

7-2016

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DUCK DUCK GOOSE

choose.

**The Alternatives
(that girl band
down the street)
are clamorous
but not complete.**

**Always some option
hidden in the dusky
chapel of the head
where you least
expected to take refuge
in the extreme old age
of your latest bright idea.**

**Choose! The Libra's bane,
every husband gets it wrong
so often it's like a song
you never knew
the words of. I mean me.**

2.

When I was a kid I finally
persuaded my parents
to visit Howe Caverns
one summer. Down there
a chaste 56° all the time
below the earth and I
hated heat. A showplace,
sunken theme [ark, a shill—
but still full of decent rock,
squeeze and stumble,
arcane distances in the dark.
I see ads for the place still.

Go there. It won't hurt,
there's something wonderful
about a sameness we didn't
make, a natural alien place
on which we live. A quiet
remark in the rock
we can hear over and over.

I never went back.
I'm still listening to it then,
I catch my breath sometimes
when I think of all that speaks
beneath us. And that I was there
one afternoon and brought

some of the listening home.

3.

**That sounds too sentimental
even for me, my budget
stuffed with sentiment and hope.
What was just said about me
and the caverns is true enough
—but who was speaking?**

**That question comes back over and over
like pigeons to the park.
Am I the same voice
in sunlight as you in the shade?**

**The Alternatives won't let me alone,
throbbing hips, merciless guitars—
yet alternatives always make us sleepy,
like O'Hara's 'quandariness.'
And some of him must have been Irish too.**

**Sleep now, the music says,
no dream will be as terrible as this.**

1 July 2016

= = = = =

**Hurtling towards how
alone, our mustang
technology,
breakneck i.e.
the change:
progress
runs sideways in America—
after 120 years we still
go there in cars, sleeker
now, slightly faster,
but where they take us
is still family and real estate,
spirit lost over the Appalachians.
We have used up all our West.**

1 July 2016

SCHUMANN

for Thomas Hesse

Through the notes
the leaves.
Through the leaves
the light.
Immense complexity
of such simple things—
imagine tracing
the shadows of
all the leaves, say,
cast on a bare floor.
And when the tracing's
done the light is gone.
The leaves though
rustle in the evening breeze.

1 July 2016

=====

**Been floating too long
time to land.
This day in 1900
first Zeppelin flew
(over the Bodensee).
Six days later
my father was born
(Northside, Williamsburg).
These are facts
basic, they made me.
All facts make us/
The LZ1 and SJK
fly in me still.
I am made of what I know.
The rest is meat. Waits.**

2 July 2016

=====

**Inherited from storm
cool morning breezes.
Toj, the day of stone.**

**Calcite from Dakota,
mysterious black
wedge from Black Hills.**

**When someone gives
you a stone it's as if
the stone has come home**

**at last, its eonic history
aimed at just this, rough
pebble on your smooth**

**hand its destiny. So
many ways things
know how to mean.**

2 July 2016

=====

**Think of a shell.
Or a cloud, one just
drifted in
above the yearning
eye that feeds on
subtle differences,
shape, contour,
densities, shade—
the eye-song
of future prophecy,
the Bible to come.**

**Will we be here when it speaks?
Already always the text is in our hands.
A yellow stone. A black stone
an abyss the light sinks in.
Or the shell on loan from the sea.
Or the gnat asleep in amber—
already always we are tomorrow.**

2 July 2016

== == == ==

**This is the year's
middle day.
The breeze inside
the hibiscus
will sing late summer,
leaves rife
on this rose of Sharon
but no rose
knows me yet,
I wait for them
every year, dance
of hummingbirds
and pay attention.**

2 July 2016

=====

**If only I could
say this
without saying it.**

2.VII.16

=====

A name is a street
yu walk on, gingerly
if someone else's,
almost blindly if
your own. Then
you get married and
all the names change.
Almonds. White clover.
Organdy. Breeze
from the south
hinting at rain. Wind,
word, wood, no
longer mean the same.
There used to be diamonds
at home in this rock.
Fairies roo, they still
live under your hill.

2 July 2016

SONG OF THE HOUSEHOLDER

**Open the door
 the daughter
the door is the daughter of the house

in the land where in means out.**

**A broken branch,
 a sound (say sung
hummed, fluted, drummed)
 has branches.**

**If we follow them
we surely reach the sky.**

**The sky is all there is out there.
Certainties. Mother of Mercy
our freshness and our hope,
 a word heard
just when you need it.**

2.

But who is this 'we' and 'you'
of whom I presume to speak?

And who is this 'I' that thinks
it's saying something when it speaks?

O rule of law you thorn bush
so rare the raspberries
for all the white flowers!

Pronouns deceive,
they're like windows,

pronouns are the ghosts in the house,

who hearkens, who shivers,
who trembles?

There is no one there
To feel an actual thing like fear.

Sleep, child, the mother says,
you are not real enough to be afraid.

3.

**Still, you come to me in flowers
(only the flowers can be seen,
purply lotuses with golden spires**

conscious beings rising from the cup)

**Still, the house is a kind of liberty,
closets and bay windows
do as you please**

something for everyone

if only anyone were there.

**'Were' is subjunctivem expressing
a condition contrary-to-fact**

**as the textbooks used to say
back in the day when there were facts.**

3 July 2016

JOHN MUIR CUNSELS EMERSON

Cascadian, as if a brutal
sun-slice cleft
faces of the rock
into mere space.
Mountains do this, their
special trance state
withstand the sun
as long as such language
serves them, sir,
and then each night
night wakes them to
their cool nature,
crystal, sir, is what I mean,
north of here, north
of anywhere you mean.

Celebrate with me
the banquet of the rock
savory with shadow,
nourished by echo as we
also are ('education',
'tradition' these are
echoes only) but here,
mountainly, if vaguely
only, we get, sir, some
sense of who it was, is,

**may have been speaking
or playing that instrument,
would it be stringed,
fretted, stopped, drawn
over by taut horsehairs
of what celestial studs,
made original music we,
sir, mishear as language?**

3 July 2016

== == == ==

**The preposterous
is always possible,
male in a female world
but just barely.**

**Equally comfortable
a sack of jasmine rice
when we ran Burma
my grandmother I mean**

**on the throne when Dad
was born. And here is me
(sounds wrong somehow)
throneless by the river**

**arm of Herself the Sea
to comfort me, sheer
looking has to do it,
little wavelets lapping**

**when scuzzy motorboats
snarl past. Motion,
that's all! I own
nothing but the sensing**

**of it, blue whatever
over red interiors
with yellow memories
of the actual, Empire.**

3 July 2016

=====

When we look at the star charts and traditional images laid out as constellations according to the various peoples (Babylonian, Egyptian, Greek, Islamic, Peruvian, Lakota) we see that sky-cunning and astral theology are not so much a reading of the heavens to learn our paths and obligations (as priestcrafts usually argue)but rather a mapping of earth matters onto the sky — for consolation or persuasion or magic or poiesis. They project their world onto the sky to keep it safe, safe from unaccountable change.

3 July 2016

TOWER

**The red tower
keeps appearing,
red, not too tall,
sturdy, tile or
brick, appears
whenever I call
on Manjusri,
tehe Young Lord
of knowing, his
mantra. Red,
tower, nearby,
when I call out
a red tower happens
in my mind, why,
the mysterious
rhymes that rule us.**

3 July 2016

TRUTH TABLES

Any figure with more than four sides is a circle.

Truth tables turn.

Women are far more intelligent than men but not every man.

Truth taps the table when no one touches.

Truth is a kind of faked séance.

Tables turn on you in the night.

Not every tree blossoms every year.

Bosom of the earth a dangerous place.

Who will rest quiet on the bosom of the sea?

A circle is awo man standing in the rain.

Albers studied the square, no one has ever studied the circle.

They only measure it.

A circle has no measure.

A circle is rain.

A square is a mother teaching her children to dance.

The deepest earthly mystery is the stupidity of the human male.

No matter how fast or far it rolls, the wheel will never escape from itself.

Miracles abound on every hand!

Miracles are called fingers.

When one stops up a hole, the note changes.

All music comes from difference.

There is no other source.

The holes are circles in the wood.

Circles in the woods.

People who are not quite people go dancing there.

Why is a house always smaller than a head?

Even the horizon is a kind of headache.

In high summer the sun rises north of east.

Here comes one now.

The Skyjogger. The Milky Way her pony-tail.

Make a list of things to forget.

When the Rose of Sharon blooms, it will be time.

Wouldn't there be time without it?

Burn the list.

Time comes in tables.

Timetables turn too.

They turn in the night.

The train never comes, the plane never gets there.

I open my eyes and the dark is gone.

The dream went along with it.

Where is my dream now?

The heartbreak maze we saw last night on TV—

bushes are all about disappearances.

Truth tables are fables.

Time is a myth.

In the *Æneid* men eat their tables.

Njera is made from teff.

Things important to remember.

**Coax the ashes back to life again in a little silver spoon
over a flame from burning brandy.**

Read what you should have forgotten by now.

Now is the biggest myth of all.

How recently this planet was inhabited.

What were we waiting for?

A child rightly confuses a premise with a promise.

So philosophy arises from pure hope.

Taste of the vitamin lingers on the tongue.

Presumably we are cured or strengthened by the taste alone.

A circle is a raubstorm on its way to a city.

People get born in a city all the time.

That's how you can tell.

Wrens tend their nestlings out loud.

Is there a day in the year when no one gets born?

What in mathematics is called a catastrophe is only one more curve.

4 July 2016

=====

**God help the world
if we ever said
what we really think.**

**Shy rhymes with sky,
silence with science.**

**Dangers of poetry:
one day the word
may finally slip out.**

4 July 2016

== == == == ==

**Bless the internet
it cuts out just
when there's something
I'm not supposed to
learn— knife blade
half buried in scree,
explosion in Central
Park. Things know
their own time to hide.**

4 July 2016

AFTER READING IN ECKERMANN

**he longer the conversation lasts
through centuries Plutarch Lucian
Montaigne Goethe the deeper
it goes into the fact of the heart
where the mind usually wakes
and sleeps, boarding house of mind
this fleshy stuff of ours we are.
Preserve the word spoken,
translate it a thousand times
until you get it. Get means stand
under the words and let them
spatter you, drench you if
you're lucky, until you yourself
become what they mean, wise
men who never knew your name.**

4 July 2016

=====

**What the sky says
never stays the same.**

**Even if it seems the same
word, the spelling keeps changing**

**until you hear
a different explanation**

**each time of where you are
and what it means to be**

exactly there.

4 July 2016

A SCHUBERT SONG

for L.D.

**Bell when the bayou
sinters sedge edges to
the simple mind, that lone
person in each person**

**who is always wandering—
tree cloud path lost
in marsh mud, mind still
slogs through circumstance**

**hungering all the time
for the grammar of place—
if it can't know here
how can it ever get there?**

4 July 2016

=====

**And when the words are written down
the trees stand up. Memory a grievous thing
though many try to laugh. Many of us,
the pallbearers of matter, we bury stuff
into our weird schemes. To go. To make. To be.
Life left in remembered words.
Three sweet dead friends.
And matter's mind is all around us, imperishable,
laughing laughter that annoys philosophers.**

5 July 2016

=====

**None but the only
card left on the deck
all the rest played,
paid out in act, this
seven of hearts left.**

5 July 2016

=====

**I name this child
Oceana. So far
inland she takes
the form of ram.
But when I fetch her
to the land's edge then
she is who she is,
seven-tenths of all of us,
mother of mankind to be,
mother of the moon — she
will warm him to life
one day and then we'll see.
It takes a long time to be.**

5 July 2016

=====

**Child of a selkie and a wizard
I wore one afternoon
my father's green coat
and ever since that day
I have belonged like him
to magic and the woods.
And many souls have belonged to me.**

5 July 2016

=====

**I am too old to be writing autobiographies —
my life hasn't happened yet.
Biography like fantasy is a young man's sport,
a stadium filled with roaring ghosts.**

5 July 2016

=====

**Far away
the green of gone.
How to write it down
to let it blow away.**

5 July 2016

=====

**I was reading fiction.
Then I realized
that every single thing
you read is fiction —
catalogues, indexes,,
histories, recipes —
all describe something
that is not now
or never was.
Language is a novelist.**

**That 'or' is a priest-hole where hope
might be hiding. An escape hatch into
an actual world?**

5 July 2016

== == == == ==

**In the genitive case
the origin
things happening
of another
as the blessed blue
robe we think
is the sky.**

**O sweet world
try to be legible
again, as once
to Marlins and Druids
your spoke your rede
almost clearly**

draw from me now.

5 July 2016

=====

Defend us in battle

it said I woke

there is a world to wonder at,

a devil war, a battlefield

of us in us.

Peace is to hurt no one.

6 July 2016

== == == == ==

**Where we start.
Remembrances. Copper sulfate crystals.
Dissolve to form the sky.**

**Mouse droppings on kitchen counter abandoned house
macerate, spread,
let dry to form earth.**

**The planet is complete.
Now cry a little to make the sea.**

6 July 2016

=====

**A design is a design
a design is not a sign
a sign is seldom.**

**You draw it from the sky.
Preposterous claims of advertisers —
the cigarette that said *In hoc
signo vinces.***

**A mark
is not a sign. A brand
is only ownership, a stammer
in the free speech of the world.**

**Yet the blandishments of courtesans
and gigolos have a sort of truth,
a kindness needed
quick in a signless world.**

6 July 2016

== == == ==

**Finding one's shoes again
in the temple courtyard,
your shells among hundreds of others**

**how shall we account, Omar,
for sameness and difference?
Only mine own shoon will serve,**

**why is anybody different?
Are we not all workers in the hive of the Lady?**

**Is there something more to us
that we still haven't guessed?**

6 July 2016

ALL THE RUBAIYAT IN ONE

**Cool and chipmunks out here.
Neighborhood of grace.
Trace the words along the skin.
In such ways we are known.**

6 July 2016

== == == ==

**Kindness of crows.
Listen to them
scanning the audible,
warding off trouble,
measuring, meaning.**

**They know so well
and they foresee. We
listen if we're wise.
This place safe now,
tomorrow nobody knows.**

6 July 2016

=====

**A little taste
of far
in that cloud
over the sun's knees —
there is somewhere
farther than away.**

6 July 2016

OF MUSIC CONSIDERED AS AN INDUSTRY

**Capture the children, the Emir promised,
and the parents will certainly follow.
,So they generated music of a sort.
droned it everywhere until no glen
was safe from its sound. Now then,
the Emir said, we can tell them
anything we choose and they'll believe.
They have no other mind than what we give.**

7 July 2016

=====

Quiet revolutions in the way we think.
A woman's voice on the far side of the hedge.
Leaves so light yet impenetrable to sight—
we live by seldom senses at a time.
She laughs. Cars hurry to their jobs—
every car is self-driven, every driver
is asleep. No news from Mount Olympus
but the bloom must be on the linden,
my wife detects the scent of its blossoms,
only every few years do I catch that
sound, it seems so subtle and pervasive.
Or what should we call what the brain
does with what the skin et cetera
so busy-randomly communicate
to know? Sharp plowshares carve
their way through the air, the wind
carries seeds in its leathern satchel,
seeds of all sorts and chemistries
to sow just past the edge of consciousness
so everything that happens always
is a big surprise, chewy candy, a girl
writes home from an art school in Rome.

7 July 2016

=====

**Cast away
or build the truth
the manna
every morning
settles still—
we fancy we
carved it
and don't thank.
We call it
breakfast, job,
the way things
are. Natura—
it is weary
work to think
and thank but
our only work
should be to praise.**

7 July 2016

THE HUMIDITY

**agitates insects,
separates me
from myself.
The wren flies back and forth
Hot humid morning.
I'm a stranger here myself.**

7 July 2016

A-o-H

**I've lived three-quarters of
my life here it still feels new.
Even strange. I suppose
we're supposed to carry
Home with us, and somehow
I lost mine along the way.**

7 July 2016

PHOTO OF AN EMPTY BEACH

**Picture it with seals bobbing on the surf,
lying slack in the sun dry. Picture
and children nearby dare to touch
those sleek hound-like necks outstretched.
Animals trusting one another. Picture
the sun trying to break through the clouds
over a not-too-distant neighbor island.
Picture lots of islands in a grey ocean.
children, seals, seagulls. No grown-ups
needed today, no sharks, no storms.
The children are dressed for inland life
but a few have shed shoes and socks,
brave the waves where they gentle in.
Beware the undertow! one cries out
because he's heard his father say so.
But what does any father know?
The waves come in, kiss, hiss, swirl
and go back out. Any child can
understand that perfectly. Of all
the things we'll ever know, the sea
gives the most accurate information.**

7 July 2016

=====

**Words make images.
Images make men.
AAnd so it goes
until society—
the place or state
where meanings
go to do die.
Then words must
rescue from ruins
some mind we are.**

7 July 2016

SONG

**It might be enough to get there
village on the far side of the sun
where Her grandmother still lives
a young woman perfectly white.**

7 July 2016

FERNS

**The ferns have grown
grand, months
since I insoected them.
Rejoice in their exuberance.
The brake runs nine feet
along the wood's verge,
a yard or more deep.
Cool green description
of a quiet world seldom
far away, Over the barbed
wire fence at Belsen
they may have seen such
things, shadowy, not too
far away, safe from mind.**

7 July 2016

GNOMIKON

**The vows we take
take us
along the way
to what wemean.**

**Carve that in marble
salt-white from Paros
using not words
but the shape
of a queen
coming up out of the sea
over and over again
until we are finally here.**

8 July 2016

=====

**The waters of chant
flow in the driest valleys
what the environment
denies the human
soul asserts, tropic
rigors, arctic bliss.
I hold thee snug
in fake fur, I listen
to music no one sings
and school never ends,
everything teaches
all the time, no voice
without its information,
the wren outside my window
coaxing its nestlings to sing—
song is the first phase
of flying, flying away
into the sky of their lives.**

8 July 2016

=====

**The discussion thickens.
Opinions farinaceous, fattening,
not good for you. The starch
of attitude overwhelms
the meek protein of fact.
If you have ever sat on or near
a roundtable of experts
you'll know what I mean.
If not, take warning. The more
voices in a conversation
the lower the IQ of the whole.
You'd expect it to be otherwise
but men are contradictors
first of all, denying the other
more appealing than assertion
of some risky truth. As if
anybody knew the truth!
It's all just talk, just like this.**

8 July 2016

DOWNSTAIRS

Light the candle oil lamp
kerosene lantern go
down the cellar steps
that creak beneath you
lightly as you step. Flicker
your feeble glimmers
around here and there—
shadows made of stone,
how far the darkness goes.
Now you are a hundred
years below yourself,
your nice pale house
just a dream overhead
somewhere. Will you ever
get out of this place.
Oubliette. Dungeon.
Do you even want to? Isn't
this what you've wanted
all along, direct purchase
of the earth, fee simple,
all the way down to the core
of the planet, all yours.
Everything under your feet
belongs to you now,
listen, all of your skin
knows how to hear, listen,

**the chilly dusty air moving
sluggishly inside your clothes,
up the pants leg, shin music,
knee shiver, listen, the whole
earth is talking to you true.
Never mind those voices far
above you asking where *are*
you. You know where you are.**

8 July 2016

= = = = =

**As if it began in me
and then went to Jerusalem,
that eternal somewhere else
just past the rim of hope**

**because time is not the only
house we have.**

**8 July 2016
(from old typed notation)**

SIEGECRAFT

**Calling for help
only silently
the way a certain animal
would stalk up the glacis
of even the best-defended castellum.
Name him.
Admire the gleaming offwhite
fence of his teeth.**

8 July 2016

NEWSLETTER FROM THE BEDROOM

**Folding the gazette around him
he fled into the lobby,
a room that used to bide before the door
of the boudoir, sacred enclosure—
o the uses of the morning paper,
Love's charms unequal to the news.**

8 July 2016

OLLAMH ONFESSIONAL

**We were created in another age
our reassuring smiles
are made of ivory and chrysoprase
and Byzantium has still not been built.**

**We lean on canes of elephant bone,
the tissue of our tunics
woven from storm cloud,**

**the way it always is, you know
all this already, you too have gathered
cherries profuse from the ancient apple tree.**

8 July 2016

== == == == ==

**Once upon
two times
the man began to sing
earthwards, the avengers
of emptiness
bringing us
hands full the godo news,

earthwords, all these
years the sea pronouncing.**

**[early July note]
9 July 2016**

THE RECOGNITIONS

1.
A day begun by hand
no book in sight
rushing down the flume
at Luna Park ago

gap in time
to splash through
the half-silence of remember.

No one there.
I stream alone
down the chute
in the tilted gondola
to meet the sea.
Everything tunnels me.

And this me is a grassy thing
a little mould on it
some scurf of seacoast
only visited in books,
Aegean!

But there are no books.
This is a catena

of null texts,
basptism by erasure.
aman standing in the rain by a gate
opening a gate
for no traveler
but the rain self.

Still drizzling this a.m.
all night long

we needed it
the farmer says
fields of wheat or barley

who knows the real name of grass

not me
speaking of me
again
lost in the morning

a hand-carved day
notionless in fury

the argument from rain.

2.

Civil discourse somewhat meaning
what little could be offered
on the shattered altar of the morning.

Early. The anxious wren
patrols her nest site beside me.
Threep threep she says
or is the male
doing the cry havoc for her

I thought I was someone's mother
and shaped her in my hands

bear-wise in the bestiary

lick into shape.

3.

So it was now after all
and the Coney Island liturgy
silenced somewhere
between waking and walking

I remember nothing
Zia's tender film

walking with Audrey on an empty road
left on the cutting room floor

along with all the metaphors.
A's face waking. Z's face smiling
left on the streets of the town.

Because morning means abandoning everything.
Didn't you know?

4.
Stood outside.
Talked to the crows.
Boiled some water.
Everything
is an offering.
Push the little button
on the Krups,
blue light comes on.
Things understand.
The coffee comes.
I look for a book
to write this in
and can only find
a thousand books
that said it better
already and forever

**world without end
Amen. But amen
is a word hard
to understand—
something said,
something sent
over and one with
into the sky.
Where the rain
comes from.**

**5.
I fell in love with a sex-worker
in Alexandria. Fled upriver
to where the rain forgets to fall.
To flee from desire is to flee from pain.
It was one of those mornings
when everything rhymed, no breakfast
no sunshine no traffic on the river
no words on the page I keep trying to read.**

**6.
Is it there yet,
the meaning,
the film, the disease
of brotherhood?**

**Can we actually see it
if we cup out hands together
and gaze therein,
well of wonders, blue glint
of the light beyond the sky?**

5

**Everything is really closer than we'll ever know.
I stretched my arm into the sky and caught
a long golden hair from the Sun and pulled it free,
hair from a lion's mane, golden eye
turned on me calm with understanding.**

7.

**Not the Thebaid
the cellar door
the stone floor
where at last
the friends must
in all simplicity
embrace. Stone
above beside
below. Know
stone because
stone knows.**

***Visit the inside places of earth
and by making all things right***

you'll find the hidden stone leap to your hand.

**8.
Calm negation.
Only this
and not much that.**

**I have come
to what I meant to say
and found it said
already**

**by the wren and the rain
the dream and the pillow
warm under my cheek
inside one cool wet waking.**

9 July 2016

=====

**Tail the true
of the tiger
mane of lion
horn of goat
but of me the
truest is you.**

9 July 2016

=====

**Let these the beaver
come out of log lodge
and say Sun Sun how far
you breed my woods for
me, thank thank!**

**Pond beyond bridge
me makes hear frog though
only by spring night says.
Now but it's summer—
am not my animal I
but some midway thing
or thing and a half to
call such singing song.**

10 July 2016

NATURE (1)

**I want the leaves to heal me
worth being sick to have such nursing
their shadows spooning sunlight to me
dose by dose through the young hibiscus.**

10 July 2016

NATURE (2)

**Name me. I was the surgeon who
removed my heart and gave it
tunefully away of tried to
on every corner of every town.**

**But only the leaves would listen.
Romanticism dies hard. Roses
recur. The ocean makes everything
happen again. Desire is consumed**

**utterly by its object. The opera ends.
The leaves keep hoping I'll understand.**

10 July 2016

=====

**The end of something
seen in the beginning
swirl of tea
poured in the cup
before the turning
stops you see
the end of things
and understand
that only loving
kindness is any use,
only compassion,
the left and right
hands of heaven
you spoon sugar
in and milk and
take the world
in your custody,
everyone and every
thing sage in your care.**

10 July 2016

DIG

**Things close,
soft ess. Tell
means hill
and who knows
what's under.**

**We may be close
to the beginning
again whenever
we walk there
on round ridge**

**all green atop
and down there
the beginning waits
to begin again
this time for us.**

10 July 2016

URBI ET ORBI

Could always try again
wet streets of Venice
silver streets of Camelot—

every city is imaginary.
Have you noticed that yet?
Especially clear on subways,

pre-dawn bridges, puddles
left from what felt for a moment
like real rain. Fat chance.

Try again — start with a cabin
of pine trunks, smoke hole,
bearskin blanket, drink from brook.

Before tyou know it, traffic—
a street will be running outside,
there's nothing real about a street,

a street always is going away,
once you have a street you're stuck
in an imaginary country

all over again. Try one more time,
find a cave deep down, inhabit it

with all your easy language,

**lie naked on stone floor, feel
something that is almost real.
Close your eyes, submit**

**your shoulders to rough rock,
compose yourself to dream.
If that doesn't work you're on your own.**

10 July 2016

MOWING

Residue of not far—
smell of mowing smell of gas
that drives the cut. Gas, grass,
time accelerating round
the growing stems. *Grashalme*
as they translate Whitman.
Really everything is a translation.
Guess at the original. Constance
in her garden chair, Charlotte
fleet-fingered at the keyboard.
The words change hands.
What I mean to say is
always what has been said.

11 July 2016

GRAIN

**The keen fresh scent of new-,mown grass
is the word of our mortality.
Trim the bushes, shape the world,
we're all fish to begin with
slapped into different shapes by mother Sea.
Grasslands of America, hills of Donegal,
puszta up to the gates of Vienna, I grew
longish legs to walk on thee,
the whole planet a sort of suburban lawn
in an oceanside community. Now
translate that into chemistry, call it food,
don't let Monsanto get its cash on it,
rind it small and there's your breakfast
sweet with milk from our mother the Cow.**

11 July 2016

== == == == ==

**Looking at the lady
where there is no lady here.
It is a kind of dance
the mind does with null
informations, An empty plate
pure white piled with apples
peaches, plums.**

**We are never far from truth
but seldom reach it,
a ferry becalmed in a lagoon,
set sail without sails and oars
let alone engines.**

Yet engines we certainly are.

11 July 2016

=====

(re Audrey's character in I Remember Nothing)

**Somehow the song
sat singing in her lap—**

**she hated school
because is said**

instead of singing.

**They left her there
at the side of the road
after it had gotten
so bright inside her
that she couldn't see.
So she closed all her eyes.**

11 July 2016

(another scene from I Remember Nothing)

When we walked alone together
along that long flat meadow road
we talked about not much
but talking *was*.

The camera
was on us from a hundred yards away
invisible as the eye of God
watching how we thought and behaved.

Slow walk, some talk, sense
that we were actors (we were actors)
impersonating ourselves.

Selves who could never meet
anywhere in the world but here,
film on the cutting room floor.

11 July 2016

TABLE

The stone table
we sat.
a thick shallow dish
shared with our fingers—
beast fat, bird meat,
sourish green berries,
who can name
the ones we eat,
our strange chemistry,
dense sauce sweetish
very salty. Servers
helped us, brought
a cup to all our lips
a red thin keen drink
no alcohol in it, sour
under sweet, like tea
from staghorn sumac
maybe, oxalic acid
worrying our synapses
with sensuous pleasure
intended from the start.
The stone we sat on
meant it too, and quiet
attendants smiling
like songbirds in foliage.
And that was our sacrament,
the way everything begins.

12 July 2016

THE BULL

1.

The bull strode
the way we do
across the field.
Curious, annoyed.
We were the fence
to his deployment.
How we use ourselves
and name each thing
we lever out of its
natural context
to make it *mine*,
a word the bull also
knows, his perimeter,
glad prison, self.

2.

I saw him coming,
I was alarmed,
I was a self too
and had seen all the cartoons
of what bulls do,
plaza de toros,
moment of truth,
all the lies we use

to prettify our kill.

3.

And this one had horns
sharp, lowered, truculent,
only the fence gave me some sense
of security, but is beast strength
could smash those matchsticks down—
but he too was playing by the rules.
Accepted the limit, maybe even
enjoyed the situation: his power,
my timidity. Maybe we make
music for one another, all of us,
just by how we feel and feel out loud
and how those feelings twist and crash
and slide past each other
until we're overwhelmed with knowing
that leaves behind the faint
scent of how you feel too.

12 July 2016

=====

**Throbbing
engine of a car
at the stop sign outside.
Or is it my heart?**

12.VII.16

=====

**One side of the paper
takes ink better than the other.
Let this be a lesson to you.**

12.VII.16

=====

**Who am I
waiting in the trees?**

**Do I have a purpose
or only a religion?**

People have to be sure about this.

12 July 2016

A SOUND

**Mewing of an animal not cat
somewhere not far.
In the near woods
this side of the shale ridge.**

**Plaintive, wounded sound,
a grief I try to share,
a pain I can't ease,
no know-how, can't even find.**

**The sound has stopped now.
I try to persuade myself
that it was an ordinary bird
if there is such a thing.**

12 July 2016

== == == == ==

**Close the gate
to everyone but the swan
the sea gate
to the waterfowl**

**the paradigm shattered
over the coast
formed streets and alleys**

**an alley is the paved way
closest to the human heart
is not a thoroughfare**

but with great effort you can get through.

**But where might you be going?
The swan is there already:**

all roads lead to a silent pond.

12 July 2016

=====

Wisdom cries out
she takes to talking in the streets
but she walks slow,
she's come this way before
and is as much remembering as
seeing for the first time,

cries out

and lets me hear her.
4:01 on a dark morning,
all the calendars have blown away—

*are you a leaf
to let me remember?*
she asks, looking right at me
and I don't understand.

And again: *Are you a shepherd
whose ships are lost as sea?*

So much to grasp,
so little me to grasp it,

O Lady I don't know I don't know—

you know me well enough
she whispers,

*you have stolen
all the words I let you hear
and claimed them as your own,*

cluelessly lyrical.

*a boy in his father's coat
babbling in his mother's ocean language.*

13 July 2016

=====

**When things are left to ripen
who ripens them?**

**She was asking me at last
the final question of all sciences:**

Who is time?

13 July 2016

=====

**The first birds are chirping out there
finches sounds like phoebe maybe—
they taste a certain pallor in the east
means them towards song.**

13 July 2016

=====

**I don't know the answer.
Wisdom is waiting.
Reach out and try to hold her hand,
is touch the only cure for ignorance?**

13.VII.16

=====

**Listen to me, lady,
I have tried to know you
by what you say**

**or seem to say, stuff
you let me overhear.**

And suddenly all I can feel is the smell of ink.

13 July 2016

== == == == ==

**One is outside
one is inside**

**the deformations of time
trap us in space**

**for only space is real,
only out and in.**

13 July 2016

=====

**Too much is never enough.
You have to turn away
and not make the last
scoops of matter pend
into the vessel. You
are the vessel. You
will never be replete.**

13 July 2016

=====

Levate oculos

Lift up your eyes

Sophia, orthi

Wisdom, arise!

Two liturgies and two cries

I rise

for wisdom,

lift my eyes

from her voluptuous body

so above her radiant head

I see

what lifted eyes see.

And wisdom makes us stand.

13 July 2016

=====

**Every pen
has snug within
the tunnel of its barrel
and little golden nib
an Iliad at least.
Just take it up
and let it do its work
riding your soft hand.**

13 July 2016

INMOST GOSPEL

1.
Losing the strength
of a connection
a signal
after prolonged use

as a sanctuary
this rock your lap
the dome beneath
called Blue Amazement
crickets in autumn

we are a country where snow makes noise
we hear each flake
as it settles down
on the drum-head of our consciousness

snow in your lap
where I would sing my Mass
if I were priest or had
a *voice* in the shadow
because it is midsummer
and the first dead leaves already
settle on the patio
even before the storm

2.

The rock is always looking at us
beyond the garage
shelves of shale
trees at the edge
shadows where they heep the ladders
lead us to
be behind everything
where the other thing is always waiting.

We still can celebrate this place—
down dome or up cup
open to all our whining whys

because complaining is a child's
first form of prayer.

3.

There, put that in your lap
and stroke it,
a fierce little harmless animal
Tamias striata
a miniature husband
in a society no bigger than
the shadow of this linden tree
whose fragrance knows the air.

O the trees the trees

are well-behaved today,
you'd never guess
the stridulous commotion on
vernal vespertides,
all the old people on slatted park benches
down Eastern Parkway
on a very hot night
all talking hard of hearing
all at once,

I hear it fifty years a hundred miles ago
even up here
on the original Ox Ford
(I can't spell Bosphorus)
the river of mindfulness
that keeps us safe from Asia and history,
the water that divides us from books
and magical beings

except for you,
 those green eyes,
that unknown DNA.

4.
So it is a temple
after all I tell,

a hill over an ancient habit,
we sent a girl there

to intuit
all that it felt like
when she sat on that stone.

She looked me in the eye and said
From there you can see the frontier.
From where I sat you can see the frontier.

5.
My argument: school bus
passes it by,
never gets to
the actual instruction.

They'll never get there now
following the wrong books.

Once at midnight
on an unknown hillside
I walked up without thinking
and let legs find the way
flawlessly and never fell.

Something like that.

Find yourself the sacred way
following the guesses
of priest or priestess
or just listen to the stone.

**Look, I know how hard it is,
how long we've been listening,
but we keep getting distracted
by theory, memory, ill-thought
ill-written books, lose touch
with the never-interrupted story
the stone knows.**

**The gist of it:
the sky is upside down.
The Mass never ends
is always beginning.**

**Any religion, any name.
They're all the same:
they hurt, they heal.**

They lead, they lose the way.

You are the way.

**Never once has the stone lost the path.
That's why we call it by
the secret name that everybody knows.**

14 July 2016

=====

**I am here
as might be anywhere
a man in love
with the obvious
things, the rubble
of perception,
the times of day,
busy planet
of the inner cosmos,
stuff, stuff.
filter it all out
to find me.
That's where you come in.**

15 July 2016

NO NEWS

1.

**Waiting for the news and there is none
poltergeist shenanigans only
emails full of rain
but not wet enough to wash your hands**

**let alone the crises of your body
crevasses of delight in mountain you.**

**Keep your lumber clean, kid,
they used to tell me,
wax each groove and lick your hammer.**

**Children ponder the thinly veiled obscene,
wonder if it means 'behind the scenes'
lurk the secret agents of what seems to happen—
are they the producers or the stars of
this show we all our lives have acted in?**

2.

**Back to the hammer
licked or otherwise.
Find a nail.
Keep them close
in a plush-lined box**

**but never let them
work each other.**

**Keep verse free
from the constraints
of willful thought—
for reason sleepeth best in poesy,
resting from its long war against the soul.**

**3.
All day long we're quoting
books we never read
and words we never heard.
Heaven forgive us for
being so randomly accurate.**

15 July 2016

THE CHILD

**Are we there yet,
are the animals waiting?
O such a zoo
the heart is**

**so many groaning dawns
rabid appetites
strange foods for savage breakfasts
lithe shadows
too quick for lust or fear**

**my I is tired
I want to be you.**

15 July 2016

=====

**Meek with changes
a lotus
opens. Who
is that who rides
the fountain of a flower,
who impersonates so well
the sparkle of sunlight
on water upwelling?
Why does everyone on earth
understand what this person says?
Who walks out of the lotus,
steps blue on water lilies,
holds hands with shadow,
puts animals to sleep
smiling in fresh undream?
Who is this torero
on the bull-free arena,
this cowboy on the sea,
this adolescent matriarch,
this glorious elision,
a shiver of pleasure in an empty room?**

15 July 2016

= = = = =

**Don't worry about the id,
it's just the workshop
down inin the cellar,
skillful enough with its Neolithic tools,
takes care of itself, spends
passing hours fast asleep.**

**You need
to worry about sunflowers,
egos in your garden
heads spinning to the nearest
celebrity, shallow-rooted,
profligate with seed.
Never mind Fibonacci —
count your own days instead —
every day a seed,
a semaphore, incomplete
interpretation of your latest dream.
Days grow in spirals too,
cut from the center of you
(you won't see that in the mirror,
it's snug asleep in your animal boudoir).
You scatter your time
listless into the thrilling stream
of what you and you alone make happen.**

15 July 2016

=====

**Turbulence of knowing
how anything works,
mystery of the evident,
sculpture made of heat.**

**Bless me your dark room.
Show me where it bleeds,
a kiss, a guérison,
Insert the ideal into the obvious
and half your work is done.**

15 July 2016

VENUS ENVY

**she is beautiful
and I just am.**

15.VII.16

== ==

**The jogger turned out to be a lamppost —
sunlight plays such tricks on mere beholders.
Get out and run, or toddle fiercely at least,
don't wait for the signpost to move
or the trees to step lively. It's all up to you
I said to myself, that's why they call it
morning, new day, anything possible, all that,
all the vague urgency of agency, do it again.**

15 July 2016

== == == == ==

**Anodyne animal
dream of the old tiler
wrestling cut bushes
with ungloved hands
held prayer beads too
a little amber chaplet,
plastic, among the green wreckage.
And there were blue squills
even though midsummer
pale spears as if of daffodils to come
by the old screen porch
and a cat walked by
paying no heed to them or it or me.**

16 July 2016

=====

**Waft of words waiting
lingers towards
like linden blossoms scented
week ago
before the welcome rains.
Are you an angel
to tell such things
or just another pretty girl
from the City of Nod,
daughter of Cain
inventor of music and metal,
how well you fit
in the arms of my mind.**

16 July 2016

=====

**Whoever you are
at any rate you tell
me what to say
as Jesus your brother
once told us Take
no thought of what
you will say
until the moment
then out it comes
all the words
in proper order.**

**I am making no claim,
I am saying grace
the thank-you that makes
the sacramental Now.**

16 July 2016

== == == == ==

**Have I even begun?
So much more
to analyze our land,
the baker's boy cycling down the road —
don't you care about him
and all this? isn't
this why you learned to speak
before you ever listened?
You wanted to greet
everything you see
in its own language—
silence, hardest of all to learn,
so you had to learn ours,
the mother tongue
the meekly utterly shared.**

16 July 2016

=====

**The story tells itself
of course provided we listen.
We hear what happened
and don't know what it means.
Just like the wind in the trees
or a car passing by.
Who are those people
who love us to know them,
names on a page,
muddy road, leaf shadows,
glimpse of sky?
Too much to remember.
Turn the page.**

16 July 2016

=====

**Have I said enough
to go on —**

**the curvature of her spine
apt to understand at once
the rRenaissance.**

**For the body
is an academy
of scholarship, art,
wisdom, alchemy,
even theosophy,
these five.**

**The body in its long
ceaseless deliberations
plummets through galaxies,
histories, night and day,
fording the Ecliptic of Spirit,
the equipoise of knowing
all that this body's
carrier Self needs to know.**

**All this from a woman's spine,
image and likeness of God.**

17 July 2016

=====

**Such a sight might
Botticelli have seen
undistracted by those flowers
falling through the air —
he knew what those flames
are, and what they mean.**

17 July 2016

WAKE PANG

Things not to think
pick at the house wall.

Bird or beast?
Too loud for invertebrate.
Listen without thinking,
All these armies
came from thinking —

reasoning from emotion.
Kill. Claim. Woman
as acquisition.

But is there a a rigor
that eschews selfish advantage,
what to call
that kind of think?

You call thast poetry?

Hard to read
without a fruit in hand.

The woodpecker never gives up.
There was a day
when the apprehension of beauty

alone was enough to keep us going,
whoever we were
in those days, Florentines,
Sienese, Venetians.

Your name comes back to me
like the wavelets
lapping at the steps of Santa Maria Maggiore.
A name that whispers
certain veiled histories into my
barely wakeful ears.

But how dare your body
invade my mind
even if I permit it,
welcome it as once
on Troy tower you welcomed
secretly the army come
to destroy your history, liberty,
drag you back to childhood.

Look — everyone
who wants anything
is a child. Wanting
is a childish trait,
halfway to being.
When you are, you are complete.
No fumbling gleaming images can undo that.

17 July 2016

=====

**Sometimes the spinning top
stays upright when its spinning stops,
stands there still
at peace with what it is
and what it's done
before a breeze or shiver topples it.
To be so centered in the fact of life.**

17 July 2016

POOR ME

The horse is waiting for its rider

**old men take blood thinners
old men bruise easy**

**sometimes the mountain itself
over there is bleeding**

**a girl is smiling, holds up a sign
I'm not so good at reading**

**something about the horse
the rider someone bleeding**

**it's noontime and I should
know all these things by now.**

17 July 2016

=====

**Open all the doors
the Queen is coming
she uses every entrance
sometimes all at once
and even now is busy
working her way inside
to the core, the cave
the cove where the little
skiff of your heart
harbors against
storms of its own desire.**

17 July 2016

=====

**A woman made of lead
stood in the public way**

**a queen she may have been
a little larger than life**

**whatever size that is.
Feel the lead with your fingers**

**reaching up maybe to her knees
and stroke down the calf.**

**she tells you (or the lead does)
kill no venomous creature.**

Kill no creature at all.

**17 July 2016
Barrytown**

=====

**A hole in the hole
you got it from hurrying**

**you ran to the wild
but brought your own trees**

**or your ideas of what a tree should be
and many of them**

**but when you came to name them
standing there like Père Adam**

**no name came to mind,
only a hole in the middle of a hole.**

**And the wild was empty again
as in Malin's "The Grasslands of North America."**

One more book you never bothered finishing.

17/18 July 2016

DAWNING

1.

Welcome, heptad of light,
the chain that comes down
before the sun comes up —

I stood on the Peculiar Mountain
belonging to you
clothed only in the ambiguity of desire

mine for all of them for all of you
and the bird rose
chattering like streetlights in a park

and we were weather,
bible and all
and one who stood abaft the light

signaled to me that I should understand
and write down the ground we stood on
voice and I, I did, and I was merely me

in the hem of my tallith I hid my eyes.

2.

Mothers know this day is coming,
beer spilled on the stoop,
family dog standoffish on the corner

they know, they feel it in the part
from which the bad child
fell when he was good

the part across the sea
that will make him good again
or would it only be the libraries?

3.
I stood among the voices
and wrote them down,
felt like a fool but an obedient fool

on whom the sun any minute will rise
disguising her golden web around him,
me, caterwauling [?] on my Saxon lyre,

my iron kantele, my Ulster harp,
symphonies for breakfast and soon shut up
and let the sleeping workmen work on in peace.

Take it as apology —
I know not what I do
until I do it and it's done and too late to moan,

when it works it's as true
as the breath of a sleeping woman

but who knows how often the mark is missed,

***hamartia*, right? unbothered bull's eye
at the crisis of the target.**

And the voice of the angel comes again

**or whoever that was, is, who stands in light,
speaking conversationally, a civil remark
as if we were coming together out of a theater**

that briefly, quickly helped me understand the play.

18 July 2016

=====

**The rose of Sharon
has flowered — you saw
it yesterday, I see it now,
in pale hot sunlight,
it feels like a pure gift
from a Giver deep in the world,
sometimes comes out of the heat,
shields old houses from old roads.**

18 July 2016

=====

**The great moieties, deepest of all
bigotries:
the child-bound
vs.
the child-free
(whom the former call the childless).
These two only seem to talk
but their words seldom reach the other's heart.**

18.VII.16

== ==

**I don't think the hummingbirds have discovered
them yet, these mauve flowers held up, high
above the little tree. For one morning they're just for me,**

18.VII.16

=====

1.

Writing on the simple side
Amergin Welsh underworld
I linger in Afalon the Actual —
she led me here
among the apples,
the fallen wood burns fall evenings
white blossoms the drumlin hillside,
forever weather
with a word to spare.

2.

In breeze interpret leaves,
in calm the sound
of nothing happening.
This is your birthday again.

3.

Tell. Hill.
A hill means remember.
(Never run out of think.)
A hill too
is a habit
of telling everyone

**you have a secret
but what is your secret
wonder-man.
Sexy archeology
your hand on her bone?**

**4.
Means remember.
Stand there till
someone makes you feel.
We all are schoolchildren
nothing more,
bad boys with knives
simpering girls ashamed
not to admire them,
society. Army and attitude.
A hill is sad
beholding such crass
imitations of its
tactful, fruitful prominence.
If only we could be green.
If only we knew
all we could tell.**

19 July 2016

== == == == ==

**When inside and outside
are the same
the phoenix flies home.
Focus meant fireplace,
learning how to live
where you actually are.
Rise from the ashes
of what you think.
And here you are.**

19 July 2016

=====

Todo es posible

**Running too fast
through the raptures
of a blank book.
All is possible
again. The seacoast
of the next word
is close, you hear
the surf of it
lapping at consciousness —
in all the white expanse
everything waits.
Page after blank page
assuaging all doubts.
Everything is here.**

19 July 2016

=====

**When I run out of words
I'll borrow my own.**

19 July 2016

=====

**Cantankerous vocabulary
stories for supper.
I ate my salad
like a religious man
and listened, endless
sermon of human [?] conversation
enforcing a moral
quandary I don't understand.
Everybody afraid of everybody else.
Only the lovers keep silent.**

**19 July 2016
Aux Quatre-Frères**

OVERHEARD ON MT. PURGATORY

Rail me out of sail
Ulisse said, that crew
hurled me overboard

so I fell to the shoal
and salved myself by
the shore, instep

of that very mountain
vexed then so to see
and so I weltered there

an age of seeing
until the torpor passed
of afterlife, roused

myself to being,
alone with attitude again
like a Frenchman with a fiddle

I thought as I gazed
shallow in a puddle
and saw I was like me again

again, the word decanted
and I chanted, drank

the savor of it, again,

**I am again, no ape,
no man, a heroic
come-again**

**comely dressed in weeds,
free as a fontanelle
open to god light**

**and I growled eloquently
tried to fang language
and belabored the obvious**

**until I could impersonate
mankind again. Again!
And so I have come back**

**parlando, om that murder
that men call myth
into the blistering actual,**

you will not lose me again.

120 July 2016

WATCHING THE MIND

**Flashes in a dark
hotel room
from passing traffic
in a strange town.**

20 July2016

=====

**After all everything is wrong
maybe. The heat is waiting
against the cool gospel of entropy.
Your loss our gain
something is always saying.
Worry about weather
like a man asleep.**

20 July 2016

=====

**O cumbersome certainties
a girl on my back
he sang, that mandoliner
wet foot from Venezia,
O the umbrellas of catastrophe
a girl on my landline
his partner chanted
to the dreary beat of his little
zebra-skinned Nyasaland drum —
a colonialist insult
if ever there was one
in his white hands,
two Eurotrash disciples of nada
vied for my attention —
what could I do but let them sing?**

21 July 2016

== == == ==

**Think about flowers
instead. Down with the *Iliad*,
war, boys killing boys,
sadists' paradise,
bronze spears piercing,
down with glamorous death.
No more. Be weak,
lean on a lily, yield
to the beauty of body,
beast, flower, stone.
Sing like Philostratus
the walls of Thebes up
from the obedient rocks.
Amphion. Listen to me
for once, I too was a stone
lifted by sheer music.
Homer is how you spell murder in Greek.**

21 July 2016

== == ==

**The green world looks back at me
and wonders why I'm not at peace.
I don't know — canst thou tell me?**

**“We are not ancient and we are not one —
speak to us as to a room full of friends —
but you do not trust your friends.”**

And that is all the green world said.

21 July 2016

=====

1.

Find the force first
then the green tower —
you see the shadow of it everywhere,
mauve roses of Sharon, pale
sauterne sopranos, hands
reading newspapers in the métro,
call it subway again,
mix all your languages,
a mother-web beneath some earth
you deign to walk on,
scattering flowers as you go.
Profligate beauty, cherry trees up Lookout Hill.

2.

Always another. Things
have their own way of telling.
That's what I've been learning.
Pick a number
and run it through your vocabulary
fast as a monkey —
numbers are mischievous,
numbers have fun with our thinking,
link things together that have no together —
but then the things speak.

3.

**I'm reaching out to you right now,
feel me in dream, shudder in waking.
I think no one likes to be reached for,
makes them feel as if they're secondary,
a shadow of someone else's form.
But knowing this I still reach out,
reality is silver the mind is gold —**

something like that.

**Everything is different from when I began,
everything but you, the destination
implied by being flesh, here, alone.**

**Being is a kind of going,
and you are the only place to go —
this hymn to Whom.**

22 July 2016

=====

**The roots of Maybe
a masque as if
for Robert Duncan's memory —**

**he knew their characters from books
and mapped them on the living
as we should — how else
know Jesus from Judas?**

**If it's not in Dickens it's in Balzac —
and if in neither it's nowhere —
so the English taught, and so I grew
cherishing my Chesterton.**

**Everything else was Bible Land,
that sealed book.
Let's meet in Saint John's Gospel
and make love in his garden,
let's write letters to the Romans
and expect no answers.
Let's sail the sea for days and days
until we reach the island where we started.
Believe disease. It knows you best.**

22 July 2016

=====

**About Prester John: as with so many
great beings, the real one is imaginary.**

22.VII.16

== == == == ==

**No one waiting in the garden —
that means me
I am less here than the maple,
than the ferns. I look about
to find out who I must be,
the point from which all that
looking looks. No one
in the garden. The cup
has passed. I have failed
something again. The tall
hibiscus tree is sure of it.**

22 July 2016

=====

**Strange alchemy of making
mistakes. See
through the doorway,
walk out the window,
let the shadow of the tree
climb you as you come near.**

22 July 2016

Rx

**The pharmacist leans on her counter
to tell you what your medicines
did to her. She swallows them all,
everything she dispenses goes right in.
How could she tell you otherwise
what that round little pill is really for?
She looks at you and knows you,
exactly how you feel, what you fear
and why you fear it. She seems to give
herself to you and you're never sick again.
But you're not exactly the same
man you were when you went in.**

22 July 2016

=====

**There is a pine tree
at the foot of the parking lot
next to a sign that says**

**NO
PARKING
ANY
TIME**

**I like to park there.
I think I can break
this law, thin I can
park time there,**

**leave it locked
in shadow
and go my way.**

22 July 2016

=====

\

The barrier the being—

**tree tossed — print
reversed, pale translucent
shiny not paper
cover a book —**

a word I lost

**in sleep, there is no
equivalent process
in waking life, calque,
mirror, offset,
none of these —
no ink work involved,**

**the light itself
remembers itself
across the shallow distances.**

**The dream ends,
nothing begins, the nothing
called a new day,
this one, map of the world,
name all the parts together,
ports, you'll never get there,**

**the barrier is being
itself. Always more,
more of you than you
can know, count.**

**Stars in the desert sky,
the diamond-bright glittering et cetera.**

23 July 2016

=====

**Whatever it is I want
I'll never exactly know
before, but above all
I want you to want it,
doing it. Love is to give
the occasion of pleasing
all round, all different,
obeying Whose actual will.**

23 July 2016

=====

**Doen't work yet—
too much me
in these poems.
Silence, gloomy roisterer!
Let the words talk.**

23.VII.16

PRNITHOLOGY LESSON

**The rain-dove complains
there is no rain.
I heard her just now
and a breeze came right up
to comfort both of us.
It's good to have friends.**

23 July 2016

== == == == ==

**Something changing in me—
I want impersonal excellence,
the diamond not the description.**

**I hate to think I've been failing language
all these years. I hate to think.**

23 July 2016

=====

**Tannhäuser, Milarepa,
is it possible?
Poet raptures in the lonely mountain?**

**For Venus lives in every hill
and her embrace allows the Mind
to know itself as truth,**

**and of that utter knowing
their music is a godly accident?**

23 July 2016

== == == == ==

**The road is always
there before you.
How did it know
where you needed to go?**

23.VII.16

== == == == ==

**Some left alone in the woods
but who are they who have
such slender names? I hardly
hear them in the creak of branch
scuttle of dead leaf. Men like me
keep asking the world to talk louder
but to make no sound. Or am I?**

23 July 2016

=====

**Double-goer, you are me —
I spied you first in an old book,
you spoke to me in another.**

**How stammering, to come twice
into the world, what were we,
are we, thinking of?**

**A virgin and a peach tree once
sticky fingers on a backyard child
more intelligence than sense.**

**Did you wander far before we met,
analyze the seraglios of Bucharest,
check gay beaches, master the guitar?**

**Sometimes I doubt you even now—
how could anyone have enough time to be me?**

23 July 2016

=====

**The stream is not far
is never far.
Requirements are always changing.**

**Hydrogen oxide and the lawn gets green.
But there is a book
where nothing gets told,**

**just picture after picture
and no *of* those pictures are,
just images, pure patterns,**

**who can read them? Everyone.
They are copied from your skin,
yes, yours, you map of my world,**

**you antelope, you vintner,
you scholar of Etruscan tombs.**

23 July 2016

=====

**Nobody cares about me and my flowers,
few of them as I know, or have, or love—
is love the same as having? — I'm a city
boy and can tell roses from tulips from lilacs—
all the rest are just colors in the wind.**

**But still I keep blithering about roses of Sharon,
about seaside rugosas of Cuttyhunk
and the blue whatever they are come April
all over our backyard hill, I call them squills,
a friend called them chianodoxa, the snow's
white opinion, its glory. Or just blue-eyed grass.**

23 July 2016

=====

**A butterfly
by jing!
A passing through
cloud-white
out of the blue.**

**Teach me a lesson
so nimble and no fangs,
horny for flowers.
Every passing thing
renews my life.**

23 July 2016

=====

**Amateur gazes
witness in their places
voices in the sleeping house
rational men in calm discussion**

**wake to these
wanting answers
white noise
could be saying anything
voices in the darkness
up again
truce with the night.**

23/24 July 2016

=====

**How deep the pen
reads the ink —**

**stars down the well
I saw when a child
in that fierce Grimm's Fairy Tale
called New Hampshire,
Franconian Notch**

**there the well was
and the virgin born
whose white body
returned me to the sea**

**in those days nothing was close
now everything is near
everyone's voice softly in the window fan.**

23- 24 July 2016

=====

Ochi dára,

principle
of subaqueous belief,
a queendom
ruled by that theology down there
we grasp up here
by listening to foreign languages.

In the *vibratory space*
between what we hear and what we know,
the bottom-wisdom rises
fresh as sea-spray
in our faces
until we're drenched with understandings
we barely understand.

So write them down.

2.
Crows are calling loud
to tell me this again.

3.

**I thought I was a church
and people came in me
each with different prayers
all satisfied by one.**

**In those days a self
was a sacrament,
the breath of one human
given to another —
word or kiss or sleight
of tongue — and the light
passed in through colored windows
we called our eyes.**

24 July 2016

ONE MORE APOLOGY

Sign a check with blue ink,
make like you mean it.
They're walking in the park today
exiguous in summer clothes
as if the weather changed
their notions of themselves, *Moi*,
I was born for rain and mist,
vaguely but amply garmented.
Not much for parks.
But there the girls are and aged
Magyars playing chess, and brass
bands making like a century ago
and all bright yellow sunshine
pelted down, that glorious
annoyance I never quite outgrew.

24 July 2016

=====

Interesting always being wrong.
It scintillates a little
like prickly heat
in the soul,
lasts all year long—
faint glow of those sparks
I note around me as I speak,
read, lecture, eat,
even when I lie down to sleep.
Think of all I haven't done!
All I should be doing this minute
instead of what I'm doing
or not even doing, just feeling
the prickles of glittering accusation
dance along my skin.
And dreams are even worse.

24 July 2016

=====

**So today is autobiography
day around the ranch,
the come-clean day.
The sunlight sneaks its confession
through linden leaves and smears the lawn —
comes right out and says it,
but you know Her, She's always
a little on the loud side.
I close my eyes to hear Her better.
The moon kept his mouth shut last night —
he'll have to do better tonight.
And the wind acts like it has nothing to confess.
I guess it's up to me again
to take the blame. All my fault.
I should have known better than to be.**

24 July 2016

=====

**The summerhouse somehow
got full of dead leaves.
Mouse nests? But no mice,
no smell. Just leaves
dead and dusty,
Paleolithic notebooks
tattered with scraps of sunlight
fallen through dense foliage.
I read them with my fingers.**

24 July 2016

BIRTHDAY OF DUMAS, OLMSTEAD AND ROBERT GRAVES

**In grammar
does presence make perfect?**

24.VII.16

=====

**The final battle
is all about us.
We are left alone
on an island scarcely
bigger than we are.
The river of all
our deeds rushes
by on every side,
the wind is strong,
made of remember.**

**But that is how the dream or sermon ended. Beginning
and middle were swept away on the tide of waking,
vividness of the ending. I stood there, it was all about me,
the water flowing so fast just inches from my feet. I stood.
And standing is what there is to do. No rest from being.
From being there. Here.**

25 July 2016

THE SNAIL

**How long anything lasts.
A snail shell on the lawn.
I was born before the war
but not before war.**

**I have some sense
of what those endless
spirals mean. And
how grass feels.**

**There is so much for children
to remember, just to begin.
Subject of the sentence, nominative
case. Words change
around us but we do not.**

**That is the terrible secret
of history. I am the same man.**

**I was before fire. Skin
a little tenderer maybe,
eyes less keen. But the man
inside the same. War
is us. Until we change.**

25 July 2016

=====

**Can the dried-out ink
in the old bottle come
back to life again?**

**Seems so. What else
might flow along to us
on the river of again?**

25 July 2016

== == == == ==

**Akin to morning
this clay tablet
fingernail music
in all this green.**

**Morning is Sumer.
It all is hard,
it all has to come again
into the hands of itself,**

**too hot, mind rot,
we learn to turn
the wheel again**

**radio next door
people getting into cars**

I hate nostalgia.

25 July 2016

=====

Thing time.

**A day
in the life of a stone
how fast
we pass**

**That's the awe
we feel in the great cathedrals
all that meaningful rock
pitying our brevity.**

**Our weddings and funerals
butterfly flickers to them.**

Sometimes I want to eat some stone.

25 July 2016

== == == == ==

**They come forgivingly,
givingly. Their veils
filmy see-through shimmer,
wings furred, smile
all ready to discharge.**

**Disclose. Hope
is a habit.**

**There is a city
south of anywhere
we know, the rain
falls upward there
and rooftops few.
But how glad the people
as they saunter
through streets you
also would never believe.**

25 July 2016

=====

**Too hot in heaven.
Aither blue upon
and only flowers to remit
colors, the small
change of the abounding light.**

**Summer. Sumer. I need
to begin again. Wasp sting,
cuneiform. Somewhere
in the future Ovid will
preach the virtues of indecency.**

**But will they listen?
No, they'll huddle
in temples quaking,
stunned into silence
by the finger of the Law.**

**The other poet said so,
I heard him
with your own ears.**

**Not a breeze. No missionaries
today. We get
smaller and smaller
where the script runs out**

**towards the end of life,
till we're little enough
to slip through the rainbow,
the doors of light.
The ordinary mind
everywhere afresh
needs no support.
I sweep my workbench clear.**

26 July 2016

=====

**Sermon used to mean
conversation. Why not again?
Needing to speak, one listens.
Isn't that good Latin, Lila?**

26 July 2016

=====

**Wait it out.
That molecule
really is moving.
Has to. Everything
moves in there—**

**Though everything seems still
they're all moving, tight
formation. Only the wind
is shy. It's so still
I feel guilty. This must
be my fault, I must
have done something wrong
to stanch the glad
pilgrimage of air.
Natural anxiety
becalms the earth.
People are terribly contagious.**

26 July 2016

TRICKLES

**One reads the page
until the leaf
falls off the branch.**

**The flowers see,
to scream with
motionlessness.**

**Only the sunlight
moves, slow
over the smitten lawn.**

**How sweet these
words would be
if they were true.**

26 July 2016

=====

**I don't have to do anything,
I am somewhere else
already. I mean someone
else, who is that I
who keeps interrupting?**

26 July 2016

== == == == ==

**The blind astronomer
reaches into the sky.
What do his fingers feel?**

26 July 2016

SOME DAYS

To know all the days
course through them
like Quixote's hound
the hunter's friend

there is a ribbon
hidden in the sky
god-silk it's made from,
find it, catch it, haul
yourself so easy up
to that plantation up there
whencethen look down
and watch the days
sprightly elapsing
and no one dies.

2.
Or so it said
in the racing form
my uncle let fall—
every horse
wins every race,
schluss, that's it,
that's what it said.

3.

I was counting my days in Guatemalan
and came to five jaguars dozing by the path.
We will not disturb you, their chieftain lisped,
bvut you will not be the same when you have passed.

4.

Magic everywhere, right?
Milk and water mingled the swan
can drink the milk alone.
I read a book where that is said.
Why a bird drinks milk
is not explained. The wise tell us
the what but seldom the how and never the why.

5.

So come back to the sky.
I mean the kiss, the care,
the touch of garnet
in a block of schist. The kiss.
The gravel on Gore Mountain.
The people we forget, have to,
just to go on living. The kiss.

6.

But back to the sky,
cloudless today, hot,
empty stage in spooky theater
for a play you fear will soon begin.
Hear the shrill delivery of absent actors,
the script pronounces itself behind the blue.
Tomorrow is a cure for today— does that
feel any better? Trickle of blood
down my shank, one of those panthers
playfully clawed me as I went by. Maybe.
Hurts a little. And it's still today.

27 July 2016

DINER

**Where the waiter lets us sit
we find a plastic flower waiting.
Pink, cold to the touch
meant to bring a rose to mind.**

**Why is it here, I wonder, this mask
poor plastic puts on to make us love it?
Why crowd the table with more artifice?
Will all the dood they bring be ersatz too?**

**I ponder, lost in provisional grumpiness.
Hope is reborn in the form of soup, thick
mix we called in Brooklyn pastafazool,
oxytone, pasta with beans, distracts me.**

Feeds me. I become a nice person again.

28 July 2016

== == == == ==

**I wonder if these roses of Sharon
know how happy them make me.
I think they do. A flower
is all about knowing, being known.**

28 July 2016

== == == == == == ==

**I read what was written
didn't write the unwritten.
I might as well have never been.**

28.VII.16

=====

**Lost in eyesight
the fine print in the woman's face,
the man's smile, the no inside the yes,
the asterisk leading dwn
to a footnote that says Leave me alone.**

28 July 2016

YJE WAITING GAME

**The goddess in the sky
(your eye) finally
will descend. Meet her
in the wall-free temple
in deep woods, no roof
to hinder her arrival.**

**You call her Sunlight
coming through leaf canopy,
you write a photo or an ode
to what you think is she.
But she's not here yet.
Your images are words,
words flutter about
uneasy in the fitful wind.
And then. And then.**

28 July 2016

== == == == == == ==

**Alive in a cartouche
a pharaoh's name
the same as yours.
Moses is not born yet.
We still have a choice.**

28 July 2016

PENETRALIA OF THE MOMENT

how many touches
des it take to be now.

Burrow into the cleft,
klephtes, like a thief,
tomb robber of the living

body you are.

Deep into the mountain crevasse—
crève, break, like

Crevecoeur, heartbreak
when the crevasse is not found,
not plummeted. Plumb,
from *plumbum*, the metal lead,
the heavy load that sinks the heart,
that drains the sink

and mildly poisons us.

Turn this to gold.

**Hoist Melusina from the vessel,
she shimmers as she dries in sunlight—
in this lab the sun is always shining—
sol in nocte, hammer blows on beaten gold,
she has no fingerprints!**

**You have succeeded — suck
deeper in yourself, the harder
you press the clearer her smile
from across the room. *A woman
is both the metal and the fire
by which it is transmuted.***

**That motto hangs in script on the wall
below the icon of Saint Giles the Goldsmith
and above an altar shelf of deities
it does not do to name. *Ambo*, both.**

From where you stand you can see crocodiles—

**your left foot is still in Egypt—
Melusina strokes you gently, her hands
damp with your sweat, then with her palms
touches the mound of shapeless metal on the bench
that now slowly, watchably, turns into gold.**

**You're satisfied. But what have you given her?
Nothing but what she asks for: "a vessel
for me to come from and vanish in,
a moment in between to discharge
my almost infinite potency."**

**Her gold
sustains you. You touch things with it
and turn them into yours. All round you
the day unfurls. Your skin
wakes up — because you are landscape too.**

29 July 2016

THE LESSON

**We move from etymology
to the actual roots of actual
things and never go back.**

**Once you know where a word
is coming from, it never lets you go.
Language is a zoo
with flimsy cages, shallow pools
don't look behind you... In a way
dictionaries are pornography
corrupting the innocence of discourse
with shadows from the cave
and those who lived therein.
Live still all around us. I feel
some fear even as I warn you,
we are ravaged by the past.**

29 July 2016

=====

**It is Friday and green.
It rained a little in the night
but not enough. I'm always complaining,
I feel like Noah anxious with the ark,
get it floating already. Already
it's loaded with every life I ever lived,
everything I ever knew. Or maybe not.
Maybe there's something in me holding back,
something I should have hauled on board.
If I know myself better the rain will come.**

29 July 2016

== == == == ==

**A couple of tee shirts drying on the lawn.
Who left them? Two people?
One people with two shirts? Three people
willing to share? No, I need glasses,
they're patches of sunlight on the grass.
But still some of my questions apply.
One or many? Greece or Palestine?
But I am ofr Egypt, and love everyone.**

29 July 2016

TIMEPIECE

**Watch-pocket in my
chinos, so what?
Time means
to wegh me down,
we invented time
to help us escape
from life. From being.
I carry keys there.
to be free in space,
to go through doors
into all the elsewhere
space keeps hidden
for us. Time is a fiction.
Only space is real.**

29 July 2016

=====

**The residue the outflow
the come of the system
impregnating the ordinary mind
with the fanciful images
doctors call emotions, diseases, death.
Abstain from the system! as Paul urges,
and the mind becomes a virgin again.**

2.

**The borderline of fairyland is close,
runs through the waking mind, takes
only the will to bring [?] it. There are no
borderguards — at least on the far side.
There are some unpaid and ill-fed troops
on this side who try in vain to keep
the fairies out, try at times
to keep you in. Outwit them.
Flee the system, the fairies
will welcome you, tall, strong,
quiet, articulate, they
will tell you everything you need.
Their land gives everything,
and no such thing as a plow.**

30 July 2016

=====

**In solitude, in grace
the maple sinner
saunters through the woods.
Wants to drink a tree.
Presses against the smoother boles,
whispers endearments —
how glad and deep wood listens!
Sap rises slow, not autumn yet,
they feel the heat as we do,
amplifying the obvious until it soars,
complex sugars! blue sky in her pockets!**

30 July 2016

=====

**Weather
is beyond measure.
Weather is experienced
and we who endure it
are its true thermometers.**

30 July 2016

== == == == ==

**This is a picture of you doing it.
Hold it up to the light. Look again.
There is nothing to understand.
You can see every part of what you're doing.
The moon is low over the river, or arm of the sea
which some rivers are. The moon
is just a timepiece here, your back is to it,
the picture could have left the moon out,
the levee, the river, the bat sailing past.
Maybe all of these are part of the action so
what you're doing isn't complete without them.
I think you're enjoying the act as I'm enjoying
the picture. Especially the swift vanishing bat.**

30 July 2016

=====

**Fairyland a state-less Commonwealth
whose only law is to be.**

**Learn who you are and be him,
her, forever.**

30 July 2016

=====

**Gold is not the only outcome.
There is a road through silver too.
Mind's slow kiln calcines the images
until a bright unknowing comes
too hot to see. Then the scurrying breezes
of everyday life cool slow the glowing —
you wake one day and know what metal
your schoolboy days have generated.
And every day (two words) you start again.**

31 July 2016

=====

(à moi-même à 5 ans)

**Perhaps rapture, perhaps
a bucket of fish such
that only German uncles catch,
maybe just hiding under the table.
Paradise has many walls,
an infinity of doors. Out and in
we go all day long. Never mind
the famous rivers, they go nowhere
a child like you needs to respect.
they do have fish — witness
the squirming mess in the kitchen skin,
nameless, victims of a process,
just like you. Get back
under the table and think about God,
the other side of anything.**

31 July 2016

=====

**There are so many distances
a trowel can plaster them in
between the ruddy bricks of this,**

**this house built of sound, Rabbis
call it *melody*, measured tones
meaningfully proportionate, like**

**the bones in your fingers. Yes, yours—
you're the one who has to play it,
bake th bricks, find each one's place,**

**slather the distances in between
so those who come to live in the house
always always have some place to go.**

31 July 2016

EPIGRAPH TO A BOOK TO COME

**Let the dark fields rejoice
the trumpet of a small child
imagines the night**

kid dreams

from everywhere a waterfall.

**31 July 2016
Fisher**

== == == == ==

**Can a word
hold its own
against the stream
of silences we speak
in all our hours
of not answering?**

**31 July 2016
Fisher, *Iris***

=====

**There used to be a train
that looked like me,
it ran across a trestle
from thigh to thigh,,
the river gleamed with
moonlight but there was no moon.
It howled a word or two
as it struggled round the headland
echoing down the valley.**

**There used to be a valley
that looked like you.**

**31July 2016 +
Fisher, *Iris*, + after**