessed in his great focused meditation “a green thought in a green shade.” At sunset, her pallor is reddish, and she smiles. Today, softly overcast, her skin is very pale. And we can guess her color at night. She holds on her lap a cup of blood, not hers. This blood will make you happy, *do you good*.

But so often the structure builds out around us, from us. It looks so much like us we call it ‘my life’. Βίος in Greek was ‘bow’ and ‘life’ — our life being the stressed instrument that sends, releases, shoots flying into the world — or into space — everything we mean.

**Young snake curled on the rock ledge
peaceful, she says, seen after chill dawn.**

Agathodaimon, the Greeks said, the household snake.

We bless things in beholding.

**A moment between hot and cold
all those islands
vanish in this fog
but we have a gull white in sun.
Not *ensker / eller* but Both/And *[SK's Either/Or]***

Hylas wins all the arguments, but Philonous is right.

**This is a book like any other. Like every other.
Triumphs and defeats, abstentions, seductions, regrets.
Call it a small city middle of nowhere. Like Athens.
Like your hand resting on your lap.**

**The clipper ship sweeps up the channel between
our island and the next, carrying a cargo of salt
to a land that has only tea. This is not
even a fact, much less a dream. The water
it moves through, though, that is historical.**

**Sometimes by what seems chance we come
up against a tuneful haunch, a useful hand.
We call this 'living in the world,' and are proud of it.**

**A door is the opening
onto what isn't there.
Nobody there.**

**Gleaming yellow eye of the blackbird
on the railing in the mist,
tiny citrine alive with light.**

4 June 2016

**Control beyond our circumstances
leads to an interruption of our interpretation.
There are seeds on the deck and salt in the sea.
No more we can do. The fingers of dawn
are on the tone controls. Will we hear rose
or cello, starling or one great cry of Merlin
or other monster left over from the mind
back in the days when we were thinking, scheming
quests and odysseys and cavernous Yacatans.**

Everything, he said, was something else.

The architect went on. The shape of her pelvis was mentioned, or maybe mine. Bone structure was important, a certain porosity to let light in — “Imagine seeing through the walls!” she said. But not too much. Bone and gristle and self-centered, zero-net energy, like new California homes or the living bodies of certain saints. As a German (Austrian?) she certainly knew of, spoke of, Therese Neumann of Konnersreuth — look her up. The walls must glow, inside and out. Seeing it in the distance, you want to hurry towards it, be close — but with respect, entering only with full permission, body of a stranger.

(quoting from old poem Charlotte found in my archive)

*I forgot the mirror
how can we have lunch.*

How far is it around?

**25,000 miles or more if you count the sea.
5 miles I guess if you stay on land —
perimeter of a small island
safest walking is in fog,
you see little to distract you
from the fact of your walking.
And nobody sees you, or not well.**

**Hard to take aim.
This combination of mental focus
and invisibility is appealing.
And explains how so much magic is done —**

***concentration of the will
creates a vacuum the world
rushes in to fill***

**Wait, I've lost my place in the hotel.
I was in page 307,
on the 30th floor, a woman
was sleeping under a duvet.
I stood on the balcony. Far below me
White doves fluttered in and out
of the royal palms that surround the hotel.**

How did she get here? she asked, speaking of Earth. Isn't Earth just one of Buddha's eyes? Where is the other? Or the other two? As the Aztecs reasoned of a black sun behind our golden one, she hinted, there is another Eye of Him, an Eye of us or ours, an Eye that's kept closed — as far as we can normally tell. I was excited by her drift but can't picture or construe what she must be gesturing towards. Have you seen it yourself? I asked. You don't understand, she said, you don't see it, you see *with* it, just as you live on this earth — never even once have you seen the Earth itself.

5 June 2016

A CANZONE OF SELF-PITY

Once there were books
and letters from friends
and signs on buildings
and menus in diners,
once people had faces —

now it's all form and
movement and color,
mostly color, like
Monet on good days
or Degas in love.

So I will study colors,
read them, stare
into their script
so colors will be my friends.

[This happened last night, the pillow talked and told me most of these lines, leading to not the “kind of poem” [whatever that means] I want to speak out in public. It came, and I would feel dishonest not to write it down, though it's only about me — and full of exaggeration,

allowing that terrifying line five. So here it sits, me and not me. But the ink glistens as I write in the new sun, glistens and quickly dries like a bird flying away. And plenty of those outside. This whole affair reveals the Qualities and Defects of [my] [the] Method — if it speaks, I have to write it down.

6 June 2016

[REASONS TO RESIST *continues*]

**Bright sun, some haze, Vineyard veiled.
Resist the weather, resist description.**

**Thermal regulation in the elderly
at fault. Cold hell of the Norse.**

She confessed she'd learned most of her skills and methods from books, though she is a graduate of the Technische Hochschule in Graz (yes, Austrian I was right). "But my art came all from *here*" she said, weeping her hand down her body from clavicle to pubis.

**Allow a certain certainty,
freedom to exaggerate.
Wittgenstein in that churchyard
— wonder what Joan Retallack thinks about God —
the English God who speaks so fierce
yet gives us wild permissions.**

**The more rules,
the more energy from breaking them.**

**Is the Devil the part of God
that wakes us from the norm,
rouses us to be and be other,
to worship God with new imaginations,
interpretations, delights regeneracies?**

**But does anybody
think that, really,
isn't it just something to say?**

**I couldn't say,
I was dreaming while I spoke,**

**a world where we don't hurt one another —
that's easy to say
and astonishingly easy to do
if only we all wanted to**

Resist consolation. Resist the guitar.

**Make language... no, let
language stand on its own feet,
ready to run, and it does run.
Stop tripping it with what's on your mind —**

Resist meaning.

“...forgot the mirror/ how can we have lunch?”

**If I had a flag, what would it show?
A clear sheet of glass
waving and furling and unfurling in the wind**

**bend but never break
let everything through,
see through me
the all that's there**

**The other woman, tense, murmurous, rather beautiful,
anxious, was into musical comedy. How it fell out of
operetta one fine day, wearing skimpy, see-through
plots and lots of tunes people could walk home singing
more or less right, at least the choruses at the end of**

**each what do you call a stanza when it isn't a poem and
it isn't a house it's just a sound that goes with you into
the dangerous street aglow with post-matinee sunshine,
the dense kind, when our Lady the Sun yawns on her
crimson couch in the West.**

**From woman to myth via an old film, *Top Hat* maybe, or
The Gay Divorcee. Not so far from *Eine Nacht in Venedig*
or *Der Zigeunerbaron*.**

What *are* you talking about?

New forms! New forms!

**Someday give me your recipe for tripe in the style of
Caen — I understand you don't use calves feet?**

**Resist explanation. Architecture is a Martian art, trying
to hide us from where we actually are.**

**You don't think about the sea.
You let the sea
do all the thinking.
If you're lucky,**

the sea will think you.

6 June 2016

**Dolcissima, in red, trusting me,
running off, in red,
famishte maydl I called her,
she was one of the Boyles
how did she know [I knew] Yiddish?**

**We all know how to talk
we just don't know when.**

**When is a bird that perches on the roof
and sometimes stays and sometimes flies**

**remember the first time you learned your mouth has a
roof?**

***cyning*, that was a good king,
a master you didn't mind.**

Not architect but archetype —

is that what it meant?

Purple and blue of bruises

Your face is your flag—

**have I lost the way?
There is no way
you're here already**

***Wer spricht?* Who is speaking
when I speak?
I have a book called that
can't lay my hands on**

**she runs so fast or not so
fast so lovelily I'm loathe to stop 'er.**

**Homeophonic. Reach for the skies.
Is sunrise a holy terror for the birds?**

Listen close and clutter the image

**when your name sounds like
children speaking in a foreign language**

you'll know you've arrived.

I thought I, you told me I, was here already.

That was just a song.

**Resistance too can be resisted —
that's why flesh is soft
to begin with,**

when you change the spaces you change everything.

**Sun glaze quiet sea
Clouds coming. I hear her
look back over her should and say.
And everything she says is my name too.**

**Tell me all my secrets
let me listen, for lo!
the untold weighs on the heart
hiccups in dream
savory history of you, my, little, world.**

**Paix nul t'aime
nobody cares**

**You wouldn't dare talk like that if I had a dictionary
stifled with sameness, his father's name the same as
mine.**

The ambiguity.

**Listen while it lingers
the sea becoming air**

what do we turn into?

**I know a chemical that smells like it,
like me, diaglossal harmonium sophate—**

taste it and be.

**So then the surf came in
bigger than I'd seen it here**

***I am Lambda and Omega*
it said on the wall of the apse
I start in the middle
*nx hurry to the end.***

7 June 2016

*

Nascent, pubescent, fiend on her throne

the Queen herself reported this to me
I mean the dream, the dream did,
ever and ever
we are part this and part Portugal
(code-word in Kelly's work
for whatever's over the horizon
(the girl next door))

but here I am, a part of Spain,
homeophonic, quasi-erotic.

I wear a shadow with three peaks
one for me and one for thee
and one to set the song birds free.

Intelligence is the reciprocal of pain.

That's not in Aquinas.
Who is the fiend of which the dream news spoke?

The Fiend is any Object of Desire,
the Appropriatable Other,

**the Bride in her transparent song,
groom thong, helpless tree.**

**I am Melchizedek, at peace
living up to my name.
Johnny Appleseed was another me
priest before religion
preaching to the field itself,
the forests to come,**

**I stand out on the morning
bathrobed in mystery,
later and slowly
I lead my — you are my — flocks.**

Melchizedek Khidr Merlin one.

The only miracle is difference.

**Menaced by meaning
the young king stood—
in meadow, true, but deep woods near,
a kind of Canada he thought,
with noises in the underbrush.**

grunting and such.
Don't specify — specifics usually
mean you harm — his wise men told,
be general and vast
generous as summer skies,
gene pool of a ravaged planet,
Sire, just be now.

O that old thing, this present time.

Somewhere a queen is waiting—
that much he knew.
He was born knowing.

*

Nowheres near dawn
if I lift the shade
I am more seen than seeing
but nobody's there.

All fish are safe from ospreys at this moment.

Did you say the sea is a motet?

Sound like yourself — *autophonic* —
give your neighbors comfort and your critics fits—

they sound like little clicking beetles, don't they?

**But be kind—
a self (if you
could find one)
is always kind,**

one of a kind,

**a distant ever-present mind.
Mind. A masterpiece
of mercy, and there's only one.**

**Keep your mind on matter
as long as you can.
These gnomonic breakfasts keep you lean.
Come back Christian or come back bread,
be me or feed me,
mystical body of whatever exists.**

**This Buddhafield is infinite
and there are infinitely more.
Wisdom and Compassion—
we use two words
to say one being**

**we too can be.
You two we too can be.**

**I was born with a will to worship,
follow reverence wherever it goes.
Open all the gates
—or leave one gate closed,
kneel before it in humility and humor and prayer.**

**My friends have come back
from the Serpent Mounds,
you stood in the socket of
what might be the eye of the beast
a-gape for the gemstone you are
to stand there and give the Sun an argument—
She only comes here for our conversation,
imagination,
we delight to show her
shadowplays of what we do,
we feed her shadows
she makes real.
There was no Sun before humanity.**

**Irreverence leads to broken sleep.
Not four yet but a faint light east
over the island that came back in the night.
Isolates come and go. Ishmael.
Come again and tell what black means
and what the ocean knows.**

**She wrote her name on the room
with her perfume. Yseult.**

**Distinguish pilgrimage from tourism—
motive. But who can tell?
Does a visit to the Louvre
equal Bat Mitzvah in Jerusalem?
We have to ask
and there is no one to ask.
We have to trust
ourselves (shriek of horror,
shiver of pudor).**

**There's something about that Géricault
or the actual Venus actually present.**

Far to the east a wall washed with tears.

But that wall in Saint-Sulpice, Delacroix—

minuterie, light lasts only a minute
goes out, where does art go too then
if not inside us,

we are the same temple,

But this is mere reasoning,
a fault of my immaturity
preserved long years
against the tide of grown-up.

Jamais ça. Or how would you spell it,
Calypso's island?

She looked up
from her blueprints, sighed,
nothing's left but music.
Give it to me.

*

So I left and went to watch it dawn.

The hexagon means *a living system.*

No journey can begin
without a farewell kiss

(Prose saves space but soon reaps ire.)

The kiss is like a compass
rose to tell
stand in the middle
of all the directions—

**you can't help doing that
can you? That's what
makes you so weak,
so strong— you have to be
the middle of everything,
no choice. Draw your charts
accordingly, sea-lubbers,
your ancient greasy portolans,
your GPS.**

Kiss me is what I mean.

8 June 2016

**Last night asked her
what she would build today**

**then it is now
she opened my mouth
to say**

**Embrace
the person not the genius,
everyone can play the violin
not everyone knows how to be**

**if a cloud could
play the violin
think what the sun would sing!**

I mean genius takes care of itself

**(I'm never sure I get them right
gnomic pebbles on the she-shore)**

**You have pegs to tune
your string she said
you have tone,
the embrace is what I matter**

Foreign accent of the morning sky

**but yestreen's great bright
rainbow, bent
from Nashawena to No Man's Land,**

**I found it hard
to read the violet,
the central green—
but that's just like me,
all scarlet and indigo**

*red beseech thee
rede me aright,
in the deep I go*

**lost in the motet
so many voices
to speak a single**

**Lumber piled up the length of the jetty.
Neat yards of 12" planks
pressure-treated
to build a new jetty**

the model is not far from hand

we all need our docks

**and I themself will tell thee
do not presume,
I have no identity.**

**Building this music
reminds me of you
I said and she was silent,
then: I build nothing, I plan,
conceive, design, draw
images in the sand, I can barely
lift a brick up with my hand,
are you talking to me?
I couldn't build a doghouse for your cat,
forgive my language.
I leave it to you to speak stuff into place,
and to the masons, free and otherwise,
to build the temple you make me talk of,
I am no Thomas Bernhard,
I have no sorrow in my bones**

**O the glisten of she
I hear the sun on the sea**

**this ballad I sang before the king
and then he punished me with gold**

**In Celtic lands we live on paradox, alone
praties rotting in the field,
the verb comes in before its noun.**

**It's all uphill —
believe the heart,
the actual, the thing
inside you that is you
you hardly know,
You go to the doctor to see how you feel,
Amerimen!**

**In lucid intervals the music stills.
If it lasts too long
the audience is gone—
the musicians too sneak off the stage —
such terror when the lights come up!**

No play is worth such pain,

she thought, though sat beside me
all through the opera, tolerating
it and my hand on her knee
or sometimes in her hand when she was weeping.

An aria, flamboyant scarf
floated widely on no wind.

Die Nullte, opera by Bruckner, words by me.

Austria, my Austria,
all you do is talk
but leave it to me
to say the words
in pretty sentences arrayed,

blue tradescantia by worn wooden steps
we are named for our discoveries

elderberry juice in the Prater
hand in your lap
what more can one say?

*

Eros always *arriving*, flying,

he is not prone to linger —
leave the lights off
so he'll think he's blind
and leave off hurrying
hither and yoni, bad puns
so often tell the truth,
O light the light
and away he runs,
half out the door puts on his wings.

And you have to follow.
Fact. We all do, too.
Eros is what it means
for the mind to move,
the lips to leap
from one word to the next,

Love is the going not the standing.

And all the stanzas of the music
must have a door,
two doors best, to be full of light.

Everything reminds me of the mind —
that's the kind of thing Quasha'd say

but do either of us mean it?

**We have no time for meaning
our words have to hurry
to the place of saying
where she stands, her arms waving,
screaming precise instructions
to the construction crew
as one more thought
weighs down the patterned earth.**

**Mean music if you must mean,
mean is common, mean is in between.**

Carry all my life this empty sign.

**He sounds lonely saying so —
is he do you think?**

**There's no one in him
to be alone — he's
only what he says.
All the rest is dinner,**

**church steeple, horses running,
rabbits on the lawn,
cloud rebuking the sun.
The world is shameless,
she!**

**Like history.
Like her
up there
undeceiving
our best illusions.**

**I thought of Marat,
immune system in collapse
he died of his leperish sickness in the bath,
Corday
came in and found him dead already,
they put a perjured
weapon in her hands
and she agreed
because the wish is mother to the deed
and she had her wish.
This is all there is to politics.**

**Now is just the index
we try to read,
precise page numbers
of a missing book.**

**She looked back at me from the work site:
do you like it now, do you think you can go in?**

9 June 2016

**So many birds
so many clouds
name them and they're yours**

(adventures of a circle on its way to the Square)

**four facts of any actual.
Four letters of the code.
Genetic Tetragrammaton.**

**Every religion has a slice of it
(name them and they're yours),
gods, clouds, the powers,
the chemistry of living on air
(pure air, Therese N., all through the war),
the human head is a tower,
a good human has three heads,**

**tile-roofed turrets of our understanding,
Bacon's house of knowing,
scrape the sky above Toronto, Xining,**

but still one wall was rising.

A wall will always be there when you look.

9 June 2016

**Slowly,
didn't I always tell you this,
slowly, slowly,**

**her voice soft in my skull,
how does she
get into the bones of me?**

Slowly, slowly,

**slow as owls,
slow as souls.**

**The important thing is for me not to think about myself,
or take me as an object of historical
or psychological research.**

**I am no one
at my best.**

**You are more me than I am,
just hearing the words
I pretend to be speaking.**

**But what about me, she asked,
can you will your weird religion,
are you allowed to think about me?**

**You are the only study I permit myself,
you are my geology and calculus and intensive Greek**

Not Greek, Gothic. Getic.

**And I remembered my Ovid,
exiled to a lap
not unlike hers, sort of German,
sort of lover, Black Sea,
fog makes me happy still.**

9 June 2016

**And there she is
waiting at the dock
or should I say they are,
a trimaran,
three hulls to one purpose
on the way to Spain.**

**Means come here.
Three “flaunted haunches”
to one pregnancy.**

G. Leavitt

**Use a pole to catch a star with,
a ladder to a cloud —
the old ones knew this best,
how to engrave (de Bry, Oppenheim)
a drawing of the mind
at the Great Work.**

**Three hulls
on the one sea.**

**Abstract expressionist dawn
exclusive bands
the Horizontals
sea island sky cloud sky cloud cloud.**

**Could she have been talking about *art*
as we know it, sell it, now,
eBay partnering with Sotheby's?**

**I thought she meant the art in Michael Maier's sense,
my guide, my graffer —
she could see three hulls
and I could see only one.**

**Her bird nature was strong:
that evening she explained —
eyes on either side of our heads
we see what is beside the point
to apprehend the point better,**

all a point can mean is where it stands.

**All arts assemble to say one microgram of metal
hidden in the sulca of the mind
sings ever after.**

You never told me any of this before.

I didn't want to scare you away.

Trust me, I would have come back, I always come back.

Thank you. Now I know.

So how many boats did you count in the harbor?

Is this a test of eyesight or mathematics?

Both / and, like you said.

I'm not good at either.

**(end of duet. The aria begins,
but who is singing?
Wer singt?)**

**Write that book another language
every day a different one,**

**cracking an egg into the frying pan
made me a vegetarian**

**why are there no blue vegetables?
because Nature is asleep in the summer
after a winter weary coaxing all those seeds —**

**sometimes truth doesn't seem to answer,
why is the chorus singing in the sea?**

**Scary members,
this daylight thing.**

**Repetition is friction,
friction heats, heat means.
Last night we had fire in the franklin stove,**

**these chilly passages,
a day like Dickens, just too many words**

No need to know the knower just the known.

**They taught her that in Austria
where music listens to itself
(Webern, Berg, but Mahler too)
and we're allowed to overhear,**

**but she wasn't big on music,
had other stones in mind
to teach men to build with
she defined her goal
*and what to build***

*and then I'll come
and live in their small towers*

**or did she say bowers?
I don't always listen good.
Bauer means peasant, farmer,**

builder.

**Wait for me in those trees,
I have a message for your skin
only I can recite.**

**You're a real chatterbox
this morning I said to the stone.**

*

You know it's light when things have shadows.

**Now dawn is Constable again
sea island sky sun cloud.
Daytime is an old-fashioned place.**

Inside the beauty, lust.

**Inside lust a frightened little girl.
To her the Dove comes down,
the beam of golden certainty
seeks her out,
pierces her to the womb.**

**That's how the story tells
the painters to show.**

**(why couldn't we see any Crivelli in
Venice? He worked out of town and they remember)**

**then I told her how to build Jersuaalem.
She laughed— too busy,
towerhouse in the Hamptons.
Too b usy doing bad ideas she had. —**

Is it really now already?

**Tarn is the only one who understands
the important of heraldry,
the demographics of the sign,**

**where the dragons really live
and what they mean,
between us**

**design an aristocracy
more lasting than money—**

**the sign is our mother
I told her, Be a sign.**

**Why stop when you're going wrong?
All roads lead to Rome —
that's what the saying means,
You'll get where you supposed to be,**

**the emperor makes sure of it
in the Palace of Amygdala,
not far from the bridge.**

**Now I have told
more secrets than I ever knew**

10 June 2016

**When Gosnold's men first saw the island,
they thought it was mainland, the white
cliffs at the western headland
made them think of Dover
so they called the land Dover.**

Abhor resemblance.

**And yet. Things
have signatures,
genetics, links
that only the eye's
superior chemistry can read**

signatura rerum

Why are you telling me this?

I don't know. It came to mind.

**Sometimes I abhor your mind—
we have no right to say what we think.**

I think it is the only right I have.

**Braggart Ameriman! Do you think
I am unaware**

**how yellow things are good for the liver
and black cherries richen the blood?**

We say enrich. But yes, I know you do.

You mean I enrich your blood?

That too.

**Comedy is always waiting,
a sinister buffoon,
the trainwreck pirouette,
belch in love avowal,
cat on the staircase
bat in at the window,
Momus waits for our solemnities**

**Hands though
reach out of the mirror,
eyes though ask me for help**

ask the sea for help

**We are drowning in particulars
that's why we need melody:**

organize the sequences to know

**a tune
tells**

**you can lose the beat
and be a commoner
but still keep the tune — sort of**

**but the queen on her microphone
never forgets.**

**The sun rises through the ink itself —
what colors the sea?
The sky. What
colors the sky?
You're asking me?**

**Someone with so many words
must have some left
for irreality,
 pray,
no perfect congruence
twixt word and referent**

**more things than knowable
more words than things**

**sounds like a little dance
we had when I was small
in summer meadows
counting butterflies
or stars at night
and naming them —
sulfurs, mourning cloaks,**

You call that a dance?

**Sometimes we moved,
spun around to catch
glimpses of what we saw
and need to see again,
barefoot, in dew,
that kind of dance.**

I don't know any language that well

**Tall and haggard
she, but young outside.**

**no fish can stand Her stern inspection,
dive down deep
where Her light barely comes
into the salty maybe**

**from which white men argue that we come,
humans and such,
our pets, our banes, our little birds**

**When the building was finished
she let me walk in,
bade me with a smiling glimpse
she offered, even before
the owners had seen it
and who they are she wouldn't say, said
all rich people are the same.**

**Spacious and cool inside
but somehow did not feel new,
she had built time
right into the structure too
so it would always be
the way it would become**

(as I, a teacher once, knew well,
you can look at a teenage boy and see
just what he'll look like in forty years —
but not what he will be.)

Rooms led into rooms
fed off one spine
of hollowness, a hall
akin to the sun's path
she averred but it was raining

room after room
when will this house end

Do you like it?

I like everything you do.

But *this* this?

I do. It feels, feels
like the inside
of someone's head
or heart, can't tell,
I like being here
but who can say why.

**I like this place, yes,
but I always love wherever I am,
hard to get me to move,
so don't ask me.**

But I did. I do.

**Then I say this is a fairy place
a magic palace
with a bedroom in it
for everyone you ever loved
and a kitchen the size of Montana
to feed every appetite you know
and a secret spooky cellar
to house the unknown instincts
from which the future comes,
the place where She makes sunshine,
Nyingma lamas age their secret wine.**

**Hide a voice
inside a poem,**

**no boats on the bay,
they call it a sound**

**spills between one island and the next
I hear it when the wind falls,
word after word
articulating on the pebbled beach,

dawn, and how to answer them.**

**Wake *up*
write *down*.**

**Meshes of meaning
caught.**

**Hair grows faster by the sea
Fingernails faster by the sea—true or false?**

**Each of us walks along
guarding the secret imperfections of our bodies**

**How dare you speak of *us*,
you are just you,
what do you know of us,
you barely know a thing about yourself**

I don't have a self

**Don't argue with me,
just sing.**

**And so I fled away into
what I thought was music
but who knows,
who really knows?**

**Sermons on the life to come
this Sunday only
be afraid**

**If the preacher comes
can the word be far behind?**

**She leaned in the painting
on the door of her car
and thought about the road behind her
wavering quietly into the distance
between the evidence of something green**

**we get angry at the past
the lost the unachieved**

**all your voices together now:
a city park a Paradise**

a Persian word for orchard

and we are the trees.

**Lighthouse parallax
sometimes the fog
lets the lamp through**

**ten miles away
the source of light
when it comes
keeps shifting.**

**Paradox of light
that it is a sometime thing
and not always,
sometimes the fog lets through,
password of the air it knows,
I pace the deck and guess
where will you come from next?**

Each one a lighthouse to each one.

Did you ever hear the bells of Stephansdom?

I hear them now.

**They come through air and nothing stops
they are another kind of light..**

11 June 2016

**This house has never had
a man inside it
or a woman,
only a couple
that mythic animal
like a workman with no work.**

It said just that before I opened my eyes but then

**Bright blue morning Mare Nostrum
nostrissimum bad Latin**

**no matter where the land is
the sea is always coming in to the shore,
it always knows.**

**Here too a land of edible rhizomes
Apios americana
she found by the freshwater pond**

**as once Chenrezi in the highlands
in his mercy sent *tro-mà*,
dark, chewy, nourishing
to rescue the people from famine—
a new food, god-found, mind-made,
we eat it at new year's
with yogurt and honey.**

**This land is every land
this people is all people—
you feed the people,
you do not feed the man.**

These are the mistakes I've made—what about you?

Am I just one of your mistakes?

No, no, I mean do you make them too?

**Sometimes I miss, if that's what you mean,
errors of judgment—**

**Once I put
a flame of fire
in an envelope
and mailed it too
a man I knew—
it burnt his fingers
when he read it
and the mailman
frowned at me—**

**and that night my soup was cold
at the Parkside Diner
so I guessed I had sinned
against fire — is that**

celebrity gossip enough for you?

What did the fire mean?

**Love, of course,
what else do I ever mean?**

**Sheen on the quiet sea
is like her smile,
almost painful to see
such beauty, intensity—**

**things remind us
of our very selves,
that is their job
in this mind's world,**

**and ours to be reminded,
through reflection
goaded into action,
bellezza, Schönheit
at the end of Mahler,
that's what beauty does.**

**It must be Sunday
if you're sermon,
whole sea sheet of ligh**

broad heave of wave—

What are you, a postcard?

**What am I indeed
but something cheap to send
to not-quite or not-yet friends,
one glamorous image
with no room for many words
cheap as words are.**

But there are so many words !

Be glad — we're not ready for silence yet.

**How come I'm always where I am?
Do I carry all the other spaces
somewhere inside me?**

You're the architect, you should know.

**I only know what I myself have built,
caused to be built, bought, brought
from far quarries to stand near, here,
my dream is to build a house I can marry,
my dream is to build a sky in the sky !
And all this space that worries me,
is it a number, a foreign language,
an animal you carry in your arms**

that keeps nibbling at your breast?

O darling, such altitude in what you say!

**Isn't 'darling' the diminutive of 'dear' ?
I am not small. We do not say *teuerlein*
where I come from, do not diminish me
with your affection. Make me big again.
And yes I admit it, I am myself
the space you mean, *Raum bin i'*!
just be glad I have room for you.**

**Why is philosophy such a lover's quarrel?
Why does Eros use an arrow?**

**Empuzzled by everything they saw
the men of old sat down and wrote the Law,
a thing that has meaning only if you follow it,
a kind of tiresome game so you stop noticing
eclipses and sickness and death and thunder.**

**A kind of ransom
—breathing—
we pay to be here,
air gives us wherewithal
to pay our fine.**

**Wait, there's ambiguity here:
have we been speaking of reasons
why we should go on resisting,
or reasons, reasoning, we should resist?**

**It is so hard to tell,
words carry in themselves
the seeds of their own unsaying.**

**Blackout. Children of Even.
Hevae. Who took
death out of the fruit
and gave it blameless
to her man, her little
man, Red Clay
by the Delaware,
Damascus Road,
and I did eat,
for I am Adam,
four-eyes they called
when I got glasses,
a fat little attitude on a blinking kid —
are you too my mother?**

**Don't you witch it!
All beings are your mother,
don't be so particular,
call me by my rightful name.**

*

**Across the Sound the Wampanoag
not far from the lighthouse
teach anew their tribal language,
Algonkin family I suppose,
but they won't teach me,
they teach only those of native stock,

their language would not be safe with us.**

**So I have to learn true
language from the rocks,
the reef, mist, turning light,
the spin of paradox, sly
parallax, have to hear
it from the egret's wings
flapping over western ponds,
the green night heron
holding the surf in place.
Tide flats tell all.**

**Flew all the way from Damascus
where the Great Sheikh's tomb
still undefiled, drew
to him the She and the Sun
as if they were one.**

**All the way to my own Callicoon,
temple of St. Joseph on the hill,
these woods run everywhere.**

**Let them forget everything they said
then get to say it again,
beauty and Michelangelo and madrigals,
dawn songs — eloquence
rises from oblivion,
the Hanged Man cuts himself free
and steps away.**

We met him in this grove.

But we met no one in the trees or on the path.

**I didn't mean this we,
some other plurality long ago,
in the Vaucluse, or scribbled**

**on a rock in dialect,
I who depended once am here
anybody can see me in the woods.**

**Do we have to stop,
Can't we just go on?**

**Music has to stop
otherwise you wouldn't know
it was music,
not just everything else forever and ever
world without end Amen.**

And the end, in the sense of purpose?

**Things define themselves by their endings,
as an island is the sum of its edges,
its endings.**

So how did you like our weekend on the moon?

Moon?

Barren, bright, masculine, half-empty or half-full.

I was your weather, wasn't I?

My lover truly too.

You love the weather more than anyone.

Take comfort from that predilection.

What does that mean?

**the sun labors to warm the earth,
we are I think
the fondest of her children —
go build your house.**

All you have to do is say the word.

I thought I just did.

**Bu tit wasn't the right one,
the right one has day in it
and lilacs in the graveyard
and rivers, and the shadow
of a dragon passing over a field,
a field with forest at its lips,**

**a word that has laps and lampposts,
*versteh?***

I do not know that word.

**I thought not,
so I go to build not a house
but a town. A town always knows.
A town always tells.**

12 June 2016

=====

postcard to Tamas

Herakleitos

**explains it to us.
The road up *is* the road down,
we are the difference.**

**High is low
among the black cherry trees
a woodcock thrums
across the path. Sometimes.**

**Sometimes the sky speaks Greek —
Earth always does.
You walk the grammar of it,**

optative, critical, in love.

12 June 2016

= = = = =

postcard to Billie

**One day the sky
came down on an island.
The other end
stood in No Man's Land,
among the runes and ruins.**

**In front of us, though,
this sudden sentence
of all the parts of
speech we call colors.
Spoke. She heard it
with quick eyes.**

12 June 2016

[REASONS TO RESIST continues]

**Quiet in there
the bell of mind
still faintly
reverberating from
the last sort of thought
thought.**

Who am I now.

**Drumhead
skin scratch
fingernail big sound.**

**Sound the mystery of.
I wanted
these things to be.
Sometimes a fact
sometimes a touch
did you really
think you had?**

**Time to go quickly now
unison (single sound)
borders of consciousness
sneak across.
ripe unknowing
filled with the *feel***

of something known
scarce specified
on the chilly dawn
of ought idea.

Ought means any
or compulsion to perform.

rail down from Lausanne
to the mournful *See*,
Genfer, remember?
Night-blooming jasmine,
H.D.'s hotel
Montreuil,
always a different
place, memory
a crowded neighborhood
all the percepts
stored close together,
swagger through the streets—

dear mind,
impersonate a master!

All things are yours
to remember,
quick-fingered, leave
a wet spot on what-

ever you touch
soon dries
soon goes away
and leaves the primal
as it was,
to taste again
another morning
another miracle .

Rat-a-tat-tat
she said, enough
too soon this
mental bric-a-brac,
go cross the border
Rorschach is not far
you see me standing
naked, disguised
as the other side
of the same lake,

gull laughter as if,
wheatears from Africa.
As if I were Edwige
again, and all
the satin evenings
slipped off my shoulders
and I could sleep again.

**Come dream me back to life.
It is not easy to be asleep,
alone in the mind's rough weather,
tough characters in
that merely plausible neighborhood.**

**Half-moon weather here,
the sky seems simple,
all measure and forgiveness**

**sea dark mirror
I hear the waves
handling the rocky shore.**

**So is this all about hearing,
not about touch, your usual
preoccupation?**

**About nothing, just saying,
just saying —
when I was three years old
she gave me a shell,
put it to my ear,
this happens to everyone,
see, now you can hear**

the sea. The sea
it came from, we came from,
I'm still listening,
you came from there too,
shedding wisdom as you run
but still wiser, wiser
than sunshine and dream
and certainly me,

with me always
sound of the sea.
That's touch
enough for dawn,

drum skin untapped,
fingers folded
as if in sleep.

Look close —
somewhere, in some dank chancel
there is a tomb
with our likenesses in stone
or bronze is waiting.
Never find this chapel.
Never die.
No man can die before he finds his grave.
Any passing bird can tell you that.

So is this just a test

**of different speeds,
rates and revolutions?**

**No, this is trying to hear,
trying to break the hold of grief
in a violent time
when cruel language feeds cruel acts —**

**look the other way
that boulder by the sea
will still be here
in a thousand years.
But what good will it do
to the murdered day?**

**Endurance is overrated,
darling, opt for glory,
glory, if you can.**

What fits inside what?

**The space so dark
inside a Chinese bronze
can I take that space,
pry it out
and wing it through the sunny world —
almost sunrise now,
we'll see.**

**I don't know how to name the vessel,
the metal,
I only want to hold the shape
uncontained now but shapely still —**

**we're speaking of course
about the meanings of words.
The cavern inside each,
the real shape of what each word means —**

Sometimes you confuse the sea with me.

Sometimes there is no difference.

**Is it done, enough, for you, this
house I haunt you, built you?**

I have not yet walked in and shut the door.

Je t'adore.

**You are the only reason I go on
resisting the silences,
the wicked things that have no shape,
the empty sounds,
gunfire in the crowd —
all that love can reckon or set free.**

**Bells have shapes
inside them too,
I wear it like a hood
my head fits perfect in,**

**Go live in the sound if you want,
the sun's over the other island,
a neighbor's house instantly painted gold.**

**O stop looking, see with your ears,
Bach sees better than Raphael
and angels crowd the porches of my ears,
bruise me with truth.**

**Built a house in the ocean
a house in the sky
Namkai Khang I called it,
I am a poet I am literal
take me at my word**

I didn't know you were a writer too.

**All architects are such —
we write, ions, instructions,
never left a finger to the task
our work is saying so**

You are another me! But this time meaning woman.

**Baffled by sunshine
as by a bumptious rival
the eye relaxes, closes, broods
better images on wider stages.
The dancers turn
space into sound
we see.
That is the secret.**

You're always saying that

**It's always being true,
the Secret is a flower
with so many petals,
like Rilke's rose
it too has thorns,
they infect us with doubt
and then the secret
hides away again
till the next time I proclaim it,
one petal of it at a time.**

How grandiose you sound, pomposo!

The secret makes me so,

**that's the thorn in the seeming,
makes you doubt what I say true.**

**A plausible rejoinder
like one of your English plays.**

Silence, woman! Truth is roaring in the street.

**No, silly man, that is my lion,
I brought from Africa
where they build with mud and write with stone.**

**And then she slept in me,
sunshine, shimmering, at peace.
We slept in her adobe mind.**

13 June 2016

THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Good morning
said the statue,
Good day yourself
but it's still dark,

it's always morning
where we are
he answered (a life-
sized Good
Shepherd with a lamb
around his neck,
cast in some substance
felt like rough stone)

that is beautiful
to hear, I won't
be so afraid
of being rock or bronze
though as a child
I had a dream
that eating grain
could turn me to stone.

Strange nightmare
for a kid he said —
how old were you?

Four or five—
as young as that.
I had seen
the Old Man of the Mountain
in New Hampshire
the great stone face
now crumbled away;
maybe that fed the dream.

But why the Grain
the Shepherd asked.
Don't know,
who can measure
dreams or bridle
Leviathan in sleep?

We can, he said,
because we neither
sleep nor wake,
all percepts to us
are summer stars
and milky flowers,
we know everything
like that, but we
know better
than to tell.

But my dream?

**You've lived with it
so long as mystery,
why foil its energy
by interpretation?
Leave it alone
and know and know
and be like me,
carry your Lamb.**

**I have no lamb.
You mean you haven't
found it yet.**

**That was a good
time to wake up.**

14 June 2016

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**Almost four o'clock
not a hint of light yet
what a dark morning!**

But now a little is!

The kind of triumph that comes with light.

14.VI.16

=====

(Lucy Lombard, at the post office)

**Little girl leaping
lowly, following
a tossed stone,
hop-scotch,
into its and hers
fated square,
one perfect sentence
in an endless text.**

14 June 2016

=====

Sound of the surf down there Dürer engraving
a man and his wife all they're doing
is listening what about us who shows us
in the beauty of unfailed attention?
Is there a liberty animal runs beside us
spacing recurring not music Mahler
not music Bach not Bach
this very fugue nothing names us I point
to my mouth and say the first thing comes to mind
that is my name clouds over fairy land
nobody needs to understand.

14 June 2016

SILENTUDE

**Alone with the mercy
mild arrivals
no one on the road or sea
silentude it said
and I consented —
it makes no sound
to write this down.**

14 June 2016

=====

**Last let it be said
it led here
through the dark
always one more thing
to explore, glorify,
report. *Hurt*
nobody — how easy
to do, how hard
to persuade to.**

14 June 2016

COMMUNIQUE FROM HQ

**Culture
is the collateral
damage of thinking.**

14.VI.2016

= = = = =

**Cloudless sky.
Chainsaw not far.
Hatred of the natural
expressed as macho roar.
Boys love noise.
And the mower makers know it.
And maybe what I'm saying now
only to the tumult of sound,
the skyless cloud
that deafens us.**

14 June 2016

=====

**Amplitude of the obvious.
kitten on a string —
and the tigers of instruction,
who rides them,
Sir William, out of the jungle
and into the book?**

**Our Twice-Born Lord,
he rides a tiger,
and tigers haul him
wisely raving
from vineyard to vineyard,
over the sea, too,
no distance for them
since they are his.**

**Not wrath
but clean intelligence
juiced with a little while
while the mild horses
trot circles in the fields.**

14 June 2016

=====

**I woke up before the poem did
so it must sleep**

**and I have to walk around
with nothing in my head.**

*Wake me, say me
something says.*

14 June 2016

=====

**A dragon is a quiet
mostly beast
but the one who guards
the bridge in Ljubljana
is very loud — even
from here I hear him,
his mouth wide open
for a high note, fangs
gorgeous gleaming —
where seeing
turns into sound.
In a magic land we dwell
where all senses are one.**

14 June 2016

A WOMAN NAMED

Bank of cloud
over the Elizabeths,

names of women.

Hedy Lamarr
the scientist, who
with Pound's George Antheil
developed encoding systems
poured into our *technê* today,
torpedos, WiFi, Bluetooth.
That's all Saint Wiki says.

Love taught you, teaches us,
all you knew, we knew,
your school was orgasm

lingers in the mind, old poetry,
fingers on the keyboard, be,
Hedy, be my Gaspara Stampa,

the brain is female to begin with
some of us lose the way.

I may yet get
to stand in the Zentral-
friedhof in Vienna
and graze the air above your grave,

**if any of you is there,
anywhere, at
least breathe in your name**

**once we called you “actress”
now we say “scientist”
“inventor” it is so
hard for us still
to say what a woman is.**

15 June 2016

=====

**The books will be here waiting —
I'm not writing letters
I'm reading them from the sea,
each wave a page,
so many volumes,
some pages quiet, reflective,
some thrash in the mind
and make me think
some other way.
Some other way to go.
Expect no mail from me
for a while, I will write
letters when I have nothing to say.**

15 June 2016

=====

Parerga, these,
to read beside the *Reasons*,

every treatise
has its litter,
leaves and husks

and even fruit sometimes,
wasp-gnawed, maybe,

one clean sweet
bite left for you.

15 June 2016

=====

**Come to the end of the door.
What then. Handle the sky.**

**If Dawn is a woman,
o Greeks, how can the Sun not be?**

**You knew better
back in the Baltic.**

**You knew that it was She.
Use the river then,**

**Elbe, Oder, Danube,
Hellespont, come**

**into the warm sea.
New country, new gods.**

**Or am I wrong again?
We have come to the end**

**of the door, the window
dead in a blackout curtain**

from my childhood, ivy

clammers up brick walls,

**idle uncles tear it down
and I am me again,**

**feet cold as Hesiod,
almost Greekless, on**

**an island about true,
truer than mainland anyhow,**

**go back to Thule
then come again,**

**make it right
this time, let me**

**be the rune
you find in the rock.**

15 June 2016

= = = = =

**Virtue to be
up early as
if to be young
for the first time
again, and yet
I am older than dawn,
I witnessed the light
ascending, how old
you have to be
to be born!**

**Brilliant certainly
intensely to be.
What have I learned
I didn't know before?**

Touch the window

kiss the door.

15 June 2016

= = = = =

**On the east coast of the east coast
we get it first, whatever it is.**

**On the beach the sea
comes in from the south.**

All we can do to stand in one place.

**No wind. The directions
unwind from us. We
are the center of the rose.**

15 June 2016

=====

for my Waterman Encre Violette

**Ink loves you.
It wants to say
and say. It kisses
your fingers
when you write,
it lasts all day
on your skin,
vanishes as you sleep,
lingers in the book
a thousand years.**

15 June 2016

AND THEN WE WOKE

And then we woke.

But what is waking
but slipping sideways
into another sort of sleep,

driven by the same
desires that the might knew
but now speaking English.

I was suddenly afraid
she had a little dog
but it was just a shadow
and made no sound —

though I have known a day when shadows talked
and lawns wrapped round the limbs of sleepers
and everything was no more alive than we are,

morituri, we about to die,
scattering what we can,
spargens sunlight
brass chords clashing in the ear.

We die so we can live forever
he explained, drawing a circle on the blackboard,

ever after theology would smell like chalk

and then we woke.

**The rifle-range was closed,
the roller coaster rolled
right onto the paper mountain and was gone.
Dragon's Gorge, Luna Park, before the War,**

**a flag on fire
amber slow oozing from its hidden room,
all heat releases**

**godown on the Calcutta dock
warehouse of desire**

**joss house = temple of Dios,
pronounced in Portuguese,**

**true enough for history
books maybe, but there needs
a different etymology for the heart**

**and then we woke
the sea was standing still in sheen
I cannot live away from thee**

but there was a dog,
a small one by its voice,
I heard it beefing in the night
the way they do

the way we do
the way sunlight enters the room,
dramatically, like an Italian tenor,
Esultate! crying, but be warned,
Otello, doubt will carry
all love away, so exult now, yes,
but exult later, trusting deep
the woman trust the woman

I cannot live apart from you

sea tells me all I know
so little of it though I understand

and then we woke
the candle lit itself
new stick of incense
burning on the ashes of the old

fragrance of the actual,
that tricky perfume,
we think we're conscious now
and moving and desiring and letting go

but no, we have no clue
even what the blood inside us
is doing at this moment,
red and white, platelets, strange salts,
immigrant pathogens,
antibodies.

What a word!
Why do religions disdain the flesh?
Because it does everything and then it dies

so they guess *something else*
of us survives. Something
we cannot live without
will live again.

The guess,
Pascal's wager.

We do not know
the busy syllogisms
solving themselves
inside us at this hour.

If we knew, we'd be

**and be awake, and never need
to wake up again.**

**And then we woke.
The building was complete,
children galloped in and out,
no grown-ups anywhere
no law except space,
dimension, gravity.**

**And one sixteen year old to guide them
as they play, making sure
play does not turn into game**

**(we can't go to Egypt anymore)
(the carpet weavers have forgotten Lenin)
(history is moving, history is her hair
lank on her wet shoulders, why
is she calling me but not by name?)**

**And then we woke,
ashamed of where we'd been
and what we were not doing there**

**Bibliothèque Nationale, recipe for making gold
using only raindrops, spittle, honey and the sound
of hummingbirds, soaked into fresh soft hay
for a season, by solstice
you'll have a lump of gold
small but real
from the bottom of the vessel
your mother's teacup**

**or I am altogether
a mistranslation, a cover letter,
an invitation from the Pope,
a postcard from Oaxaca,
marketplace,
alien vegetables on sale,
you cannot name me though I am green
I am yellow I am red,**

**no words, our words
are hollow shafts of bamboo,
girls run away, the garden drowns —**

**this is your fault, this
is what you've done with all your sleeping.**

So then we woke

**the fire needed tending
sent Phoebe to do it
she knows the day**

**dark as this sunshine is
makes me close my eyes
her eyes, soft
fingertips on her
hips are narrative —**

cannot live without thee.

15 June 2016

=====

**Out there.
Antics of cardinals
and finches.**

**Who knows my portrait
painted by Francis Bacon by Klimt by Géricault?**

**I was an old man
in love with politics—
blonde (right wing) brunette (eftist)
and flame-haired anarchist.**

**Finches squabbling, the fat
red cardinal says nothing, stands
powerfully above the seed
among the seed.**

**They painted me this way,
as if I were a man
and didn't care,**

**as if a small bird
lived inside my big male body
and fluttered wearily,
intermittently,
eager to fly out.**

**But the body has no out.
The soul has no weight.**

**The old man said
as old men do
I can't make love
but I can vote.**

**The finches heard in horror,
shouted and squeaked and giggled
the way they do,**

**if you are kind and call it singing
we can do nothing but sing.**

15 June 2016

PASSACAGLIA

*What the light knows
we disclose*

Did you say light or night,
is this Goethe or is this *Faust*?
O what glory it would be
to be neither,
just a plain self (no self)
between circumstances.

I never understand a question
until the answer comes
then sometimes I get
a pilgrim glimpse
of what it means to mean.

I have slept into stupidity
the color of dawn.
Sailor take warning.
This is an impossible arrangement,
dispositif, a bridge
from Denmark to Sweden —
yes, but this bridge
from Newfoundland to Cornwall
we call an ocean,
it lets us cross itself,

**we walk on boats,
pacing the deck
to make the winds blow
and keep the whalefish deep below
who'd wreck our track.**

**I am allowed
to see things as I do
because nobody cares,
there is a parliament in Budapest,
a holy synod happening on Crete
but they're not afraid of me.
I have slept beyond meaning
and mean no harm.**

**2.
Call it a game,
a theme park in the head,
Fairyland for real —
no matter where I go to sleep
I wake up there.**

**Nothing to read
except shadows of leaves
and faces as they come close,
or pass or kiss,
and each expression on a face
is a manifesto
and every glance a new religion**

whose bible lingers in the touch of a hand,

**ah, the deep romance
of being gone
from the world into the world,
bookless I quarry.**

**It is a country north of synecdoche
along a rimless lake
or lens the sun
comes up from presently.
And there abide these seven,
the Sisters of the Shining Bow
from red past indigo
and the last of them a flower too,
a woman's name, a time
when sleep begins to whisper
and the inveigling light calms down.**

**Am I a madman to live such life?
My sin back then
was trying to reclaim land from the sea,
deny ocean its empery,
nice try, a Dutch treat.**

**Sin I say it was
and so the mermaids
in their twinkly gowns
blonde-wigged and looking serious**

pronounced it from the beach down here —
your only hope, they hissed,
is wish the sea rush in.

3.
So it turns out I was
the character Goethe had in view,
charácter we Greeks say,
spoil the god and spare the child —
something like that.

Goethe thought I wanted something smart,
eco-friendly, good for man and beast,
some technological benefaction
of our endangered brains.

Not so. I wanted sleep,
the long slow passacaglia
through the streets of dream,
maybe it is true all progress
comes from sleep,
not dream so much
as what it wakes us with,
the quiet gasp of sunlight
at the edges of the window shade.

I know they're making light of us,
the fairy mothers and the guardians of bees,
they're breathing messages for me

disguised as what I see.

**We all know mostly
where we left our hands last night —
are they still there?
Is this street what I intended?**

***Light touches us*
and teaches how.
That is the secret
I keep trying to tell,
but the words keep changing,
books flutter in the wind
till none of the words cohere
and nothing makes sense but sense.**

**That's where I came in
as we used to say at the movies
when projections was continuous
at what kids called the moving pictures
pronounced *moon pitchers*
and they still pour
those uncanny incandescent images,**

**it still never stops,
sunrise all day long,
I need to sleep a little
to learn a little more.**

16 June 2016

ANTHEM

**Steady application
of hand to brush
and brush to paper
paints a message
lasts a thousand
years. You
don't have to know
what it means
when you write it,
meaning is gradual,
incremented, a voice
in the woods slowly
comes closer, not
a bird you decide,
something newer,
slower, you-er
you imagine,
something that all
these years has
been coming
towards you,
only you,
telling you now
who you are.**

16 June 2016

=====

**Lean limb of land,
sand, between the sound and the channel
as to walk there out to Doerr's house
between the seas, dry-shod
like Israelites crossing, returning.
stumble on pebbles. But still.**

16 June 2016

=====

**Hour when the rising
sun over the island
is so bright I can't
tell cloud from sky.
It's a sea thing,
eye confusion,
switcheroo cosmique,
uncanny, a game
they're playing,
I watch from the bleachers.**

16 June 2016

=====

**The organization of all such things
a paradox in a small town paper
reads like a fish struggling
in the talons of a cormorant,
alas, these things happen
we eat one another.
Vegetarians kill and consume
millions of collateral
unseen victims from tith
and harvest and transport
just like the rest of us.
Just because you can't see
a living creature doesn't mean
it's not alive. *Vegan Cuisine* I read
and the heart sank lower still.
We eat one another.
Let us learn to live on light alone.**

16 June 2016

POSTCARD TO ALL POSSIBLE POETS

**Time to review
the new,
revise
the unwritten.**

16.VI.16

BEACH

If there are other people on the beach, you can still get a suntan, gather shells, or even swim a little. But what you can't do is be alone with the sea. When you're alone with the sea, you hear what it has to say, and what it has to say specifically to you, just you. But when there are many people, or even a few other people on the beach, the sea talks to all of them. The sea is generous — in that respect it is like the sun, it shines on everyone. The sea talks to everyone. When there are a hundred people on the beach, the sea finds it necessary to talk to each one of them, telling them things that each one of them can learn from, use, understand. But that doesn't help you, if what you really want is to get the full dose of the sea's information. That's why you stand like a romantic poet or a dying man, alone on the beach, as often as you can, at odd hours, dawn, or sunset, or on chilly days, when the water is too cold even for your feet.

16 June 2016

THE IMAGE AND THE SOURCE

for Charlotte

1.

But of course the ocean
is all of us anyhow.
Wake with nothing in mind,
just Robert Duncan's face
in later life, laughing brown,
and it was clear he had,
has, some Latin in him,
Mexican or old Cal-mex.

Why didn't we know this
when we were all alive?

2.

Dream
does good DNA analysis,
ocean in the blood
and where we've been
to be so suddenly
as it seems here,
a tune from an opera
suddenly glads the mind,
no story, just

tone upon tone.
Shaping the now.

3.
So there must be a genetics of the moment.
Why was he laughing. Edward Howard Robert Duncan
some man we knew. I used to think
Welsh was in my blood because of names,
names have their destinies, *habent sua fata*
nomines, who knows who's wrong
anyhow? Why was he laughing, this single
story-less image of his face as I tried to wake,
tried to go on sleeping, dawn of a Friday
clouds shivering apart just before sunrise?
A woman coming to wake us, and she too is laughing.

4.
No explanation.
Why should there be,
I'm not even asking.
If this were a love
poem I'd find my,
love shows the, way.

But just fuzzy
questions without
much urge for answers.
And that too is a question —
and one day I will

finally answer the sea.

5.

Correction. Density needed.

Throb of a huge engine last evening

boat going by, she told me,

other side of what we see.

And you know who she is,

she is always, she is C.

6.

Once I was a clerk

in chancery, once I wrote

mostly the names of people,

places, boundaries, ages,

mortalities and marriages.

A quick and lively penmanship

graceful, legible, was needed

for my strange businesses,

to write down who what

happened to or whom.

We are lost in transitivity.

Might have been Welsh there too,

or French like Mickey Mouse

or Irish as my fingernail
(digitus medius sinister)
always trying to split.
Pathology of language
that it remembers too much,
all the wrong stuff,
1941 Pontiac, shine
of the hood, Indian head, my
father waxing the car.

7.
All doubt begins in memory,
all the times this happened before
“all my failures” you think,
“Why should now be otherwise?”.
Because it always is. Karma
has unnoticed side effects,
outriders remittances — maybe
that’s why he was laughing.
the virgin the quick with life beautiful today
Light coming up from the sea
out of nowhere all over again.

17 June 2016

== == == == ==

**Clouds at actual sunrise
disembody themselves.
They will come again,
another shape, another movement,
shade and sculpture.
Cool and shimmer
but always the same
droplets of water
endlessly forming.
And sometimes speak as rain.
Feast of the Reincarnation.**

17 June 2016

=====

**Permanent magnet
not really. Any ism is an iffy *chose*,
a chewed-on biscuit
left on the stoop — birds
maybe rats maybe bugs
maybe naught. Not everything
gets eaten. Not
everything dies.**

17 June 2016

LETTER TO ALANA IN THE WOODS

If the sea were not so dark
the sun could not sparkle on it
between the beach and the peninsula.
Principle of opposites in love.

Yudon a lamp of turquoise light
your new name — the green
of mercy and the blue of healing.
Tara the Savioress, Buddha of Medicine.
Spices they call *meat-medicine* too,
they heal the horror of killed meat,
to hide the sorrow.

Where you are
sorrow takes a breather, your chest
is filled with light
on loan from everything
you give back changed.
For we do this to the light,
it marries us a while
then goes off and loves other people.
Ditto the air,
the sacred oxygen nitrogen pollutants we inhale.

I know you do, I have seen you laugh
and take a breath, your eyes charmed with light.

**And morning is a sadhana of light and air,
a footstool to reach the sky,
soft cloth around your arms,
a tiger skin around your waist
from no known beast, no,
that was last night
when you unfolded the pecha of the dark
and read your way to sleep,
that busy schoolhouse.**

**What was the first thing you learned?
Somewhere in there I am your brother.
Think of an ink
you write an angry letter with
but the ink vanishes
as soon as you write the next phrase
and at the end of fury
you have an empty page
you send it to your friend —
it puzzles him more than language could.**

**What was the first thing you learned in the woods?
How loud the silence is
even the rain doves and finches couldn't mask it
always there is some animal to look in
to teach detachment. Always the fever
of learning more and more, the shawm, gong,
alphabet, jeweled treasures of the abhidharma,
how to walk in the rain without getting wet**

by being wet all the time before it, all the time,
how to be bareheaded in the dictionary,
barefoot in the study hall, how to hear
all things as Hebrew and suddenly know
where all language is coming from —

what was the worst thing you learned,
that being alive is like having a child
and being a child all at the same time,
ache of being pregnant with yourself.
Pain of bearing and being born every day —

how can you answer me,
we're so close I won't stop talking,
and what was the first thing you taught the wood,
spilled onto the space around you?
It must have been love of some kind,
you're always housed in it,
the walls are windows,
the doors are everywhere and none are closed —

it's past dawn now,
the sea a sheen
of what somewhere must have
a newer name than light
since light is all around us
in the first place, making
the grass green, the lips red.

17 June 2016

=====

**If you want to go to heaven
be careful what island you live on.
Maybe a little one's best
where you can't get away
from your mistakes and fascinations.
so you work them out year by
year in sunlight and in silence.**

17 June 2016

====

**Exhibits may be adequate —
sit up straight in your chair
and fly towards the moon —
don't land — he's
not kind to visitors,**

**takes their breath away — etc.
Go by and head for the Great
Invisible Planet of Ishtar—
invisible from here
but you'll see it clear enough
as soon as you pass through
the moon's opaking sphere —
as they used to call it.
Head for Ishtar, land.
Careful not to topple
out of your chair —
make a good impression
here though no natives to impress —
just you and Herself.
Don't worry, she'll let you go
eventually, speed you home
with a carton of information
and some seeds and spores to plant
when you get home.**

**That's where all
our vegetation came from
in the first instance. Now
up to you, go and come back,
enrich us with flowers
and grain that charms the soil,
unchains the mind.
That's why you were born,
that's why you're a little boy.**

17 June 2016

=====

**Astyanax comforted
as he falls through the air
hurled from the walls of Troy**

**to think in that instant
of immense descent
that he'll not suffer more**

**or be the cause
of Andromache's anxiety,
mother, or this other**

mother he's hastening to meet.

17 June 2016

=====

**Anxiety of boat arrivals.
Wish you could take a steamboat
up from the city and dock right near us,
gamble your way north or serve
lemonade to tourists. Get here
anyhow and ask your questions,
whispering each into that (an arrow
points to it) hole in the white birch tree
(*Betula alba*) that connects
indirectly to my inmost ears.
I'll rush out and embrace you
with information, names,
dates, titles, recipes from the hills
of Nepal — you'll never go home.
This is where your language lives.**

17 June 2016

=====

**Of course I want to hold you —
What else is history for?**

17 June 2016

= = = = =

**Just a touch
and the light comes on
your skin
illuminates the world.**

17 June 2016

CONTRA VOLUNTATEM

1.

Fullish moon's light woke the room
coming between the molding and the shade —
so little light is needed to begin.
Cosmology of one more day.

Rooves come first, and then the houses,
we live from the top down, no wonder
we can't shake hierarchy —
rule by priests or rule by holy

the moon tells its own romance
hungry questing skin all night.
The sun touches without meaning to,
the moon wants to but cannot touch.

2.

This whole operatic tragedy
every blessed month, the Magus
propositioning the mind.

Trust the witch
but doubt the wizard,
the witch worships what she touches,

the wizard just wants to rule
everything instead.
Trust the witch — her skin
is subject to leaf and bark,
milk and blood,
 the wizard
is a prisoner of his will.

I learned this in Hawaii from a tree,
blue leaves and pure white skin
and nobody around to see us talk.

3.
Of all the paroxysms of the ghost
doubt will the most.
Ghost = *geist*, mind or spirit,
the ghost in our animal machine.

And more. Whenever you see the word 'spirit'
replace it with ghost. The way
Catholics do, the ghost in poetry,
ghost of the Renaissance, ghost of the times.

The will is where the wicked lies —
any alphabet will tell you that.
Whatever it is, it is not free —
not free to choose, not free to use.
You're paying for it all life long.

4.

But it was the birds
that woke me,
only then did I see
what woke the birds.

Moonlight, mild
synaesthesia,
waking on earth.
Again.

 Didn't
have all that much
to say. Don't.

But now the real
meat comes,
the unintended,
the never-knew-you-knew,

what's known only
after you spoke it.

5.

So that will be my Egypt,
reading the ruined monuments of dream,
the shattered tablets

**of everything I ever read, learned,
misunderstood, didn't get,
forgot. I read these ruins
like any archeologist,
mind on my work a bit
distracted by thoughts
of my illustrious career.
Pleasing interns
working at my side.**

**And that means you,
you read this stuff
to let me be.**

18 June 2016

=====

**Get the numbers wrong
but get the letters right.
And poetry was born,
rising wet-thighed from the sea.**

18 June 2016

= = = = =

**In birdish sleep
made uneasy
by the full moon —
the dark is hard to find.
Thei pooreyes !**

18 June 2016

BEING AVERAGE

**Average all I ask she said
and that meant politics to me,
tumult in the barrio and neighbor strife.**

**There is no number like that
I expostulated, she insisted
inches and yards, pints and ounces**

**but I resisted, my job is exactly
to say things are different
from how they seem, the whole**

**ocean in this glass of water
as Augustine proved.
He proved the opposite she snarled**

**and when it comes to snarling
philosophy gives way to knives,
not so surprising really**

**philosophers are only
hooligans of the mind
as we say in Russia.**

**She turned her back on me
and strode into the nearest town
looking for some guy with calculus.**

18 June 2016

AT THE WINDOW

**So many leaves out there,
each leaf a page.
But in what language
I have to learn to read?
Keep busy, the birds say,
it won't be long now.
Before what? I ask —
but they fly away.**

18 June 2016

=====

**The phone won't ring.
But the bird comes,
perches on my notebook, finger,
arm of chair, arm of me,
hops on my chest. Hungry
not just for affection.
I recognize our brotherhood.**

18 June 2016

=====

**Teach dogs to talk.
If we're so smart.
If they're so intelligent.
teach dogs to talk —
that's what they really want.**

18 June 2016

=====

**I'm speaking human language
because I forget the other kinds
I used to know. I plead
with the rock — help me remember.
The leaves on the trees
try as hard as they can,
but I'm a hopeless student,
daydream, wander wit,
forget what they teach me.
Snooze at my desk.
I don't even have a desk.
I'm stuck with what
I think things are called.**

18 June 2016

=====

**The truck
gets stuck
in the field,
up to its axles
in mud.
A mysterious gondola
adrift on land.
I see this clearly
in half of my head.**

18 June 2016

=====

**Lengthen my countenance
on the day of the Lady
to whom the Lord if any left
the conduct of the world.**

18.VI.16

=====

**Late afternoon. A man
walking alongside his shadow
past a white wall.
I see them, recognize
one of them, know his name
even. But the other —
who will ever know him?**

**18 June 2016
(Glyph 1)**

=====

**Hum of aircraft
unseen over.
Dwindling into the blue
that hides, sustains it.**

**It sounds like a sketch
by Picasso glimpsed
before the album's shut.
Two Girls Walking to the Party,
a smell of soap.**

**18 June 2016
(Glyph 2)**

=====

**The light here
you can breathe.
A little land
arounded by great waters.
Everything talks.**

18 June 2016

=====

**I lie there
pot on my earer
weighing, weighing
the causes, totality
of causes until
I handle sleep**

**it seems to say,
the French forcing its way
back through Latin
to find me.**

I get it all wrong but know what it means.

19 June 2016

=====

**In island silence
I listen to the noise
my body makes
inside. I am
the only action in town.**

19 June 2016

E-MAIL FROM AN ISLAND

**I seem to have forgotten
who I think I am
or thought I was.**

**Has that ever
happened to you?
The sea says No.**

19 June 2016

=====

**Leave unspoken till it rises
a larger column of air —
bassoon, not piccolo — the play is
fingering each syllable out
into the generalizing air —
it's up to you to be specific —
that is the animal you ride.**

19 June 2016

=====

**The janitors of sleep are busy foreigners,
no wonder they forget me on their rounds —
how hard they work, and from so far they've come
to swish the curtains to and fro and lullaby our ears.
they must think I'm old enough to find my own way in.**

19 June 2016

=====

So much is guesswork —
a pain here and there,
a sly figurine of Pan
left over from Byzantium —
he is everything there is
yet he dances in our little woods.

2.
Pas in Greek means *all*
in French means *not* —

not one footstep further
will it go, whoever, with me

as I try to walk along the beach
watching the sea keep coming in

and never stop. Why doesn't
all mean ocean anyway?

19 June 2016

=====

**I guess I'll never fill
my pockets with wild
strawberries —
my pockets are immense
and reach all the way
down below the night.**

19 June 2016

=====

**I never learned to ride
a bowling alley very far —
the noise terrific
all came out of my hands
and hands like mine.
Scary. Too much bad wine.
Old fashioned telephone
cradled between shoulder and neck
and nobody says anything.
Hello, hello? Clatter
of ball-stuck pins scattering.**

19 June 2016

=====

**Sometimes nothing happens
to happen. That
is a blue day
with orange feathers
towards evening.
A quiet squawk or two
like surf washing out.
Each wave subtly
rearranges the rocks.
Don't be surprised — you
get repurposed too
by the afternoon,
breeze, news, holes
in your understanding.
Less and less. This also
is a kind of happening.**

19 June 2016

=====

**I lie down now and count the ways.
Whys. Wise
to sleep and slow to wake. Make
much of so little time
all these merciful years.**

19 June 2016

=====

**Tell me all you know
about Byzantium.
I know Theodora's breasts —
what more is there?
Some laws, some churches, soon enmosqued?
A city with a water in it,
and every street leads up to the Moon**

19 June 2016

=====

**But enough about me.
The mind has better friends
and business to address. Waikiki.
Pont des Arts. necktie
nostalgia on Allen Street —
you know all that, you've
been listening from the start.
The evidence piles up —
red cans only for gasoline,
steel rails still embedded
here and there in asphalt —
we cut corners every day.
And cable spools turn
overnight into table tops
we gentry like the smell
of other people's labor.**

**You'd think I was angry
or just sore, but enough
about me, this is all about
history, the thing that happens
exclusively to other people,
like winning the lottery or**

glamorous assassination

On the Steps of the Bourse

shalt thou fall down,

wasn't that a movie there?

Not anger, sloth, demur—

to lift a finger would besmirch

this valorous aesthete—

complaining is our politics.

But enough about us—

there is a rain dove

out there lamenting

(we hear it that way,

sorry, can't help it,

emotions rule our wits)

but all he's doing

really is saying hello

the way the sun and wind

and seasons do — take

the long view, not the L train,

get outta town.

But enough about you —

I'm far from certain

you're paying attention

in hard cash, the kind

that brings blond furniture

home from Ikea instead.

Key to social success,

**upscale your neighborhood.
I Kiss Everybody's Ass —
that's what it stands for,
how could you of all
people not have known?**

**But enough about you,
this is more like Stravinsky
than the hymn book,
Southern Baptists barking
in the local chapel,
horror story, Cthulhu
will come to the rescue —
nasty little leaflets
everywhere, accept Him
as your personal savior
(the hell with everybody else)
and do as you please.**

**What an odd religion
daytime is! Enough
about everything, in silence
sand rises from the sea
and stays. A while.
And the personal
happens, so we neglect the stone.
The stone is our mother.**

Come, love and answer me —

**did you pay attention?
How many *thes* in the Bible,
how many *thou*? Hel
was kindly before we
got there, death
was the mild hotel
she ran where we might sleep.
But enough about us.**

20 June 2016

= = = = =

**Can't get away
from having something to say.
Blame Baptism,
holy salt on my tongue,
a sprinkle of cool water
to open more than my eyes.**

20 June 2016

= = = = =

**Can't help it,
get confused
all this light
and no one in it —**

sometimes a birdsong

**is a requiem
for some other song,
some other's voice.**

20 June 2016

= = = = =

**Shouldn't I miss people more than I do?
You will, you will, when the price is right,
graveyard stinks to high
heaven wit with store-bought flavors, how they
too die in a few days, whose job is it
to take all the dead funeral wreaths away?
Is that what poetry was all about?**

30 June 2016

== == == == ==

**We paint our history over every.
And then we think we know the one we meet.
Am I the man you thought she was?
Inferences mislead, identities bewilder.
Keys to safe deposit boxes for example
in long-gone banks. And clearly windows
can't be trusted either, pale blue socks
wrong for funerals, deceased dead
with no insurance. A golf cart
comes grumbling up the memorial lawn.
Baker, where is thy yeast? I crave
a pinch of your best music. Thanks.**

20 June 2016

= = = = =

**Thunder to bless new summer
dry land relaxes, caressed.
Things wash away. *Stuff*
transforms, ports, pyres .
Hard rain then soft —
how simple all words make us
or conversely. Wet or Dry.
Many or One. Drenched we are
with archaic philosophy.**

21 June 2016

=====

**So dark now —
and when the storm goes
it all'll be
preposterously bright,
this *it* of ours, this all.**

21 June 2016

=====

**I need a little silk cover for my bell
so I can ring it and not wake the sky —**

21.VI.16

THE THUNDER IS PASSING

Rainy rhythm Lena Horne
childhood folds back on the man
a tender almost welcome stifling—
waking with blanket over your face
on a cold morning. *Stormy Weather.*
After seventy years of rainstorms
why does she come back today.
Mist on the sea. Her beautiful face.

21 June 2016

= = = = =

**Bee in a garden
sea in the sea.**

21.VI.16 (Glyphs)

= = = = =

**As if the rafters
or from the sky
two of whom
as in Chagall
the Holy Land
of her body
swing low
with the Holy Land of his.
And Jordan was
and is the flow
between them
always soft entangled
in mid-air
clear, the way
a planet is,
ours, vast embrace
sea caressing
land, the two
locked together
joyous in mid-space —
never let the arms
of land open
to let her go,
their kiss
is all we are.**

22 June 2016

=====

**I feel the dream
in my hand
it was green
with no gravity
except ourselves —
that's what
any dream means.**

22 June 2016

FRIENDS IN BADEN

In spa town
in all the land
of baths
where Mörike
spent a lustrum
divining night from day
and saying how,

our friend's now fevered.
Feverpush, the cure.
The peaceful town
below the fortress
of the warrior knights,
those Christian jihadists,

dear God let anger
dissolve out of our
bodies, our towers,
towns, wicked isms
that suffer no joy.

He might have prayed.
Keep the measure
taut and quick,

no margins
to guide you,
cling to the pathway
of the spine, the single
road that goes
two wheres
and takes you there.

Be quick as breath
a word trails
after, trying
to catch its life
for its own.

But breath
is larger than language
though only
language lasts.

This paradox
torments us—
no wonder human-
kind spends
a third of its life
asleep, trying
to forget
the distances
yet to come.

**Is this fast
enough?
Sunrise on the sea,
slows everything
down. Can a man
go faster than the Sun?
rest my case.**

22 June 2016

=====

**What is the first name of St. Christopher?
the name he bears now
comes from what he bore —
the Christ child across some busy stream.**

**We seem named for, by, what we do.
Who is *Yah* and who is *El*?
One or two? Or sometimes three?
Incongruous divinity!**

**Of course we want to know what our name means —
that is, why it *is* ours, why given,
as a kind of instruction, or mere description,
heirloom personality, shadow of a dictionary
in another language. One we still don't speak/**

22 June 2016

=====

**I used to think the folk I saw in dream
were real or realish
and were the same people I knew in waking,
often, though they were often
oddly different bodies and behaviors.**

**But lately I think the ones I dream
are not as real as the ones I think,
the ones who speak in my waking state
(or is that real either?),
the think-ones, the ones we write novels about.**

**So three categories in my Indo-European head:
dream folk, think folk, wake folk.
I seem to need all three
but the first is really still a mystery.**

22 June 2016

= = = = =

Slept to the loud, calm,
quiet thriving of the surf,
and still at morning speaking
into the calm bright day —
a genial instructive sound
louder than I've heard it here,
no wind on this windy island
to mask, only the wind
below the sea that churns it.

We walked along the shore last night
marveling at the quiet roar
out of the calm sea,
loud, soft, calm, urgency—
the sea is everything.
And says so —
hearing it is like praying.

23 June 2016

=====

**There was a coded message in the dream,
a pot of ointment, tiny alphabets inside
disguised as green. And on the base
the message scrawled minuscule,
something about communicating,
other people, other people and love.**

23 June 2016

=====

**Morning makes me a pathologist
examining the carnage of dream
and — often scarier — what
dream made me think on waking.
Am I Goethe, to have such
presumption over the night time,
to feel such competent authority
to speak into the very face of day?
I'll eat humble pie for breakfast
and crawl away to scheme.**

23 June 2016

THE USES

Beer can candles
any vessel lights the dark
palindrome of vowel song
birds always sing backwards,
have you noticed, Respighi,
Jannequin? *We*, we
are the only forward movers,
we and our wheels and arrows,
mortars and mandolins —
get moving each of us
whispers to itself, let
the world stand still
we must be on our way.

On the lawn. Squirreling away
our senses in the tree of dream.
What does that even mean?
Hierarchs and aqueducts,
there was culture for you,
before our time when
water ran from the hills
down to our closed-door
keep-out houses
where we kept, keep
moving though there's no

where to go, no savvy
for staying, always this
girlish yen for other,
this boyish twitch to shake
leads to no purpose,
buy a ball, bounce
images off images, game,
o boys love games,
all that going and no gone.

I'll meet you in ten
minutes in Paris,
by the Spanish Steps
and we'll climb up the
Akropolis together.
But everything's closed
on Thursday, we must
make do with history,
a cup of coffee, bad-
mouthing close friends,
watching the waiter's fingers
as he wipes the slop,
what a gorgeous ring,
emerald in silver but
why not gold. Why
not indeed. The coffee
is too hot to taste,
by the time it cools
it has not much taste

**left — doesn't that
remind you of something?**

**Doesn't matter if they're shut,
the outsides of museums
are what really tell you
what art and culture are
and are really about. Big.
Big stuff. Marble and granite
and modernly glass.
Pyramids and domes,
KuHiMu, imperial power,
the Louvre that mother hen
(mother wolf in chicken
feathers) gathering fetishes
to itself, courtyards,
rivers, they can't
stop collecting. Grump.**

**Thank God it's Thursday
or we'd have to go inside
where only John Yau
dared to go before us
setting his feelings free
in such a dangerous stone —
a hero, he, who knows
to see and dares to say —
I am no critic, I employ
my ignorance to withstand**

the pain and beauty of art
when rarely I find some.
Go back downhill,
Demeter is waiting
for the school bus to bring
her daughter home from hell.
The park seethes
with sightseers.
In time, myths muddle,
make no mistake.

I was waiting on the corner too
for her to lose interest
in mere progeny—
Madame I explained
I am the future itself
come to embrace
your tepid but attractive
now. Do me the honor
to walk with me
beyond that tangle
of awkward, unsatisfying
relationships you call
your life. Come
to the verge, the waterless
ocean, the starless night,
the unending, all-yielding
people of the sky —
come tell lies with me

and I will turn them
into chewy chunks of bread —
we'll share them!
We'll call it being!
Being in love! A cup
of coffee with a big
league team, sorry,
you wouldn't understand that.

Thus he spoke. (*Hos
ephat* in the original)
and all the birds of Budapest
(never been there) rose
and soared around his shoulders
then settled back
like homeless braceros
beneath the great bridge.
A postcard in your ear,
dear friend, whoever,
these images have come
such a long way to find you
in time, their duty is
to make you see at last
the great bronze dragon
on the Bridge at Ljubljana
(another burg I've never been) —
green functive wings,
a row of spacy fangs,
nothing snaky about him,

hips like a Hussar,
roar like a whole opera
all in one shout,
eyes intelligent, claws
ready for you
(I may try to personate)
but those magnificent
leathery wings of bronze —
this, child, is a real dragon
photographed in some
Slovenian gorge, copied
faithfully in mind's
metal. This animal
(one of the few creatures
I admit to being more than me,
more me than me, too)
this animal turns fear
to beauty and back again,
and love is like that,
bite of the caress,
heaven hunt of the invading.

He's only a picture
on the walls of the web
but he's realer than I am.

2.

There's a touch of Byron here,
sheer going on
and nothing too deep—
we deal here with things that we can say
another day we'll speak the silences.

As once in Rome
that Celtic poet from the north
used obscenities to prove
the chasteness of his heart,
so here we have to put to use
the shop-worn hand-me-downs
we find in any dictionary.
Will you forgive me,
you all deserve so much more
than words and what they point to,
will you?

We wait
by the river for the first
skiff to ply upstream
bringing a new faith from the city.
Religion usually lasts
no longer than a day or two,
then it's Thursday and we start again.

All the gods come along to us
by way of Alexandria,

**move towards the big islands
vanish back into the sky.
And here I stand, Nonnus of Panopolis,
waiting for my god
to stretch out full inside me,
already I feel his hand
through my arm
and soon my fingers will be his—**

**and then you'll read the truth in what I say.
Greek epic is like a functional but creaky TV,
you see and you hear and the show goes on forever.
It makes you want to go places and buy things
but you will never have that kind of money.**

23 June 2016

CONTRA OPINIONEM

Whatever happens
I'll have an opinion about it.

And that is sad.
Very sad, a grief
to the cognitive mind,
a veil of *something*
between me and what happens,
not even a notion
half-baked emotion,
doxa, demon of the soul.

And this too
is an opinion,
a *scandalum in mente*,
in thinking about thinking
the veil shimmers
even there, where
ought to and *wish it were*
and *wish it weren't* writhe,
hiding the mind from seeing
the actual present — itself
the future.

Leave me,
opinio, but how

**to banish opinion
without abandoning
intelligent response
to what happens?**

**See the other side
of everything. The other
other side of other
always. That helps
but that's still more
thinking. You work it out,
you're stronger,
you're many and I'm one
Seid umschlungen, Millionen
and wipe mud's
mirror clean again.**

24 June 2016

ST. JEAN-BAPTISTE

after S.M.

His feast
he speaks,
illuminé
by the same
motive
somewhere
chose me
my head
permanently
bows down
in salute.

24 June 2016

GRAMEN

**Does what sea does
and does it green.**

24.VI.16

=====

**Name me. I am
the riddle deep
in the core of the obvious.
Apple seed, peach stone,
the dream you had
last night you
thought no one saw —
I did. I was there.
Am there. You
are the husk of me —
didn't you feel that
sometimes, when
you felt your own skin
and your fingers
found it strange.**

24 June 2016

=====

**If I stand here
long enough
will I be me?
Will I be tall
enough to cast
a shadow?
So much depends
on the sun.
The wind. The waters
of Jordan flowing
always between
and between. Come
from nowhere,
go nowhere.
Have I come home?**

24 June 2016

[THE USES]

3.
So that's where the sand
comes from in my shoes,
a Little Egypt (remember her?)
of my own. Man,
how old are you to remember
that. It's not me it's the sand,
those tiny inorganic grains
have no life of their own
to dream about so need
the living coral of our brains,
chalk cliffs of our bones
alive alive o. Gotta keep
your purchase straight.
Silica versus Foraminifera,
c'est tout. (A line Tom
Raworth might well envy,
howdy, dear friend
so far away) . Egypt,
as I remarked. No one
needs to believe me.
the asp is in the asking,
self-doubt kills queens.

IU'm trying to get through

**the poem to the mind,
through the comfy sparkling
wall of words to what
might be behind them—not
the poet's mind, they're
as dumb as all the rest.
but what the words,
those hussies, might
have picked up along the way
from mind to me.
To you. Somewhere out there
under the rainbow
where the first ones were,
where we still are.**

24 June 2016

=====

1.

Where did I leave
the world last night?
So different now, cold,
empty, only the sea's
rise and fall and roar
are constant. Thought
bird song. clock
or dream? Syntax
rules the waking
mind.

It is
a bird, there,
as sure as Coleridge
attended half-ear
to owls at Grasmere.

2.

Naming the ancestors is good
before breakfast, greeting
the noble lineages you wish yourself in,
great themes, fabulous sea creatures,
myths even you could understand.

**The mirror was talking again,
the one you don't even have
to hang on the wall, no glass,
unbreakable, streaked with tears.**

3.

**You can always change the numbers later.
Broken streets, torched cars, a neighborhood
of pure resentment. In Bihar once I saw
poor people happy in a three-walled house —
triumphed over poverty and oppression by
not paying attention. Doing what they could.
Smiling out at anything that passed by.
Class-struggle principles choked my tenderness
but thirty years later I still see their eyes.**

25 June 2016

== ==

**Learning to keep the eyes
focused on what isn't happening —
the A24 bus heading vaguely east
for instance — helps what happens
feel more like an opera,
everything is music and glamor and intermission.
Mingle while you can, little boy,
till they discover you deep in your grown-up clothes
and cast you out into silence.**

**2.
39th St., old Met, another city,
B-13 at my door, Athens
still calling weakly, almost sobbing,
from the ruins of my education.**

**I have been nowhere, seen nothing.
I knocked on Freud's door
but he wasn't home, went
to kiss Mahler's wife but was too shy**

—*la commedia e finita*

**the poor clown says
dropping the knife,
letting the music go .**

**3.
We all make mistakes,
by way of love and trust.
but don't think we *are* mistakes,**

**there is a Golden Something
hidden in the gorse
of all our nastiness —**

**a little lummoX soul maybe,
but capable of song.
Or whatever it is that keeps on.**

25 June 2016

ARTCRIT

**Doo-wop of the partial senses
an animal would be ashamed
of using so little of its musculature
to bite a burglar or blame the moon —
put your back into the work,
all your so expensive skills,
feel everything — that's what it's saying,
this art we love so much, if only
for all the naked people in it.
Remember how there used to
be Schiele or Modigliani, or Renoir.?**

2.

**Art wants all of us from all of us.
No one walks the morning streets of art —
They wake up late and read their devices,
make up their mind before the door flies open**

**only too late. I have decided there is no
difference between abstract and figurative —
we can't see either because the wrong
parts of us do the looking. Need I say more?**

**sit on the sofa and look at that Monet
a dozen years and let it shine
its way inside you —
like Bernhard's old bloke's Tintoretto.**

**The ancients knew
you needed only one
or two paintings
to know the whole world —**

**Vermeer, Crivelli, Friedrich.
Leave the rest to Sotheby's —
look at this one thing
until your whole body sees it**

**and is seen. My father's love
affair with Cézanne's bowl of peaches.**

25 June 2016

[from scratchpads recent]

1.
Decommissioned lightship
at berth behind the ferry,
its lenses still intact.

The little dog of the starboard lady
weighs six pounds—
his weight is in his teeth.

Thalassa! New Bedford
harbor, moving now, out
into the open sea,

we are together.
Twenty-third anniversary.
There is no time B.C.

2.

**Open sea so
I can finally be me
and set myself aside
so the real flows through.**

**The sea loves to hint
about its magnitude.
Efficacy of its ablution.**

**all the way here the forest
said so too. We're all
alive, you know,

not just your big blue mama.**

3.

**Being able to disclose
is itself a discovery.**

**As men grow crazier
sometimes they grow
less neurotic. Now
all their distresses,
fear, anger, pettiness
get focused on one
theme or thing or group
till they forget all the stuff
they used to blame.**

**Madness as a kind of
monotheism in a pagan world?**

[transcribed 25 June 2016]

=====

**Pull up yourself
and light my cigar.
I am a craftsman
of the obvious.
And you have left**

**2.
a smile on the back
of my head. To
work with, make
something, make
something happen.**

**3.
In the third movement
transhumance. We move
to France, you take
my name and I take
everything else.
It's like chemistry,
science of arbitrary
connections, name
then and weep.
There is no coda.**

25 June 2016

=====

The glow belongs to the god
it said. I was awake
enough to be impertinent:
Goddess? I asked
because I'm always asking.
There is no difference by
now, it said, you should
know that, also by now,
how long have you been
eating barley, walking
on grass, catching
bird songs in your fingers,
you?

Abashed, I answer
since I should, I will
and now I do.

OK it said
do not mistake
your whim
for a theology —
wait for the passerelle —
Does that mean sparrow,
the bird will tell
all when she comes?

No, it said, it is

**a footbridge over
a chasm you never
dare to look into,
there are people down there
and market booths
and a band playing loud.
Meantime the glow
lights up your cracked
skin, the glasses
you guess through,
try to stay awake
to the end of this
very short sentence.**

26 June 2016

=====

**Make history with wax,
plant words in the ground —
remember Alana when
she planted old books
by the doorway of her
someone else's house?
Who knew what grew?
Terror of what a book
could grow up into.
I will not eat that wheat.**

26 June 2016

=====

**Somewhere in the dream
I called out to my mother
as I never had,
I was an infant
climbing stairs,
hard work, frightened
Mommy, Mommy
I was calling
in my own deep voice.**

26 June 2016

=====

**Silence in my head
a hum
like sunrise**

**in the far dome
of my skull
out east
where doves get trapped
sometimes,**

**a hollow declared
where thought could be,**

**a hollow like pain —
easy pain,
almost a friend.**

26 June 2016

=====

1.

And they were waiting for me.
Who? The gates themselves,
their need to be entered,
to be gotten through, as if
no passage means no being,
and they were.

Green

it seemed, color of rain
and with a voice like it.

2.

The young men were reluctant
to run home through it,
clustered in the lobby, nervous
giggling, looking out
at the pelting courtyard.
Talmudic academy, I
was the melamed, chaffed them
for their timidity
before this purest
of all God's gifts.

3.

Vita dulcedo et spes nostra

But it wasn't raining when I woke,
the land was dry all round
except for the merciful dew.
Mother of mercy, I thought,
our life, our sweetness and our hope,
I thought, because I was Christian again
in the bright quick dawn.

4.

Because of course we are everything
all the time, onion-layers
of our conscience, moral sense,
consciousness. All theologies
sleep in the waking mind.

5.

So that's what rain was,
is, a shimmer
that loosens the hold of dogma —
who can believe anything but rain?

**Reminds us to find a doorway,
stand there until reality stops.
One time we found Socrates
doing that, he jested, he
pretended he'd been thinking.
But what he was really
doing was waiting.**

27 June 2016

= = = = =

**The news meant me
but I ducked.**

**I sweltered in my sombrero
but I was free at least**

**of other people's thinking.
My own is bad enough!**

27 June 2016

ROBERT'S PALINODE

**I hope she'll forgive me
so many years of disliking
sunlight — the glare, the heat,
it makes every face look
porey and sweaty and old.
So bright it keeps us from seeing.**

**But now I'm coming to my senses,
I should delight in this super-
heated confusion, this carnival
of colors that makes the insects
crazy and the birds wild to catch them,
sorry, sorry, this golden
sari, goddess, you wear—
I hold the hem of it
now to my closed eyes.**

27 June 2016

=====

**Wampanoag waters
stretch out to here,
last boulder the god
cast in the sea, or first,
who can tell, farthest
it certainly is
from where he stood.**

**We are where it fell.
Trees gone. Heathery
moorlands, rocky shores,
a hilltop fortified
with phone tower and flag.
Despite the gingham yachtsmen
you can feel him still,**

**them, the people
who glanced this
island into place.
I imagine it here still.**

27 June 2016

=====

Seeing how far you can go
with only knowing.
There is a cloud in it
might be rain
Not all of your hopes
turn out to be vain.
The ocean after all
before all.

2.
They tell us we came from there
but did the knowing rise there too?
Or was there a meeting
some lonesome town ago
where something happened to us
or in us and we *thought*?
And what does thinking
have to do with knowing
anyhow? So long away.

3.
I'd call it a miracle
if that weren't such a little word
(*miraculum*, a little thing to look at).
Everything is a mirror just as well.
Anybody can just walk right in.

28 June 2016

=====

Feeble sonata,
you tried your best.
Women were kind,
played you competently,
pretending to be reading the score.
Women are like that,
and men too when you think about it,
they listened politely
to her hands
trying to find you to explore.

Feeble sonata
fast slow fast
it was good that you tried,
gave nice people
something friendly to do.
Don't change your ways
though you could wish —
so many hammers
in the piano trying to shape you,
yes, you give the world something to do.

28 June 2016

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**The birds were nervous.
Or was it me.
Cardinals at first light,
rain-doves now,
their mournful empathy.
End of vacation day,
the going home.
Don't say so much
your nest could be everywhere.**

28 June 2016

= = = = =

**But only the dead are always at home.
Prospero's grave — that thoughtful place.
You can also let go of fear.
Fear and far are the same man.
he said and brushed away a tear.
An emotion too big to be named,
crossing the straits, swallowing the river.**

28 June 2016

=====

**Say as much as timely lets.
The word in edgewise
silence resists.
Sophomore antics at the Sorbonne,
they play with contradictions
till nothing's left
and then they say it cunningly.
I'm talking about myself of course,
always a new-baked meaning
from the same old dough.
We need a new place to think *from*.**

[On Philosophy Island, in Desperate Straits.]

28 June 2016

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**Started enough to say.
The long-armed seaweed
clutched the rusty rock —
porphyritic, she said,
staring at the sky.**

28 June 2016

=====

**The other one I knew
by its going away.
I spend half my day
apologizing for the other half.
Peace of mind
cheap at thrice the price.
Pa, Pr, Fu — the three times —
have at you,
measurement! My scramasax
against your poltroon numbers!**

28 June 2016

ON BUZZARDS BAY

late afternoon (on the ferry)

**The two mothers
above and below
schemed us,
drew us,
 up out of contingency
onto two feet.**

**Then brain. An organ
that can receive
from far-off everywhere
the voice of mind.**

**Primitives confuse
the antenna with the signal's source.
They teach in colleges.
To keep busy they measure things.**

28 June 2016

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**Are you saying the ocean too is woman,
like (you say) the sun?
Thalassa, first declension feminine, 'the sea.'**

28.VI.16

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**The day serene the level plain of sea
like a line of ancient poetry
(thrilling in deep, old, quiet way,
breath easy, light cloud the whole bay)**

28 June 2016

=====

**The return tells me
the world is close,
close and green.
The republic of trees
in which we human minority
is permitted to live,
forest dwellers still.
I saw that yesterday
as Charlotte drove
fast up through the millions
of trees between our rock
island and the leaf-smitten
valley, as once before
I saw it from the air,
flying from Labrador
looked down on an unbroken
carpeting of forest
then suddenly Long Island
and the city — we are
dreamers in the woods,
no more.**

**But this
is not a poem.
This is telling.**

29 June 2016

=====

**Start again.
I don't like
this word 'goddess,'
implies she is some
version of someone else.
Hereafter call her god
tout court,
all of them gods,
the ones I cry out to,
raising my voice to reach
the real reality.**

29 June 2016

=====

**That's better —
telling still, but true,
true means
something I never knew
but says so now.**

29 June 2016

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**Coming home and being green.
A month away and who are we?
Leave your identity
behind and be?
No wonder we love birds.**

29 June 2016

= = = = =

**So few we feed
of all the wild.
Sleep now
and dream pigeons
all over the park,
chickadees and sunflower
seeds, nyjer
for finches.**

29 June 2016

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**I can't wait to hear a crow call.
then I'll know I'm home.**

29 June 2016

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**One is here
and there are circumstances.
Forgive the bee
for making honey.**

**Every week the insurance man
would come to the door
for the weekly premium—
less than a dollar — mark it
in his little book. A sad,
pleasant, dignified man
in a topcoat and felt hat
like my mather's.**

**How poor we all were,
how well we lived,
cheese and spareribs,
we had neckties and big
straw sunhats in summer.
And all the ladies wore veils.
And from these veils
we wove our poetry.**

29 June 2016

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**The wind is reading my book
backwards, as it happens,
the way I should have written it—**

**could I even now write yesterday
green hills of Massachusetts
then the faint shiver crossing the border
into the somehow wilder
green hills of New York?**

29 June 2016

= = = = =

**No read instances
bring all your instruments
into the OR. The pen,
eraser, nail file,
cup of coffee, the vast
Alternative of what
must be cut into breath,
then loosed, then fixed
firm on the dermis,
the skin of time.
How do? Be you
all over the place
until it lands
surprising you both.
Us all. The miracle.
Something said.**

30 June 2016

= = = = =

**Aim for the bottom of the page
see how far you get.
Bonneville salt flats,
a spill of white
as if the skin of the moon
peeled off, it scares me,
choking on light,
an angry country,
but I live on salt
I suppose, blood *et tout ça*.
Being a mammal can be fun
but stay near water.
No water, no singing —
in harsh landscapes
everything turns into religion.**

30 June 2016

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**I don't think sex is for that
it's for something else, lyric,
lewd maybe in the sense we
all have skin, all have senses,
but it isn't for *moving*
the species alone, true that's
where we got it, learned it from
beast panoply and bird song
but it wants more from us now,
not even play, not even
relationships, dreaded word,
something else beyond — from us
but not in us, but only
from us can it be captured,
glory that drenches the mind.**

30 June 2016

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**Are we allowed to use
another person's name?
Or are we all the same
name anyway, slight
differences in pronunciation?
Idiolect. Self talking.
A ratio between identities.
And what was St. Christopher's
name before he picked up
his lord load and carried
Him safe across the river?**

**[3 June 2016]
Transcribed end of month**