

4-2017

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**Waiting is beginning
all over again.
Clock on the wall,
slate from la Suisse,
we carve our names,
our times, on the unyielding —
that cave wall at Lacoste,
five hundred years of graffiti, why
into such hard rock
with such effort carve
traces of a name?
Let it wait for you
to come again
and show you who you were.
All clocks should be made of stone.**

1 April 2017

=====

**Come drink my well,
exaggerate my quality,
pretend. What are friends
for if not the necessary
lie that keeps us going?
Come tan in my sunshine.**

1 April 2017

== == == == ==

**The pen has ink
to make it speak.
What do I have, what
spunk or stuff to ease
words out? I know less
about me than about
the yellow Lamy in my hand,
its soft green speech.**

1 April 2017

=====

(for BC, Dream 2)

**You can't rely on men.
Fact. They have hands
but can't hold. Don't hold.
And all of them are part
of a secret society you
have long suspected, symbols
creepy pn their jackets,
hoodies, words in the wrong
alphabet. They don't want
you to know, just want you
and want you to be afraid.
It is hard to be you, to want
and be wanted and not trust.
Never trust. The society
they belong to has published
its rule book thousands of times,
theyvcall it poetry, fiction,
literature. You can hold it
in your hands, even squeeze it
but it will never squeeze back.**

1 April 2017

=====

**As if another time
the wall will be broken
but does not fall**

**except inward upon us
and then the epic starts
all over again.**

**(from an older scrap)
1 April 2017**

=====

**A Yes upon us
after a glass of Why,
and now in quiet
no No remains.
Yes is all anything
means to be.
The air sings itself
right back to us.**

**(from an older scrap)
1 April 2017**

KÉKHEGYVÁR

**The mountains are blue
still, but the language
has gone grey.**

**Old Dutch lost
into catamount creek,
Catskill. Give us our
Blue Mountains back.**

**(from an old scrap)
1 April 2017**

=====

(for BC, Dream 3)

**To see it
really see it
is the same
as diving in,
lake or pond
or spill of water
on formica,
a tabletop.
But can you be
small enough
to dive in
flailing, floating,
seeing the bright
plastic gleaming
brown below?
All round the rim
naked folk lounge,
babbling. These
are the ones who
really do
understand politics.**

2 April 2017

=====

Wanting
to wet you
wed you
I mean
what you think
you are always
thinking, some
with body
some with mind
warm warm
the soft place
the go in.

I interrupt
this interruption
to declare
the air
around you
shapes itself
by my desire
so that you
(this feels a
little creepy)
areutterly touched.

2 April 2017

== == == == ==

**Getting it right at a distance.
More miracle stuff
angels in waiting, I'm not scoffing,
I'm praying, the only
way I know. Say it,
keep saying it till it's there,
the gleam in the trees,
the impatient actual.
Even from here it will take you
all the way you need to go.**

2 April 2017

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**In winter
I can see the stream
through bare trees,
its rare kindness.**

2.IV.17

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

**Maneuvering the predicates
of this world to fit the slim
verbs allotted me — groan
of the handicapped, blind,
unimaginative, old. Things
groped their way towards us
to be cherished. Or just used.
Everybody wants to be used.**

2 April 2017

=====

**The gods I knew
or names I could remember
the last time
I made up heaven**

**then heaven faltered
(all my fault)
her hair came undone
her gown in tatters**

**things were closer then
and blue only belonged in the sky,
most of the names were right
most of the gods still lived**

**in you always and often me,
heaven relented
oceans of evidence
lifted this poor quadruped**

**who then went sailing
on the bones of his identity,
breeze of his breath
all the way to Santiago!**

**where heaven relented again
and made the earth at last,
round and blue too
and full of virgins, us.**

2 / 3 April2017

=====

The stuff that makes us —
there is a book under my elbow,
in a minute I will open it
and read a sentence that will understand
me or I will it
or I will stutter foolish
back into the alleys behind sleep.
“The name of a deity is the godhead’s
first expression.”

and from the book I learn
at last my mother’s name
means descendant of
the sun goddess Aine. *[Kane < mac Aine]*
and when will my golden
rings be found? I lost them
in the earth when I was earth,
in furniture when I was wood —
I can’t find me anywhere,
how can a ___ hide in air?

2 / 3 April 2017

=====

**Live through the night
and remember. All
we can do. No book
is reliable — rely
on it anyway. The gods
in your mind
will make it right.**

2 / 3 April 2017

INNIGKEITEN. VIERZEHNTER TAG.

1.

**Seeing ahead
is locking the tiger in his cage
but put the whole jungle in with him —
horizon habit,
we are chained in space.**

2..

**Closer than that.
I call this *Inside In*
because a truck goes by
noisy outside.
And a friend's electric car
slished silent from our driveway and.**

3.

**You can see how things are going.
Clocks, cantilevers, wind chill factors,
calendars, no buds yet on the bush.
This is called hope.
Things walk constantly but do they mean?**

4.

***Inside*, I say, because it all
has to come from somewhere,
In I say because it has to
meet itself inside itself
to hear the word it means to say.
And words are one more hope.**

5.

**One takes dictation
from a voice within
that sounds just like
the one you think you are.**

6.

**Urgent to talk
from the furthest
side of desire,
before the animal
wides its eyes
and only knows
deep inside the need
to act and be acted upon.**

7.

Sometimes it's enough
to pin a thought of one kind
one a statement of another,
the rail fence on the green
for instance really means
I can't get you out of my mind.
And when somebody else
reads the words or sees the fence
they'll know, they'll know.

8.

Assorted by, but single-minded
the swarm. April animals,
very small. And the blue
squills arise. On time,
comme tout le monde.

9.

But of course there is rapture,
easy doses, wind-blown skirts,
gonfalons, banner (holey)
of my old regiment,
veteran of a war I dare not name.

10.

Pinxit, it says, so-and-so
painted it, this picture
you're looking at,
these words you boldly
pressure to read. Far-off
shotgun blanks, or nail guns
closer. O builders
are not so unlike hunters,
killing the actual into some
ragged spears of new-
willed otherwise.
Corpus tuum. A house.

3 April 2017

Dominabitur

**He she or iit will be ruled
and not by demons
make sure the letters
look like numbers
and spell a sum significant
and not by money. Or else
Or else this triste cabala
would bore even the angels.
Who administer it each night
and we call day.**

**2.
Profitable alphabet!
Skin-tight signifiers!
Campfire boiled coffee
and the caravan waiting.
Schlep the sentence
to its glowing horizon,
that bitter noise
is lunch [?] breathing.**

**3.
Or else the heart itself conspiring —
echocardiogram at noon in Rhinebeck
the squelching echoes of its beating**

**I heard through noisy chat
my own body talking
and sometimes I could catch a word or two,
foreign movie of my own heart
no subtitles to tell me
what after all I really am declaring.**

3 / 4 April 2017

== == == == ==

**That the physical world
is a foreign language
we still have not mastered —
we can speak a little,
read a little more
but still make neophyte mistakes.
That's why the great mysteries [mystics?]
are those who guide us when to plant potatoes,
light the fire, build our houses
so as not to offend the sky.
Even so we wake startled from dreamless sleep
and guess it must have been the rain that woke me.**

[read as preface to the Seligmann reading]

3 / 4 April 2017

INNIGKEITEN. FÜNFZEHNTER TAG.

1.

**Things turn right turn left
a stealthy finger rubs between.
Ancient city found again
and instantly inhabited by dreams,
foolish, ours. All ours.
Sometimes we think no one else is there.**

2.

**Call it rugged mountainous terrain,
call it red. Fly over it
and guess its history.
Then guess your own.
There's an Anatolia in everyone.**

3.

**Not sure I've got this straight —
do you want me to touch you,
sacred rock, enter your primal
fortress and make myself at home?
Archeology is the only me.**

4.

**Lackluster monographs,
dwindling evidence —
plenty of room for one
to guess my way around.**

5.

**Comfortable as a sparrow in the sky
only long enough to get there.
Do birds ever get back?
An ouzel on the river Ouse
thought I once in Norfolk saw.
Albion — a place to come from.
This is my last encampment —
(signed) Robert Falcon Scott.**

6.

You see how many birds are in it.
Soup cans in the kitchen midden,
no more medieval [?] for millennials,
neuroses too must all be up to date.
Allergy to human touch. New roses.

7.

Take the chill off the child
and bring him in. Or her,
can't tell with all those mufflers.
Settle it by the fireplace
(we have none), warm some milk
(we're fresh out) and let it drink.
(Are we sure it has a mouth?)

8.

December lasted all through March —
my discontent was manifest.
But now cold April rain relents
and lets a few blue squills rise up
Charlotte tells me, who sees so well
and has a heart for everything.

9.

What makes you think Nietzsche?
is there a book you bought
that spilled on your pillow?
Silver and told! We remember
everything but at the wrong time.
Sleep, Love, it is not yet the dawn
that old song.

10.

I hear Mac Cormack singing the sun up
in my father's dining room,
or is it Roméo by Gounod
levering the sun's self
up to wake some girl
impersonating love
asleep beyond her balcony?
We still live here — that's the point.
All music is true,
even the shoddiest Most words are false,
even the goldenest.
We're just what's left of what we've heard.

4 April 2017

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

**Precision in relation-
ship is all.
TV over my back
reflects off the inner
curve of my glasses,
makes me see
the colors of behind me,
quick pulsing blue
of what has just been
and will never again.
Fit amusement for my
heart doctor's waiting room.**

4 April 2017

INSIDE IN. DAY SIXTEEN.

1.
Help me understand
what went and keeps
going wrong.
Angel with an arquebus
keeps vigil on a cloud.
We call it rain.

2.
But every molecule
depends on us
to make sense of it.
That's what we're here for.
Garden. Apple tree.
All over. Begin again.

3.

The girl next door
before my time
grew up to be a movie
star but took a
different name.
That makes me wonder
now what my real name is.

4,

Exaudi orationem meam
but I didn't pray,
not today, yet the morning
still needs me
to attend to its thinking
and write down what little
I can catch of it. Patience,
plenty of time.
The earth is so young.

5.

Wake up thinking
why not sleeping.
A plague of questions
sun-bonneting my ears.
New hatched mosquitoes
from beneath the snow
just like Wyoming.

6.

In Greece all the Easter
eggs are painted red.
Scarlet. We all have
the same religion,
only the names are changed,
keep changing. After.
And after burying the dead
we come back home
and give each other hard-boiled eggs.

7.

ut why do apples float?
And what have rivers done
that they keep running away?
Ask my wife, a wife knows
whose fault it is who
ostensibly blameless stands
pointing at nothing
lost in the air.

8.

Reunion. Meeting
me halfway
the morning. What more
can I ask? We are together.
Sunlight. Bushel of wheat.

9.

**Too many drivers
for one little car.
Get your hands off my wheel
is my vain appeal.
Who drives me?
But they won't even speak.**

10

**Chasing children through the woods
I wolf. Chasing
wolves across the barren plain
I man. Who can say
what kind of thing I really am?**

5 April 2017

INSIDE IN. DAY SEVENTEEN.

1.

**Wait for the answer
the gloaming's coming
here is the morning
the blackbird knows —
these are our instructions.
They follow us wherever we go.**

2.

**And there are semaphores by railroad tracks
they have been like crucifixes to me
slightly secular but holy all the same
holding arms out to show where all this
traffic I'm made of has to ho.**

3.

Meaning no irreverence
every human must become
a church herself
to the unkown but discoverable
god inside him.
That's why we have bones
to keep us steady in the sky
in all the windstorms of
imagined identity.
Minster you and minster me.

4.

Sometimes I wonder if I'm right
in all these guesses they
pour through me, *Langue, Langage, Parole*,
those three hooded
deities of Samothrace or of Northumbria
the French grammarians rediscovered
just before our own aching day,

5.

Counsel me again, brothers,
I am still a man,
all my bird work and lion growl
avail me not.
Two flat feet and one bad ear,
two hungry hands and one good eye,
I made a jungle of me
now lead me out.

6.

Sex is perception.
Sleep is kabbalah.
Wake on Thursday
with Wednesday's children
all grown up already
all around us,
lewd and raining
and speaking passable Greek.

7.

**Where do the buses come from
that haunt the lane?**

**Who comes here so often
and so many, and who goes?**

**I suspect it's all about marriages,
hasty unions in the coffee break,
impious remarks about the boss —
if only there were one to blame !**

8.

**Whistling. Not many
do it anymore.**

**What do they save
their breath for now
or is there no more music**

one line of breath can sing?

We have come to the end of melody.

**The man piling up oranges and melons
at Hanaford's is silent at his work.**

9.

**Six pages then the brain
runs out of ink.**

**Ailing Virgil steps ashore
at Brindisi and we listen
for the last echoes,
we yearn for more.**

**The exactions of poetry
demand more
of us who merely listen.**

**People fall beside the road
but the mind we share goes on.
I think I mean the mind we are.**

6 April 2017

INSIDE IN. DAY EIGHTEEN.

1.

**Reaching edge.
Reading sparrows' flight.
Keep watch.
I am an experiment
I think.**

2.

**Particular care
in handling where.
Location is our only
safeguard homeland
trust. Somebody.
Anybody. Nobody.
These three
are we. All
magic made from
us. Somewhere.
Nowhere. anywhere.**

3.

**Interact. Polar regions
lights above.**

Some see from here.

***Ur-ur* the baboons cried
on the Upper Nile
greeting the dawn.**

***aurora* the Greeks heard
or someone said.**

**For us on clear nights
greeny ghosts arise
horizons. Summer time.**

Don't you know that everything is far?

4.

**Far and fair and in between,
a blue dress for the lady,
a green air for her swain
her constant true and unrelenting sky.**

5.

**Porous waking.
Waiting. Seldom
dine along long
stretch of road
this. No appetite.
Kindle interest
in lost things,
these stones might
bear inscriptions.
Read them until
they really are.**

6.

**Go away like Saturday
liturgical deployment of clock time
versus time perceived by
a perceiving subject.
Paid-for work is rape, she said.
Capital should be kinder.
As Engels was. Angels
laugh at our timid erotics—
they can love so many all at once.**

7.
In Duke Bluebeard's castle
I oped a door
hoping to behold
his virgin brides
all spotlessly arrayed
but none were there.
He changed them
it seems did not kill.
(But what was he after
all those years,
woman after woman?)
He let them go—
the door I opened
let onto a great forest.
The wives were trees now
or loft beings of some
other sort, ceaselessly
moving slowly in the dim.

7 April 2017

=====

“she carried the candle from room to room”

— A.M.

**She could not find it
what she was looking for
was hidden in his body
buried long ago
before the snow before
the fall and summer
had no part of it either,
all gone in him, and now
no way even to give a name
to what she was looking for.
But still shadows on the wall
give her some comfort,
the same little candlelight
so different in every room.
That much at least was new,
always changing, always
there for her when she looked.**

7 April 2017

== == == == ==

**Who is it?
Wind in the trees,
I heard him last night
all through the night**

**What is his name
if you call him him?
His name is what you hear
when he talks in the yews.**

8 April 2017

INSIDE IN. DAY NINETEEN.

1.

**Learn to be darker
learn to be dull,
dun-colored against
the splendor of the other.
So be invisible
and anywhere and be
elsewhere right here.**

2.

**Is there room enough on the lawn
for the grass? The snowplow
gouged out the ground—
what will the earth's answer be?**

3.

**Every question's a dumb question
since all questions arise from ignorance.
That's why I like them, aggressive
thought they are (all questions
are aggressions. Fact.), because
they grovel a little too and say
Noisy though I am I still am dumb.**

4.

**But I love idle questions,
don't you
start doing it too
the sun just came out
after three days don't you
think that's answer enough.**

5.

**We attribute motivation and intention
to all sorts of inanimate things.
This is very wise of us
if often wrong—
put your house on show and it will bring
cunning mortgage seekers to grasp and dwell.**

6.

**Some things are not worth saying.
For instance this.**

7.

**Make me doubt
my senses more.
Cars come,
the wind goes,
for a little while
the world was mine.**

8.

**Man rakes litter off the grass—
things misbehave all winter
and now he has to fix. Parks
everywhere. Hard working man.
I thought it was Paris near the senate
but it was only the sky.**

9.
**This last little place
to be alive.**

10.
**Be a woman
for Christ's sake,
answer my need
or take it away.**

11.
**Despite all my humming
the trees are bare.
Even this hibiscus
in front of me resists.
Can it be that I
have nothing to do
with what happens?
All these years I thought
I was the weather.**

12.

**Still room for more
said Noah but alas
only we believed him.**

13.

**I make a contract
with the sky,
cover me slowly
and I will praise you
all life long. This
is my signature.**

8 April 2017

THREE MOODS OFF MUSIC

1.

**Always the temple the church
is sacred, the hierarchy is profane.
An empty building fills with music:**

**last night Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius*,
the words imaging Christian afdterlife,
the music sounding clear the Bardo.**

2

**Newman's "Angel of the Agony,"
a terrible personage I never knew there was,
never knew was there
in the shattering collapsing, deafening
moment of dread, God
kneeling alone in the garden
suddenly perhaps for the first time
realizing what it means to have two natures:
how to be the deathless one
and still actually die.**

3.

**But musc mostly reflects upon itself
Good Friday comes this week
then everybody knows**

**then Easter — forget the bunnies
and all the chocolate eggs,
reflect instead a tortured corpse**

**roused, tottering naked out of its tomb
his wounds almost scabbed over
blood too dry to leave a trail.**

9 April 2017

== == == == ==

**Waiting to hear more than enough.
Seabirds squawking, I love the sound
cloud wrack, skimny bushes, wind in yew trees.
We live in a book of signs
we labor to read
 but sometimes just go to sleep.
Deep sleep is a way of reading too.**

9 April 2017

INSIDE IN. DAY TWENTY.

**1.
Discovering the evident
takes all your time.
Buy a blender,
growl it all together
so you take it in all at once
but sip by sip.**

**2.
A vampire for readers
is that space between the lines,
topless saloons,
cactus shortcuts,
shootouts every hour,
anything your little heart desires
happens here.
Right here, as you just saw.**

3.

**Cherokee chick
up in Tivoli
all our blood gets mixed
and how long is a season
where did they hide hell?
Your clarity of mind
puts me to shame—
but that;s ny middle name.**

4.

**Don't get too light-hearted, hubby,
you're still married already
to that grindstone you got
in trade for your heart.
It's all work now, ad work is your play —
they forgot to teach you that in Sunday school
but here I am to help,
I'm your own personal M.B.A.,
Master of Bad Advice.**

5.

**Baudelaire and Jean-Paul Belmondo
both born today.**

**Their years seem to be different
but a day is always the same.**

**Listen to me, I am your heart
telling you what you always knew,
right now is all there is.**

6.

**By animal increment
wait a long time.**

**Or be a blue flower
and always be now.**

9 April 2017

INSIDE IN. DAY TWENTY-ONE

1.

Time moves faster mornings.

Fact. In this house.

**We are its only measure,
what happens to our heads,
our beautiful clear skin.**

2.

Rhomic, angled, odd, enclosing.

**Smell of cedar left on fingers —
like a church hymn only drier —
a language spoken on an island
rescued from the sea but
waterfowl wading through my words.**

3.

**Skillful as can be
a joiner. The tall
writing desk (picture
Bartleby at work
)has a sloping top—
the apple rolls off,
the scroll remains.
Pleasure lapses,
work is always —
my penmanship
would put a hen to sleep.**

4.

**Because time scratches letters out
leaves gaps — mouse nibbles,
worm holes — in the papyrus
nobody knows exactly what I said
when I was she, or they, or
noisy Babylonians bartering their gods —
yes, theology. I am just a man,
an olive in your martini, maybe,
but I'm the taste you won't forget.**

5.

I'm not sure I said what you meant —
will you try again, this time
talk straight to my hand,
my fingers are smarter than my head,
so many surprises they've brought us both.

6.

Tell the truth
they'll do
what they can.
Music is like that,
true as your ears.
It's a game, you know,
the oldest one,
silent call and loud response,
we have been listening
nine thousand years
already, and still can feel
your rock in my hand.

7.

Haughty jogger
hound at her heel —
a road is pure
interruption,
good for the mind.
Fleeth yet none pursueth—
something like that,
flight for its own sake.
The dog I don't understand.

8.

Do you mind if I finger your tattoo?
It seems a *hodos*, a holy road to follow,
a tracing my touch has to retrace
to know the meaning of the sign.
As you must say a word
out loud to understand it.
A sign is a road to itself.

9.

Wind in the bushes
drves me on too.
To see such generous
turbulence evergreen !
Every time it stirs
I feel I need to answer —
and I'm stll not sure
if that's the wind
or just some breath in me.

10.

But why should any man be sure?
Certainty dwells in the Woman House
side by side with Beauty and Intellignce,
these three. Outside we prowl around.
gaze hungry at the shadows on their window shades.

11.

That sounds so sad
but really not,
outside is where
the wind is there
and talks to me
and sometimes even
tells me who you are.

12.

**Please make it more complicated
we need the trouble
the sun will set soon
and only our hard work will
keep her in the sky.
Complex as can be,
as being is. Keep writing,
faster, you can still see
light through the words.**

13.

**Holy of Holies
Our Lady
grotto in the mountain's flank
speaking an unknown language
everyone can understand.
I am born of you every morning
something like thinking
but with skin.**

10 April 2017

= = = = = = =

Baldwin, 1

**All we are is wounds.
The wounds we feel
are just the healthy
flesh around the pain.
Don't talk about pain.
Pain is a color
running down the arm,
a shadow in the breast,
a rash mistake. Light
falls on us like some
drunken friend at a bar.
We have to carry all
the splendor home alone.**

10 April 2017 6/24

== == == == ==

Baldwin, 2

**I brought these for you
from the market,
a cheese grater, this meat
the butcher said was lamb
but I don't know, we'll know
when it's cooked right enough,
the taste, the taste, And this
book written in Morocco
by a German exile, the print
too small for me to read
but you, you, with your eyes
you can read everything
even the shadow I hid so
carefully beneath the glass.**

10 April 2017 7/24

=====

Baldwin, 3

When I was a kid my cousin
the fireman slid down poles
like this and I wanted to
but they said dangerous. See,
everything around it is red,
color of fire, blood, tragedy,
patriotic music, algebra.
Frightening things. And still
I yearn for that immaculate
descent, slippery between
the thighs and very fast,
almost like the opposite
of making love, getting there
too soon, the fire already out.

10 April 2017 8/24

=====

Baldwin, 4

In diesen heiligen Hallen
all the persons of our consciousness
stand around and praise
loud as yellow itself
some absent god.

It's the temple that counts,
not the theology, color is religion
enough for us, for humanity.
Color is the only thing that means.

So be colors with me, tell me
(that's what we can do for one
another) what color I really am
and I will tell you yours — and I

may lie. Men do. That too
is part of our theology.

10 April 2017 9/24

=====

Baldwin, 5

**The apple bites back
the round turns square.**

**Every evening
is an alchemist
turns the gold back into
opus nigrum, the dark,
that's is the real
miracle, where all
transformation begins.**

**And all the while
the blue eyes of Margarethe
laugh out at Faust,
the poor guy trying
his damndest to learn
just a little bit of all
that she has always known.**

10 April 2017 4/24

=====

Baldwin, 6

**Jubilee! Every
fifty years
set my people free.
When I lived in Brooklyn
the rabbis at midnight
danced through the street
holding sacred objects
in their hands: bottles
of Schenley, watermelons,
heaps of yellow roses,
brooms and carpet sweepers,
and they were singing
not too, loud, all the black
neighbors need their sleep
but we not black not Jews
not much of anything, we
stood and prayed with them
in our fashion, squeezing
hips and quoting Latin
and seeing as loud as we could.**

10 April 2017 5/24

=====

Baldwin, 7

**Fat as France and full of seeds and
the first year I went to Europe
I found 5000 francs in the gutter
when that would buy good meals and wine
for poor students , god was I gauche
and red and in everybody's face,
climbing cthedrals and kissing fences,
kissing shadows, kissing columns,
kissing anything that would stand still
or stand for it or stand for something,
like a flag or an opera or *Mother
Courage* in German at the theater
along the river and I was lonely.
But red, red as my hair, red, and red
is the color of loneliness, red is always
lonely: below it nothing can be seen.**

10 April 2017 10/24

=====

Baldwin, 8

India is like this.
Everything growing
older and paler
and good to eat.
It turns out in India
everybody is
a kind of vegetable,
I noticed that right away,
in Delhi (they write *Dili*),
huge complex salads
walk through the streets,
praying and peddling
and all the weird fashions
of being that bring
tourists and seekers
(penniless conquistadors)
all the way from Jersey
or all the even paler
wherevers of the West.
And here they are
made holy by mere seeing
darshan, the way a painting
works on me when I close
my eyes and hold it in my heart.

10 April 2017 11/24

=====

**There are letters enough
just enough
to spell my name
said St. One the Stone.**

**With teakettles and syntax
we conquered the world,
now with beauty let it
conquer us right back.**

10 April 2017

== == == == ==

**The flow
too slow
Niagara paused.
Between one breath
and the next
earth was born and grew
and died. We
are Atlantis, all that's left,
sunk in the sea
of capital and labor and grief.**

10 April 2017

AN DIE BLUMEN

**Let me see your faces,
flowers. I know your needs
a little, do you know mine?**

**Do you know
all that color does,
and you small Siberian squills
work harder than the sky**

**which is only sometimes blue.
Help me to be
and to keep giving
just by being, being here.**

10 April 2017

=====

**When you're in your eighties
patience becomes a vicious habit
you have to learn to peel away.
Then haste is virtuous — no, not haste
but promptness. Whatever you mean
to do or say, say it now.**

10 April 2017

== == == == ==

**Full moon in bare trees
but mild enough out here
to stand and worship them.
Or whatever it is we do
on such spring nights
that takes our breath away.**

10 April 2017

== == == == ==

**A man in a dark room
closes his eyes anyway.
This is the museum in him
maddened with images.
He turns on the light,
opens his eyes — that way
he won't have to see so much.**

10 April 2017

== == == == ==

**The palms of Palm Sunday
dried and cracking
flutter around his tomb.
He will rise but they will not
though they and we
shall all be changed.**

10 April 2017

== == == == ==

**Regimented reality
can you spell my name
without the alphabet?
Once I could, in China,
a foreigner or stranger,
a sinew in the arm —
but now the word
is caught in the fibers,
fabric of seeing —
my name is what you feel
when I touch you
or leave you alone.**

10 April 2017

== == == == ==

**A little jeweled box
that has nothing in it—
that is the mind.**

**Lapis on the lid
and emeralds for eyes
and one ruby
just standing there
in the middle
of all things.**

10 April 2017

THE WHOLE STORY

I guess it all has to come out tonight—
aleph to *tav* and all those birds between
chattering and singing and flying away.
I thought I had a whole life to get it done,
get it down, but now they seem to want it
now, those letters who are everything —
and each one is a deity, I know that now,
gods when they wake or when they're sleeping
the 22 pillars of the sky.

2.

And in the middle of this night
only me awake to praise them,
only one light in the town's [tomb?] window
so it's all left for me
to write down the dreams
that language makes us have.
The streetlights are part of the plan,
the road, the deer step across it
from the ridge to the stream.
How dare I try to sleep?

**3.
So here it is,
the whole story.
There was a stone
that learned to speak,
it called out to the rain
Come cover me
and so the sea was born.
Ages passed and the stone
learned to move around,
swim a little, even walk
and one day stepped
bravely from the water.
You know the rest,
the Sultan told it
to your own mother when
she went swimming in her tan [?],
frolicked in the Lake of Milk
until we both were born.
Now do you remember?
Now can I go to sleep?**

10 April 2017

== == == == ==

**Nestorian scribes
carried two colors of ink
one pouch of blue, one of black.
For they were dualists, I think,
power of good and power of evil —
which color was which?
But in Byzantium, the great mosaics,
the devils wore haloes too,
but the haloes were blue.
I know so much to understand so little,
I open a bible and the page is on fire.**

10 April 2017

== == == == ==

**The sound I hear
is only fear.
It is my own body
swallowing, processing,
breathing. Why
do I startle myself?
Why is my hearing
so far away
from what I am?**

10 April 2017

== == == == ==

**Never likely to be
the whole story —
write the pen
right out of ink,
Canadian border,
lake with a moose in it,
a moth bigger than the full moon.
There, that's my song,
you sing it, surely
better than I can — see,
not the story, just its song.**

10 April 2017

=====

**Be strict for once, Robertus,
sneak the apple
back into the pie,
let it cool on the window ledge
and serve it to friends,
pretend you made it,
pretend you bought it from the tree
and paid the sun to bake it for you.
Some people will eat anything.**

10 April 2017

=====

**I woke because no one
was calling me.
Only in mental conversation
can one sleep deep.
But I was on nobody's mind
and so I woke
empty-hearted in the night
all about listening to the dark.**

10 April 2017

== == == == ==

**Ribbon in somebody's hair —
blue with silver sparkles.
Confused earth with the sky
on these few clear nights
as if the whole sky was
just a woman passing.**

10 April 2017

INSIDE IN. DAY TWENTYTWO

**1.
Cast the characters
keep the plot —
scratch marks
on mind wall
to follow by finger,
inner, best
someone else's.
We are someone else's.**

**2.
Sea barratry and piracy
I was insured against
when I was a wooden chest
full of books on homeopathy
recently from India.
I came to hand,
was read and shelved.
What is barratry?
Where are my pirates?
I could cure them of thievery.**

3.

I am a long time ago
when I say now.
The greasy minutes
slip from my fingers

4.

I don't want a picture of you
"whoever you are"
I want the feel of your fingers
testing, assessing maybe
a bronze zarf smuggled out of Turkey
or a smudged nineteenth century postcard
showing the market in Marrakesh
you bought in the market at Clignancourt
a week ago. Or was it Spain?

5.

I can't complain —
so many of you
and so generous
with years, and just
enough fears
to keep us both
at a safe distance.
But even so I'm waiting here for you.

**6.
Blue squills a-shimmer
on the hill. A lawn
recovers from what we do
mostly, the well-meaners,
earth's own apostates,
all of you almost
bad as I am.**

**7.
One nice thing about Catholics —
early training in Penance and Absolution,
Going to Confession, reminded them
that they could possibly,
now and then, be wrong.
No millennial would ever think that.**

8.

Shall I censor
sly glancing observations
the better to preserve
the abstract texture of the whole?
Max Ernst is my appeal,
two children menaced by a nightingale.

9.

In math a catastrophe
is a special thing, a curve,
a hill, say, you can go
some way round or down
and then the point is irretrievable,
or you are, and down you go.

10.

See how mean
most science is?
Bones in the dusty
showcase, ours.
And they use music,
math, that scary poesy.

11.

**It still keeps talking.
Wander free,
dear sleepy thought,
schläfig, I smiled aloud
to the full moon last night.
Sleepier even than language
the morning sunlight topples on the page.**

12.

**Let the strident voices
be next door and not come here.
What do I have to say
to anybody who thinks listening
is a way of understanding
where they are or I am
or anybody is.
Need I go on?**

13.

**I put on my father's baseball cap
and feel luminous and so happy
I must be doing something wrong.**

14.

**Evade the pattern.
Layer the colors
thickly, make them
march forward
plane after plane
to meet the astonished eye.**

15.

**If a painter [?] can do it
anybody can.
For we are vertical planes
thickly arrayed
and moving towards you
day after day.
A week will come
when I understand what I just said.**

16.

**Holy week
and which one isn't?**

**I celebrate
beyond belief
the risen Christ
in all of us.**

**See Varley's great painting in Toronto—
your portrait, true,
all my darlings.**

17.

**Numbers aren't magic,
your fingers are.
Numbers are only for
when your hands get tired.**

18.

**And the bluegrass glad
and the heart at peace —
first such day in three months,
nobody telling me anything but you.**

11 April 2017

=====

**Every house is haunted
that's why we have bad dreams**

**some trees and fields and waters
are haunted too, the ash tree**

**used to grow here till it dreamed
a blizzard that took it down.**

**But every house is. Yet under the linden
an easy pillow sometimes waits**

even when the house is full of dread.

11 April 2017

ELEMENTAL

**In twenty-two days
the Elohim
created what we know.**

**There are *biblia*,
books that say this
in different ways.**

**Rays. Days.
Numbers vary —
for instance how many**

**birds are there in the sky —
and we weren't even
there to count them**

**as they worked,
poured, formed us
and we are known.**

**And all we know now
are the twenty-two shadows
cast in us as speech.**

2.

I woke up thinking:
“in twenty-two days the ALHIM
created what we know” or
“...everything we know.”
I stumbled down the hallway
and the clock read 2:22 —
so I had some corroboration
to go on with — I believe
everything I’m told —
that way nothing will be lost
even if nothing is found.

3.

It is the middle of the dark
hours from any natural light
I hear a bird singing
or think I do. Rain maybe—
doe rain sing?

Robin

Redbreast roused
by spring, can’t you
sleep either,
dreaming the beginning
of all things
over and over again?

4.
Birds know
because they fly,
because the air remembers,
oldest of us all,
the breath before the *aleph* came
to shape us into
the knowers and the known.

.

11 / 12 April 2017

== == == == ==

**Churches should be built
by secret architects, sky masons
who slip away by night and leave
a sacred hollow empty edifice
we fill with consciousness.
The empty room is synagogue enough,
“no priest but the perfected man”
The welcoming shaped emptiness
is sacred. Hierarchy is utterly profane.**

M.B.E.

**12 April 2017
(recent scrap)**

== == == == ==

**It's the face
we don't confront
that gnaws us.**

**Think death
and come to life again.**

**12 April 2017
(recent scrap)**

THE EPISTEMOLOGIES

**1.
Everything I know is wrong.
What a relief !**

**2.
We say without and within.
Why don't we say withup?
Or withdown, after all we
go there all the time?**

11 / 12 April 2017

== == == == ==

**Be close to the old rabbis
when they're taking it easy
talking loose. Their idle
guesswork is the loftiest
theology. All prayers
are wrong except the heart
and we know what happens
when it stops praying.**

11 / 12 April 2017

COGITO

1.
I want a different
thing to think about
or think to thing with

and so I throw open
a book in my head
thast I've never read

geophagy in Carolina
or lunar cycle tribes
observe in Ghana

which used to be
the Gold Coast colony
when I used to be me.

2.
But now the moon changes,
comes to dinner in jacket and tie,
keeps his fly zipped tight
and says ary a word.

As usual I have to do all the talking
because I have nothing of my
own to say, so words come free

and easy — it's so kind of you

**to sit there listening alertly
while at the head of the table
the sun in her glory sits
smiling that special smile of hers.**

11 / 12 April 2017

=====

**Daddy, forgive me,
your penis
has become my pen.
We still go on making
in this sly world,
getting a word
in edgewise to steer
the silent conversation
of all things
through ten thousand books.
And I sign eah lyric
interruption with
your own unicursal star.**

11 / 12 April 2017

== == == == ==

**When I think all the things
this body has done
cars flash by on wet roads
helicopters scour the woods
on the watch for miscreants,
log rafts steer dow placid lakes —
nothing stands still.
Chyme and blood and neural sap,
unknown elixirs piping through bone.
And two old feet shuffling along.**

11 / 12 April 2017

== == == == ==

**Some of it
makes sense.
The rest
makes senses.**

11 / 12.IV.17

== == == == ==

**And you, honest reader,
all you have to do
is feel. I fumble
at your dear switch.**

11 / 12.IV.17

== == == == ==

**Things I don't want to know
come with the gentle rain
soon there'll be a closet in the woods
where the trees can hide
and we can shelter with them,
among them, tasting their deep shade
safe from the news. Words there
learn how to relent. Meanings
fade back into sounds, wind,
breath, bird chatter, leaf fall,
raindrops. Noise, not news.**

12 April 2017

DIAGNOSTICS

**you think
you have
rabbits on the roof.
Tell the nice nurse
how soft they are,
furwise, but
how hard they hop.
She will believe you,
she's trained for that,
the best religion of all,
of old: believe everything.
She'll help you name
each bunny, recognize
its footfall, and help
you learn to take them
seriously, literally,
the way real things are.
When the doctor finally
slips into the room
she'll be on your side,
baffle him, battle him
till he subsides, smiles,
tells you to go home,
your rabbits need you.**

12 April 2017

== == == == ==

**I have to be slow
to write the morning**

**sometimes it's noon
before I'm done**

**everybody laughs at me
and why ot,**

**outside the lawn
turns blue with flowers**

**year after year,
I must mean something.**

12 April 2017

== == == == ==

**Box of berries
mildewed in the fridge.
How things never
stop teaching their lessons.
Hold as hard as you
can to now. This
time is your only
one of your million
last chances,. Toss
those strawberries,
birds or somebody
else will be glad. Then
start the day again.**

12 April 2017

=====

Baldwin, 9

**The harper hurts.
The chair he sits on
breaks the light,
distorts the sounds.
Why are these colors
pouring out of my hands
he wonders, he speaks
another language
that's made of colors too
but he doesn't notice,
music is like that,
it never hears itself,
only that other thing
it's always yearning for,
there, over there,
I see it now.**

12 April 2017 (11/24, bis)

=====

Baldwin, 10

I've lived in this small city
all my life but never counted
the separate houses in my own
neighborhood. Something wrong
with me. Or with the weather—
why is everything so right?
Roofs and walls make perfect
angles, people live quietly
down in their sacred colors,
bands of traffic bend the sky.
Alleys full of sexual politics—
what can one do, faced with
geometry, but be sensuous,
serious, lustful though mute?
It turns out we were living
in beauty the whole time.

12 April 2017 (12/24)

=====

Baldwin, 11

**The judges met and sentenced me
to many years, unspecified, of what
they called Community Service.
What that entailed were these:
drinking the lake dry, the one
that had somehow sneaked by night
into our small park. Drink that,
they said. And build from driftwood,
cardboard boxes and oil drums
a temple to the Living Goddess
the one you call The Sun up in the sky.
When I got done with that, then,
only then, they'll tell me the third
thing I have to do. I fear it.
I fear what may fester in their minds.
I should never have done what I did,
tear the bible up in public, screaming
at every page Who needs such ugly truth?**

12 April 2017 (14/24)

== == == == ==

Baldwin, 12

**Wanting is good for the soul,
getting not so good.
The soul is an arrow flying
somewhere the rest of me
can't imagine. What I think
is just a window flying
through a world of flesh,
what I am is just a footstep
left by someone passing.
But the soul! All color!
All arrow fletched and pointed,
all flying and all arriving
here!**

12 April 2017 (15/24)

=====

**It gets dark just before eight—
my father called it the gloaming.
Deer move around, and the fox
lopes along the drystone walls.
I delight to think of you there
in the studio, breaking pure
colors all over the world
as they fade from the place itself.
Offhand, I cant think of any
colors that say more, work harder,
say more than the ones you
right at this momet are wielding,
mind on better things than this.**

12 April 2017

=====

Baldwin, 13

**How the light
finally falls.
Nothing we
can do about it,
time is a cliff
also, and beyond
is only the glow
our closed eyes
see, far, far, warm
as tomorrow,
I thought I stood
beside a waterfall
but it was dry,
thought there was
a city I the distance
but t was my own
breath seething in my ears
as if I too were finally
part of what I saw.**

12 April 2017 (16/24)

=====

Baldwin, 14

**It's where we started.
We pulled the colors off the trees
and wrapped them round us
except the few holy ones, women
mostly, who used the sky as their clothes.
We lived there so long, ages content
with sheer continuing, delicate as birds,
loud as rain. We called it Aphrica,
the sunny place, because She was over us
and her warmth ligered through the night.
But one day she told us Go,
go for no good reason, just move,
you have spent too many winters
safe and warm, now know the other thing,
the busy pain that makes you sing.
And one day you will burn like me.**

12 April 2017 (17/24)

=====

Baldwin, 15

**Holy Bible ppen up for me,
let your pages be my skin
or her skn whom I desire,
obedient to the ancient laws
that wrote us both, and you too,**

**Because skin says everything,
music is just skin out loud
and words are just the pattern
of fine hair on your lover's thigh.
Bible, don't tell me more than this,
we are holy enough bad as we are.**

12 April 2017 (18/24)

== == == == ==

**Wishes fester
in time's mind
he said, that
vox in deserto
voice in the empty
night. Wishes,
and when they do
they rot into actions,
and there's you'll be
trapped in a peopled
city of your design —
will you ever
hear me again?**

13 April 2017

TO SPRING

**Be. Blossom
while you're at it.**

13.IV.17

OF THE ENNEADIC PRINCIPLE

for Tamas

Here's my answer.
Why nine? Because
(a) my hope, my plan,
my dearest strategy
is to put down in
writing every
single thing I know.
And (b) because
I'll never know it all,
the whole ten,
ten the highest
number there is
in the human world.
So, nine is both pride
and humility at once.
I wonder if Plotinus
thought anything similar.
I'll have to read
him all to find out —
but there too
zehn mir fehlt,
can't get the whole
thingever, can't
get to ten, *ten*
is what I lack .Or
ten wont come to me.

13 April 2017

=====

**I was born in a German
speaking country called Brooklyn.
At 8 I moved to southern Italy
without leaving Brooklyn.
No wonder nobody
knows where I come from —
only the streets remember,
I say a rosary of their names
sometimes to help me fall awake.**

13 April 2017

=====

**Have I waited too long
to start waiting?
Was all my furious *now*
just a tactical retreat
from the somber silence
even I can't fill with words?
I thought I was the Bible
but I was only a calendar
hanging on your shadowy wall.**

13 April 2017

=====

Baldwin, 16

The uncanny. We live
below the ground,
rooms and rooms of us.
Unheimlich. Rooms
and rooms of us beneath
a single tree that is yours,
your doors to us. To me.
I speak a hard quick tongue
made of blue squills,
flowers that shimmer the lawn
in April and soon are silent.
Every year though there are
more of them. More of us,
More of me. Bend down,
let my bluest word touch you.
You are as strange as we are
I think already you are one of me.

13 April 2017 (13/24)

=====

Baldwin, 17

*Door I am a door or
what comes as a door
through a door. Or
I am opening, opening
more and more, I open
myself like a door.*

**That;s what I heard it
claiming. I wondered,
how could anything open
and open so much and go
on opening? Can someone
have outside built in?**

**This is clearly one of them,
they have their own shadows
built right in too, a quiet
sound around them as they come
towards me opening and opening
until all I know and think and want
is to in, catch that disease myself
and be nothing but opening.**

13 April 2017 (19/24)

=====

Baldwin, 18

The wind blew against me
until it blew the sky away,
it blew rocks and sand against me
until I stood there stiff as a house.
I was a house. Thank god
the wind does not keep pets—
there are no animals in my nature,
only me. I was a long time empty
house, the insurance company
shook its head, the street went away,
my phone stopped working.
I was happy. A house can think
better than a man. I stood there
relaxed and handsome and thinking,
lights in my windows that no one saw.
And what I thought was texture, how
everything, even the wind, has it,
a touch of its own to know t by.
I like there all night caressing the wind—
how shy air is when it stirs in the dark!

13 April 2017 (20/24)

== == == == ==

Baldwin, 19

So you have come to me at last.

Never! I've been here all the while.

Then why didn't you say something, why didn't you tap me on the arm or something?

It's not my business to touch or to call. I am the touched.

Should I touch you now?

I didn't mean that. You can reach out, people do, but reaching out is not the same as touching. Touching is a kind of call.

Well, I'll call you now.

It's not so simple. Calling means something like: you hear your phone ringing but don't answer it, you wonder and wonder who could be calling and what they might want. The phone keeps ringing, say ten times, and all the while you're thinking — that which is going on in your head is what I mean by calling.

So I have to wait before I call?

Yes, you have to wait for someone to call and then you mustn't answer, you have to think hard thought, and that thinking is calling.

Somehow I think I'm calling you now.

It may be — calling is a red thing, though, a tender thing, more like an evening sky than a dog, say, though it is very fierce and very soft. If you really are calling me then I can close my ears and eyes and call you.

So you can call...

only when you're called.

13 April 2017 (24/24)

,

=====

**In mythology
in leather undergarments
screaming for help —**

**may I call you Leda,
can I be her brother
for one era, tell her
all the scandalous weather
that makes a man,
lead her from the mainland
safe to islands,
your daughter, forever?**

13 April 2017

== == == == ==

Meniscus,
 masculine
a mannish
 (moonish)
lift in liquid,
 a curve
in fingernail.

Gender
reveals
 the sex of the moon
usually the Latins hid
is masculine,
 the cold,
the needy,
 the mourner
lost in the dark.

14 April 2017

== == == == ==

**I thought I had not turned
the wheel of the day
so waking in the next dawn
I turned it fast as could be
until I was born
into now again
and maybe could sleep.
Are you with me
where you are?
All these night islands
lost in a bright sea,
wheel spinning on each.**

14 April 2017

=====

**Everybody keeps being Romulus,
always guilty, always in charge.**

**The city east of Eden
Cain set up was Rome.**

**Eden was Atlantis. Abel
was Remus.**

**Caesar
rules us still, his sword
the *Confusion* we call history.**

**All the books he propagates
to help us never learn.**

14 April 2017

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

**(There I go, blaming
the state again.
I *am* the state
and you are too,
we are part
of a dreadful thing,
the President.)**

14 April 2017

=====

**Politics
is what happens to boys
when you're not allowed
to play with girls.**

14 April 2017

=====

**Why can't I just use
my native language?**

—Which one is that?

The one I'm speaking now,

**—if only I were here to hear you
then we'd both know.**

14 April 2017

=====

**The plane took off without its wings
so the passengers had to work harder —
they called it praying — and the pilot,
an impatient man, got there before they did,
silence in the middle of the air.**

14 April 2017

=====

**Eliminate the obvious
and there's nothing left.**

**'And' here means
'as a result' — a trait
we share with Biblical
Hebrew.**

**But my point
here is that everything
is here already, no one
hid anything from us.**

**Only in us, the last
place we'd think to look.**

14 April 2017

== == == == ==

**Sun rise.
More why's.**

**Top tips
of bare still
trees turn gold.**

(I have to explain everything)

**Have you ever walked
through an old doorway
in a garden and felt
fine filaments of
spiderweb settle
on your bare skin?**

**Whatyou feel is time.
We blunder through it
and it marks us as we pass.**

14 April 2017

GOOD FRIDAY

**In old days didn't
eat from noon to three.**

***Tre Ore.* On his cross said
Sitio, I'm thirsty.**

**I thirst. For something old
this bright cold day,**

**something I never lost,
the friend. Never
let me go.**

14 April 2017

=====

**Near the shadow's edge
one starts to hope again.
Even this huge tree
that keeps us from the light
has some limit. Slowly
move to the border,
the boundaries, where doubt
gives way to something else.**

**For years I have tried
to name it — but to get it right
I'll have to cross that border
then the name will be all around me.**

14 April 2017

=====

for Billie

**You put the flowers there
isaw you doing it
wondered what was going on
with you and the earth.**

**2.
You knew,
 you know
about flowers,
 names,
sex lives, family
tragedies of the roses.**

**3.
When I asked
you said They're yellow
(I see them now)
daffodils**

**4.
 from the Dutch
way of saying asphodel,
that Greek thing,
flower of the underworld.**

5.

Underword,

 what the ground
was muttering all winter,
mothering.

6.

Underwear of earth,
the naughty places
soft under solid soil
from which

 you said
they come.

7.

Bless you
for your flowers
in my lawn, the few
yellow pale chalices
cheer me
on this Good Friday,
they slump a little
on the hillock
among the profusion
of blue

8.

flowers I call squills

**you know by
another name**

**I'm sure I'm wrong
but wrongness too
is a kind of flower
isn't it?**

**9.
Or if not,
put up with me anyhow,
you
and all your
knowing flowers.**

14 April 2017

= = = = =

**Birds many,
beasts few.
The adolescent
breeze breathes
I love yu I love you
all over my bare arms,
I shiver at its
clumsy caresses,
but accept, and the sun
too, from across
this immense boudoir
of hers, tosses
me warm kisses.**

14 April 2017

= = = = =

**Write it down fast
before it forgets you.
Prayer time. I mean
time is prayer,
we are the words it says
telling on its beads,
endless rosary of days,
we are what time uses
to thank the one or some
or many who created it
and made it run so smooth
but sometimes lingering,
mountainside, waterfall,
sleepless night.**

14 April 2017

THE WITNESS

**someone is always watching.
How round that circle is!
Just being observed
is criticism enough,
the silent commentary
of the watching eye.
And this straight line,
how straight it is,
but it points both
ways of once so
how can you tell?**

15 April 2017

== == == == ==

**When iy grows warmer
wish it otherwise.
A gate made of apples,
some deer pass through it
on the way from winter.
Sinner? No, a glass
empty of everything but
light. I'll drink to that.**

115 April 2017

=====

Too many books on the shelf.

Pelf. Eyes demur.

Clamor. Glamor.

**Out of the *Kreide* endlessly mocking
words on the sidewalk words on the wall.**

[German, 'chalk']

**I've read too much to know so little,
here, let me study your heart,
the lines on your right palm
because you are left handed
and I want to see exaxtly
what your running from, aside from me,
your blithering witness.**

15 April 2017

== == == == ==

**Left to myself
I don't even have
the sense to be lonely.**

15.IV.17

EASTER

One time this did so mean.
Easter.

The rising, the refusal
to be gone.

Now why
does *mean* mean
'signify' but also 'common,'
even 'unkindly'?

When I was a child
we had Easter
and learned its meaning
but we also had
mean old people
who seemed to take pleasure
in spoiling our play,
our talk, our way,
sending us running away
in tears, even,
maybe,
and what did they mean?

Now we know and forgive
and even sympathize with
all their sufferings, failures,

reprssions, illnesses, the pain
that made them that way,
so resentful of what
we didn't even know
we were, quick, limber,
almost free

to play.

Because play has no meaning,
it's what a bird
would try to convey
by flying away.

16 April 2017

== == == == ==

**Now Easter is it,
of it. Spangled
lawn, squills
blue a week
late, soon gone.
Raster comes
again, it all
comes back in me,
this world a tomb
from which we
constantly wake
and stumble. Each
morning rolls
away the stone.**

16 April 2017

=====

**How much of this fits
together? Nobody loves me
the cartoon sobs
for Valentine is past
and June not yet
so don't
waste your marriage on a wedding,
let some passing scholar, solo parson
hear your vows and wander on.
Then you and be home.**

16 April 2017

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

**But do I have a right
to say these things
without being wise?
The words permit me,
the words are always wise.**

16.IV.17

=====

**People walk
and the road lets them.
Bronze melts
and enters the mold,
takes from
and keeps it
as long as heat lets it.
Through strange permissions
our dreams try reading .
I think of you
asleep in early morning,
your face an amazement
to me, beauty serene,
substrate of our being
the quiet, lasting,
not even waiting,
just being always.**

16 April 2017

== == == == ==

**Everyone you meet today
is Christ risen.
If you don't believe me,
just look into their eyes.**

16 April 2017

== == == == ==

**Hot Easter Sunday
warmup after winter —
we understand just enough
to sit in the sun a while,
getting ready for whatever.
The beautiful candle
she holds on the sky.
But here are wasps
exploring crannies,
making me uneasy
with their undercarriage
their sluggish reconnaissance. Be quiet,
everybody, I want to be alone
with that woman in the sky.
Let her be the only one who moves.**

16 April 2017

== == == == ==

**But they all keep buzzing
and circling around
as if they owned the place
and it's suddenly clear
even to me that they do.
One comes walking on
thisvery notebook as I write,
one of my billion nameless landlords.**

16 April 2017

=====

**Citronella hat?
All I'm doing
is talking to you —
isn't it time
I made something up,
tell it like it isn't
so you'll get to know
the other side of truth
from which the real emerges
so slowly, so slowly, Christ,
how many million years,
dawn of the alphabet —
Never mind the cathedrals,
don't fret, they're almost here.**

16 April 2017

== == == == ==

**I am the strangest man you'll
ever know, I hide
my strangeness like a precious jewel.**

16.IV.17

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

**Sitting in the sun and saying.
That's me praying.
The things that music does
to say its notes
are called its accidents.
Sunlight, words happen.
Words happen.**

16 April 2017

=====

**Chalcedony
if I knew it, stone
of counsel, gaze
into this milk green
cabochon and see
the other side of language.**

**I'm always hungry
for the other side
of every anything,
bruise on my forearm
from all my door knows**

**open, open.
Your beautiful ring
reminds me
past the sea and past your eyes
the quiet word always
on its way in.**

16 April 2017

=====

**There is a star leading to me—
Venus casts a shadow on the desert —
broken bones of some old book—**

**I heard the redbird this morning,
heat is bad for flowers
imaginary imprint**

**I made a skeleton of sugar
you called it *flaquita*,
a skinny little girl**

**and ate the legs off it
and one shoulder. Sugar
is the color of death —**

**we all know that, the doctors
tell us in their white coats,
all I want's a stone bench by the sea,**

**and if that little duck don't quack
mama's gonna buy you a Cadillac
sang her to sleep**

**mentioning one by one
all the entities east and west —**

near enough, the omnibus from Oxford St.

**I followed on foot
speaking my original language,
the sly patois of innocence.**

**Someone comes up behind me,
no, it is my shoulder
reading what I write,**

**checking it for truths,
the way they do,
our bodies the only oracles.**

16 April 3027

GIFTS

**She gave me a shirt
that has no pocket,**

**no way to carry
what is dearest,**

**the writing pad
all blank with promise**

**so I have to give her
an empty page.**

16 April 2017

== == == == ==

**Go back to the beginning
and wait for the end.
Be a pearl necklace,
be a song you lost
the words to
you still can hum
wheat field by moonlight,
a pocket of seeds,
on acorn among them.
Be huge by comparison.**

16 April 2017

== == == == ==

**When the girl calls
it makes religion.
It happens in the head.
You hear her voice,
say, and suddenly
you know what you believe.
You know what matters.
In this way we
give god to each other.**

17 April 2017

APRIL.

**It's getting
to be a habit
to be outside.
To be alive.
Slowly learn
the calculus of flowers,
Dali-esque thermometers,
breeze all the time —
the world is endless vowelings,
up I guess to us
to shape consonants,
pluck words out of the air.**

17 April 2017

=====

**Not just any church
but Holy Wisdom,
mosque, museum,
doesn't matter.**

**What counts is the dome,
it taches every dome
enacts heaven on earth.**

**(Not the geodesic, though,
that's just high school math
lets light in, yes,
but is not smooth, sticks
angles in the sky sky never knew
sky doesn't need.
Grrr at geodesy.)**

**But Sophia,
vast, seems they say
to float above the space enclosed.**

**And we know by now
that *space enclosed*
is all that's holy,
come in and close the door
and be your mind.**

2.
I'm arguing I don't need Istanbul,
vowel harmony, not even
Justinian's beautiful lusty wife.

I argue for Jesus in the closet
praying wordless to the Father
or the Mother or whoever
out there or deep in you
might hear you calling.
And you are the answer to your prayer.

17 April 2017

=====

**A crow is comfort
a cardinal's need.
Depend on the weather,
it will always be here.**

17.IV.17

== == == == ==

**Somehow I added
truth to the cup
so when you drink
all vows are forgiven.
Your own reflection
bobs on the drink, gives
you pleasure to see
and arund your face
faces of your good friends
and they all come home.**

17 April 2017

DIASTOLE

1.

**As if we could tell the difference
the number changes in the night
the diastole the unexpected
low rider through this border town
we're migrant workers in, braceros
all of us in body come and go.**

2.

**It opens us. It opens
up and we pour in,
no more sense than chaparral,
just there, waiting our turn
without the sense of waiting.
Then we're done and gone.**

**3.
Can't get away from microcosm
the movement of blood
into and out of the valves
is Magyars riding across the steppe
until we're stopped.**

We
**is the name of our blood
we keep going till the chamber's full
and then we depart.**

**I used to
live in that town the heart.**

18 April 2017

=====

**I want to be obscure
again as you must be
walking in the marsh
voyeuring the birds,
guessing trails and giving
names to trees and scat
because we're never
the first ones here. but you
know how to walk away
from most of the human world
keeping only *the names of things*
to guide your mood, your
voluptuous errors excite me,
Swainson's hawk? Serviceberry?**

18 April 2017

== == == == ==

**O Christ the page is blank again
no matter how many time
I moth my way all over it
leaving lines of dust, frail
wings, smudges of sweat
from the diaphoresis of just
having to, have to write something
down, words among the dribbles,
no matter, the page is always
empty when I look, always
a blank page, one more pilgrimage
summoned from the dark.**

18 April 2017

=====

**Schiller's apple
too fragrant in the desk**

**the requirements each
artisan demands**

**an apple a yellow
stone on middle finger**

**green-shaded lamp
on an empty table**

**in my case cold coffee.
Why do we need**

**the little things we need
to keep our identity**

**clear — or maybe lose it
until we pure agency**

**nothing but the meaning
of an old apple's smell.**

18 April 2017

End of Notebook 402

SKIPPING

**when they did
needed hard smooth street—
don't try it on sand.**

**This mode of motion
is how children teach adults
how to progress
in scholarship and sciences:**

**firm-footed on what you know
kick it away and leap—
one brief moment in the air,
and then you're there,
the new place, the new idea.**

I am your Muybridge to show you how.

18 April 2017

=====

**Will you write for me
and say me what you know
of what we are? And will
this always be Vienna,
land of the loveliest mistakes,
a stranger's tender skin
never far away? Outside
old churches stand around,
gorgeous guesses about the sky
they wallow in their silence.
I'll never get the language right,
gender always wrong, I feel
like an elephant among camels,
big and useless. And in fact
we never visited the zoo,
the cemetery was enough for me,
vital whispered debates there
in the congress of the dead.
Poor Mozart!**

18 April 2017

at A MEETING OF THE TRUSTEES

Trying hard
hard always
hanss in lap

trying not to talk.
Told me as a kid
say something pleasant

or keep still.
I kept. I still
a, keeping.

18 April 2017

== == == == ==

**What color are
my eyes today
and why. This
is how the song
begins, now you
make it go on,
ask me some
silly asks only
I can answer.
Then we're done.**

18 April 2017

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

**Today I am an old J'ish man
sitting out in the sun
thinking about the thighs
of young women: how firm
muscular their outer sides,
how soft and pale the inner
surfaces, forming that great
arroyo it would be my task
to coax full of living water,
the flood of pleasure. It is not
easy work, sitting in the sun.**

18 April 2017

=====

**When you close the door
that's when they really come in.**

**When it's open they linger
but now, *motivated by obstacle***

**they invade. They are walking
around in you now, some even**

**are sitting in your lap, riffling
through your emails, smiling**

**knowingly. And some just hurt—
hurt you and feel the hurt themselves.**

**maybe not wounds, just pain, the wound
came long ago. It was the door.**

19 April 2017

SPARTAN MANNERS

**Grow the kid
like poppies in a bed
all together—**

**they need each other
more than they need us,
they know more than we do,**

**only the words
fail them, as we still say
,as if we remembered
what it was like to be a child
when adults owned the words.**

**We rent them to the young,
they do the best they can
with what we foist on them.**

19 April 2017

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

**The finest teacher in any school
is a youngish woman
with her mind on something else.**

**They are the ones through whom
the true current flows. The Nile we need.**

19 April 2017

Z

**Over my head
a giant zed.
I am a cat
in a cartoon,
the man
in the moon
in daylight
hid,
 my bed
is everywhere.**

19 April 2017

FOUR FACES OF A FRIEND

1.

**The desert
has gotten into her.
In her eyes, a wary light
so that when someone
reaches out to hold her
she accepts the touch
with anger but accepts.
Afternoon of alkali.
The dry fear of being alone
allows the approach
the way bitter sand accepts
the sun's intemperate caress,**

2.

**Intelligence
is a strange religion,
she knows enough
not to smile,
she knows a smile
is permanent,
eternal, outside of time
like those ancient
smiling Greek statues,**

god knows what's
on their minds,
do they sneer at us?
She knows a smile
gives too much away
and gets nothing
in return. Instead
she gives an honesty,
challenging me
to be as accurate as she.
Those eyes tolerate no lies.

3.
First impressions
always right, always
not quite adequate.
If I studied her hair
I would learn the long
itinerary she followed
to achieve this face.
This permission for
the other to stand
before her, guilty
as ever, fearing,
daring, wanting.
Who knows
whom she will accept?

**She looks away,
looks down,
as if her body were
and were a waterfall
coursing down into
a land she's not sure
she wants to be in
or become. Lovely
sensuous doubt. She
could do anything
at all. Does she want
her beauty too to flow
away, down there.
I want to know what she wants.**

**4.
I like this one so much,
she's looking, but not
at me, leaves me free
to think as I please.
Monochrome like
stone or old movies,
a passport issued
on the way to sleep.
Greenish, seaweed
on a beach stone, color
comes towards her,**

she is by a sea, I think
her body I don't see,
I never see, that
is itself the ocean.
She's looking that way.
See. Sea. See. Sea.
Her serious intelligent
eyes know what's coming.
There is pain in everything,
but something beyond it,
she accepts what is becoming,
o lady why have you given
yourself up to this story,
stone and sea and desert?
It seems to the bravest
face i have ever seen.

19 April 2017

== == == == ==

**Listen is there
sound of mourning,
moaning over picnic tables,
campfires dying down
with no one round them,
someone humming in the trees
just out of sight?**

**Listen is there any
way I can convince you
the shadow will never pass,
we have to do what we can
to stand or lie a moment
in a little light? Friction
is one answer, rubbing
limbs together till we blaze
and share the light of
fire till we too go out.**

19 April 2017

AGAINST IDENTITY

1.
mark
Mara
in her trope

a caravan—
watch
from your rooftop
cityman,

all a town can
do is watch things pass.

2.
Belong
to all the colors
you can.

Truth
is a leaf
on an absent tree —

its shadow
shows up as color, colors,

in our town, *zaun*,
 a place
all walled around us,
 here.

3.
So mark the driver
count his camels,
watch Queen Mara
shiver past in glory.

4.
Are you trying to tell me
yet again that everyone is everything?

And everyone.

 The secret is
there is only one of us,

just one person, just one
from the beginning of the world
till now,

 only one, now girl
now whiskered dotard,
 now black

now white, only one,

**one who sometimes thinks
he's many, she's many,
all the dreamed identities
clothed as history,
all her faces, all his names
all just ciphers for the one
he is, I mean she is,
I mean you are.**

20April 2017

=====

**We who have been everywhere
are soon done.
When will we stay home?
The hill I see out back
is Denali enough for me.**

20 April 2017

== == == ==

**Who knows better than I
the names of the falcon,
the bird you set on my shoulder
and told me it was me?
I know his name in every tongue
because I was born screaming
and my scream is still in the sky.
I'm glad you heard me—some
think the noise they hear
around me is human speech
or screech of lesser birds.
But you knew better. You saw
the crazy eye, unrelenting appetite.**

20 April 2017

== == == == ==

**Did she say
the squalid stars?
we find their faces
in the gutter
when we look down
after the rain**

**the things that poets say,
crowding out the forest
with their old dry words,
one word can spoil a whole day
whole life, imagine.**

21 April 2017

=====

(Baldwin 20)

[img 5250 jpg]

**He was tired of Matisse
so he tore the wall down,
tired of birds
so he erased the sky.**

**Now it's all in here with me.
all the stupid shapes
and all the wise colors,
God, what else have we**

**ever to go on with. Light
I suppose (he said) but
have you ever tried to eat light?
Sometimes I think we could.**

**Sometimes I think anything.
It is what colors do to you,
the woman sitting in an avocado,
the man studying his blood**

**conceived as, stained-glass,
o these mournful churches, drone
of virtue, smell of good intentions,**

behold (he cried) I throw them

**all away, I keep only the tumult
of body against body, shoulders
knocking down trees, soft hands
clappling as the dayf alls down.**

21 April 2017

=====

**How to say six
with one hand:
fingers closed,
thumb and pinky
out extended.
A Chinese man
taught me this.
Now how to say
I love you without
moving my lips.
Must be a way.
Try all the ancient
declensions of hand—
manus, masculine
by form, feminine
by gender. How many
schoolboys have been
ruined by forgetting that.**

21 April 2017

=====

(Baldwin 21) (bis)

**There is a pineapple
that just fits inside
one chamber of the heart.
It is what Time,
that unrepentant vegan,
eats in us. Blood pales,
seeking the condition
of cloud. Time wants
us to be gone, at least
from here, this town
where men love women
and women are supposed
to love the consequences.
Time wants us out—
eternity. a real place
outside of time. From there
all the colors come
and try to call us home.**

21 April 2017

SLOCUM

When I was a Brooklyn youth living off Manhattan, as we mostly did, do, I wrote my first long series-poem and called it *The Exchanges*. Cid Corman was kind enough to publish it in his new series of *Origin*, around 1962. Only now, in myopic hindsight, does the other meaning of the title finally click in my dull wit — the names of the telephone exchanges. Now all of them are mere trinumeral: 758 in the town I live in, but it used to be Plateau 8 (spoken locally as Plato, with no intent to amuse), while the next town south has 876 but once said Trinity 6. Lately I've been trying to recall the exchanges of my youth — Esplanade in Flatbush, Taylor in East New York, for example — all the Gedneys, Albemarles, Nevins, Murray Hills, Triangles and beyond. The old exchanges, make them ring again.

The word
 comes slowly
as a morning,
 along the esplanade
from which the sluggish eyes
watch the sluggish shipping pass
north into haven.

**I am the regent
of all I see,
not yet the king's sway
or ever, maybe,
but I ponder in peace.**

***Say anything
the words will come true
make everything right.***

**Make
everything write
its name clear
on your heart
so you can use it later,
incriminate yourself
in the court of love,

what else ever
are words good for?
The names of all
the old exchanges ripple by,
each one a special time,
each ne a failed connection,
the uncalled friend
at Trinity 6,
the lost,
the sweet,**

the maybe.

***E nomine*, out of the name
all things arise —**

**the word came first
but only we
by calling it
can make a name of it.**

22 April 2017

== = = = =

**I sit in my house
where I've lived fifty years
and all I want
is to come home.**

22 April2017

=====

**Go out in the field
and what do we find?
A ladder to heaven
that has no rungs.**

**That's what it's up to us to make,
shape, whittle, declare.
The more we conceive
the higher we climb.**

**And when we reach the top?
Angels come down to help us up.
And by the time you're there
heaven can be anywhere.**

22 April 2017

=====

**One's own body
in a monastery
—such a pale place —**

**does the skin feel different there,
skin of your buttock, skin of your thigh?**

**Or is there something that silence does,
fixed belief, frequent prayer,
never-ending silent music of liturgy,**

**something that changes
the simple feel of who you are**

**and what you stand up in
or go to sleep with in the early dark?**

22 April 2017

== == == == ==

**The voice that speaks in me
is sometimes louder than my own.
Apples grow on a barren thorn bush —
no one tells it what to do
but suddenly the sun is there
and everything answers.**

23 April 2017

=====

Baldwin 21, ter]

Is there a word
more to be said?
A room exhaling
itself free
of all it holds,
furniture suddenly
breathes with light.

closets open onto forests,
all solid things
loosen their seriousness,
air pervades color,
the oak top table floats.

O you have made me
a bird in your house,
a parrot who thinks he is a crow,

I have the whole encyclopedia
memorized. I blow
all the letters in it
softly into your
eager tender face.

23 April 2017

LISTENING; LIGETI'S VIOLIN CONCERTO

Concerto.

**Polyphonic
conversation.
Jews and Christians discussing
the hiddenness of God —**

how loud the apophatic is!

**2.
Runes come back to the mind
as tunes.**

**The people stand
in the church of themselves,
no stone, no prayer but breath.**

**3.
Why music makes
religion
 happen in the head
is hard.**

**To fathom
what is heard**

=====

**It's not
that the brain is working
or the skin ges hot,
one breaks
into waking
out of loss,
a simple lack
made complicated
by dream, memory,
and other distortions
of desire.**

**How shall
the lack be named?
What is the skin of loss
and who wears it?
Lie there gasping in the dark.**

23 April 2017

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

**When I write the letter
it is graceful and clear.
Minutes later it has collapsed
into bare legibility.
They dance inside me,
make sport, I am Falstaff
teased by pretty neurons,
dumped into the tepid
brook of recognition,
tricksy meanings.**

23 April 2017

=====

**Leave a book
where it likes to live.
A book is also a thing,
you know, and things
know where they should be.**

**(Nothing is ever lost
except sometimes to us.)**

23 April 2017

== == == == ==

**No one knows better than the lost
how far the west is.
Our journey is from water to water,
our only tower
the cloud the sun hides behind.**

**O to see the other side of her!
What would we recognize,
our own faces or her blazing otherness?**

23 April 2017

BENEFIT OF CLERGY

**Ministers of doubt,
priests of profit,
rabbis of resentment,
imams of revenge.**

23 April 2017

== == == == ==

**Now I have spoken
more than I meant to say.
Was the yew tree listening?
Safest to talk in a room alone?
No — no one there
to distract the things around you
from hearing what you say —
and things remember.**

23 April 2017

== == == == ==

**I should have my whistle at my side
in case I need to blow it,
call for help or orient
myself by sound. They call
it cellphone now
but it's still a little
fipple-stick for me
chittering at need
the wild guesses of my human will.**

(Getting through time without experience — ah!)

23 April 2017

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

**We can at least begin.
A breath. A wall
to push off from.
A name you can't recall.
Those are enough. The rest
found you along the way.
The grass is growing there too—
they all read the same bible,
the one you are not permitted
even to open. Except by going.
Except by beginning.**

24 April 2017

= = = = =

Out of orbit,
loose from the rut,
the cart topples free.

It is a mind,
a mood. A countenance [?].
A woven basket of apples,
a voice on the phone.

Thou art woman.
Thou art men.
Thou art another thing
in between.

(Children now are taught to sing
Nobody knows what I am
who I love and who I'll marry
I'm a boy named May
weds a girl named Larry
and off they'll travel soon
to live on the moon.)

No honey left.
Only the beaver,
whacking his tail
on route to his lodge
down there,
where all the water goes:
Warm in the afternoon,
a good green glow.

**I am a member of a Secret Society
called the human race.
Some of us know more of the secret than others,
but that's to be expected in any club.
We are here for a reason
as the Sun is our witness.**

24 April 2017

=====

**Nothing like this
nothing like you
I hesitate
on the banks of the river
lined with chestnuts
soon to flower blush pink and white,
nothing like this,
nothing like you
wandering through the crappy
suburbs of my heart
studded with junkyards,
car parts, fast food.
Fast food lasts forever,
nothing like this,
passes so quickly,
what do I have to offer you
but more machinery,
ball bearings, broken
vacuum cleaners,
an easel that won't stand up
to hold a picture I will never paint?
Wander me,
find something in me
worth all the years of your journey.**

**Raiding the Alphabet:
suppose each letter
had a secret lover
from one of the others —
let's break down the silence in the dark
and see who's sleeping with whom.
Is it statistics that will tell us,
or mystics? Who is L's
secret flame? What other
letter does B come home smelling of?
I swear there is a logic in love
the alphabet is master of —
and rhyme itself (I stole
this one from Rothenberg)
is another form of one night stand,
a word caught in delicto
with another, same sex,
maybe even a brother.**

25 April 2017

IN FACT

**Imaginary people are
realer than real people.
They are intact, solid,
resourceful, accommodable
to every situation.**

**When a real person dies, he becomes
history, i.e., imaginary, and then his
reality is augmented.**

**the image is permanent,
identity fluid. Trust the imaginary friend.
Doubt the real.**

25 April 2017

= = = = =

So if this were now
what other spikes
would sharp out from the calendar
to puncture our favorite
fantasy, this moment?
But now is always then.
In front of the broken
Tydol pump from an era
halfway between
Hopper and xxxxxxx
an actual auto can still rest.
Rust. But be there, I think,
for all the sngels to
msarvel at and despise,
a thingly thing, complex,
unitary. We speak Thinglish
to it always, hoping
always to be understood
by one another. We say
car. Gas statin defunct.
Early spring shower. Art.
We think we're naming
things. The things
themselves understand
us perfectly well.

25 April 2017

THE FIVE CHAMBERS OF THE HEART

(Studies of a series of five astonishing oil paintings, heart in the dar, done by Sherry Williams in the period 2009-2011. They are dedicated to her with gratitude and admiration.)

Four is an animal everybody knows
you can even find it in books
doctor's offices, gloomy
museum showcases, real hearts
(but what is real?) in old jars
floating in something, cut open
to display what everybody knows.

But there is another chamber of the heart.
Another heart, white and magical
and lost the way real things are
(but what is real?) in the mist of seeing.
The whiteheart, The heart beyond blood.

The thinking heart, The lustful analytic
heart, the four-square five, the straightedge
miracle. Open any door and there's the heart.

*

**I've never seen
the like. A pale
planet humming
hard in the dark
inside the body.**

**My body,. How dare
you lookinside me?
How dare you see?**

**See the pale heart of desire
thirsting for blood,
touch, ocean, engulfing,
shark frenzy, gold mine,
broken tower, torpedo,
scuttled warship, nun
on her knees pleading,
pleading. How dare
you know so much of me?**

**How to smooth out the dark.
How to find the edge of the known
and draw it fine across the visible
saying: here I have drawn
a lucid picture of the unknown.**

*

**I heave my shoulder up and pray,
give me o Queen of Heaven just one
straight line and I will follow it
forever or till I come to the special
tender darkness you keep exclusively
for those brave enough to bear
all the way to you an empty heart.**

*

**(I had never seen anything like it.
A painting so dark and so precise,
the quiet mathematics of desire
provoked those bold lines that cut
darkness into luminous differences.
Was it a heart in a dsark sea, a broken
moon begging for pity, child's face
in the doorway, frightened to be in,
frightened to go out. Face of a planet
lost from any star. Be what you are
it murmured, and get over it. You
are the only one here. I'm in you
for good. And the door did not close.**

*

**There is a wall.
White wall, old
cracked plaster,
old New York apartment
empty. One lightbulb
and I am alone.
I hear something
through the wall,
it worries me. I drag
my fingers down the wall,
the plaster crumbles,
I dig in, I scratch away,
the plaster gouges
under my nails, the dry
dusty plaster sticks
worse than water
to my skin. I dig
my hands into the wall
and tear away and tear
more away, everything
is turning dry and white,
the noise is louder.
I understand the sound
is not coming from
beyond but in, the sound
is in the wall, I see**

movement, a throbbing,
I tear more plaster away
and there it is, squirming,
pumping throbbing
I don't know what word
is what it's doing, white,
it's a white heart beating
in the wall, I pull more
white away and free it
but it stays there beating,
something about the rhythm
worries me, it is the same,
the same as me, I am tearing
at my own heart in the wall
or is it every heart
in every one, locked away
in this scrappy wall
in nobody's house,
hardly any light to see
the white thing moving.

*

It is the fifth chamber
the one all humans share.
No blood no air
no hope no fear.
A pale thing just going on.

*

**The time is telling.
The grey heart pounding in the wall
hears me. Hears me
hoping, It works too hard,
it just wants love,
love affairs and friendly clergy
and little trucks that roll through town
ice cream ice cream.**

*

**The little heart I have
hears.
Hearing by beating.
It hears the wall.**

**A wall remembers,
a wall is full
of everything everybody
ever said beside it,
in the room, whispered
to the cold plaster
in this place, this
holy space of**

anywhere we ever live.

**An interruption, that's
all the heart is, a moment
to block the flow
of blood, a customs house**

**through which all
that must sustain us runs
to be analyzed, inspected,
simplified, consoled.**

**A kind heart, we say,
one made of nature
not of thought, not
dragged from sleep,**

**white, babbling Latin,
panting, losing its place
in the original sacred text
the blush beneath your skin.**

**In wood and stone and plaster
words are all remembered**

**and worse, the music that they heard
or made themselves
or turned away from in hope of silence
but silence was always the wall,
always the heart recalling
everything I ever I called.
I mean you called. It's your wall.**

**Years ago I had a store on East 10th Street, I and seven
friends, a bookshop for poetry when the street was alive
with new art, galleries, vagrants, prophets, us. A
bookstore needs shelves, and as we built them against
the old plaster, some of it would crumble at the touch of
hammer or molly, and when it crumbled we'd find mixed
in with the fragmenting plaster long strands of human
hair. Black hair. The low old brick building had been
built, we gathered, in the nineteenth century, and in
those days builders mixed human hair into wet plaster,
to hold the stuff together. Our wall was built of hair,
women's hair, long black hair, Chinese hair.**

**Where is the silence that I need?
I look at five paintings,**

paintings that move me deeply,
doors and darkneses masterly
shown in opening, to show
a heart, a heart that beats forever,
that will not let me keep silent.
I disguise its beating as talk about
art or love or personal experience
but it's the heart talking. Only
when I turned away and looked
calmly at the eyes of her cat
was I silenced. Clear green eyes
looked up beyond the need to speak.

*

The wall has wind in it
as the heart has hands.

*

All substances remember
what we say.
Listen hard and hear
the grey sound between the ears,
the noise of dawn.

*

**No room for remember.
No need. The fibrillations
of that chamber
flutters endless imagery.
I am made of a million images
I hurry to heaven.
The wall stands still.**

**What does it mean when a woman
sees the fifth chamber of the heart
as a heart all alone, aloft, on its own.
Is it a stone?**

**The integrity, honesty, bravery,
straight lines of the picture—
all the colors drained out, only
the weighty shadow of color left.**

**Each colors left a sound
to trace where it once lived.
Memory of a lover's skin.**

A door she opened and went in.

*

Sometimes terror is serene,
the heart throbbing in the wall.
Tell me your fears. Tell me my own.
Conversation should be science,
experiment, revelation. No small talk
in a painting. Nothing but the fear,
the quiet beautiful fear from which we live.

*

The cat was sleeping on the couch
proving every house used to be a church
before people moved in and shoved the god out.
Space, pure space lost to satellites and probes,
pure space that only a painting shows—
the foursquare room from which god can't be thrown.
The cat was sleeping on the couch
and when I roused it with a cautious finger
it woke and told me what I just said.

*

In *Leviticus* a wall has leprosy.
It stinks and crumbles
so the priests come out
and say things to it and do this and that

**holy stuff so the wall heals,
turns clean, stands around.
But deep inside the old heart
was ticking yet, the wall keeps
loving, broken love
of all familiar things.**

**The animals go on
living in my chest.
Resolve to see them.
The trinity of hearts
powerful and accurate,
made of stone, three
hooded gods of Samothrace
whose names are known
but not to be spoken,
names like straight lines
shooting through dimness,
limiting the dark. Island
where the blood is pumped.**

**Her triptych tells
the whole story,
any triptych
is complete, terrible.**

**unanswerable
power of three.
*I am made to be
ruled by thee...*
There is no number larger than three.**

*

**The wall stretches
from beginning to end
first orgasm all the
way to the apocalypse.**

*

**The truth once hidden in the wall
is dust wedged inder my fingernails.**

*

**To open a door
and open the opening
walk naked in the marketplace.**

**When you open the door
your house runs away,
silence everywhere except the heart.**

The hard heart

**making what it needs
making us need what it produces.**

**In lassitude, in love,
a body always listening
and all it knows
is what we all slowly
come to know:
to hear is heart.**

**A journey by door,
by the white heart
hidden in the dark,
a journey with no ship
and no ocean, unless
the light lets us drown.**

**It has to be like this.
The heart has to go on.**

=====

**Does it come alive
or who is waiting?
Glimpses of porphyry
polished to a blush.**

**Your face or mine.
Place. Memory realigns,
Mercury with his wings
rearranges everything.**

**Connecticut afternoons,
a hollow damask armchair
spent hours talking to.
Walk by the quiet beach.**

The Sound hears. Sound heals.

26 April 2017

== == == == ==

**But who is the miracle?
Is she a book at all,
a child a porringer?
How can we tell
ourselves from things?**

26 April 2017

== == == == ==

**It ends just as it gets started.
Questions are enough
by themselves, need no answers.
Sluice the quiet question through
the merriment of sleeping crowds
and see the throngs uneasy pause.
Nothing more brittle than delight.
Trouble at the big house, a fox
seen at high noon n the lawn.**

26 April 2017

=====

**Everything I know
came later.
How by an upper arm
to judge a woman's
character. Northern
Lights. Frim raccoon
at the garbage can deduce
evidence of appetite.
And that is fog I see
hanging in the leafing trees.**

26 April 2017

FROM A DECADE GONE

1.

**gather me the centuries
Roar absconded vowels
and the sunken galleons
naufraged and limitless,
like loss, like time.
Measureless leaves!**

2.

**Containment in metal magic ping
a dried lentil off the hollow dome
reverberating destiny – each thing
has a word of its own, alike
as they may seem, all the ball bearings,
each has its own separate word
not just a sound or meaning: a word
is a time sounded and a sound timed
into the world, a word is a homeless
intersection has to be housed in us.**

3.

**A word needs you. Open!
Small chasm in the wolf woods**

**a hope around here, roar jet over
bad, bad, a love letter from the Pope!
Aircraft disaster in our neighborhood,
we are the indistinct ones, the merely here.
The also ones.**

4..

**Habit pattern, scandalous,
your Stasi worsted skirt your apple blossom
underarm deodorant your nickel
in the slot your Spanish grammar book
wine-stained from all you forget. Habit
though never forgets you. Ampersands
we eat for breakfast, algebra
and parlez-vous, the day is made
of dream debris, scattered streets of mind,
alarming documents, prisoners set free
too soon and climbing up our walls,
delinquent daylight and then cool night
comes. Pathways of crushed shells.
Hear Jack. Hear Jill. Erase their hill.
You are a priest. Let no one ever fall.**

**[4 October 2007]
recast 26 April 2017**

THE INSTRUCTIONS

1.
Know enough
the chances of it —
take a deep breath and hurl
the writing back on the wall,
pre-Hittite, habit, it's all
in your breath, lodged
obscure, you more-than-Mason,
just speak!

2.
Muse
makes answer come, makes
outside in and roar out again,
that is who and what she foes,
the long-legged question.

This is your chance
to be hers. Heard.

3.
Invocation. Call her in
or him who
overtakes and makes
the loudest asking.

4.
Speak to that necessity,
the only. You are the only
wolf in these woods
and he is the moon. Howl
time now is now.

27 April 2017

FROM THE INDIES

**Something like malaria
when I got back
the first time from.**

**Shivering and chills
the fourth or fifth
of every month**

**for six or seven
months thereafter
and then none.**

What kind of math is that?

27 April 2017

TO YOUNG POETS

**Play nice.
The day is long.**

**Everyone
you ever meet**

**you'll need
before the end.**

27 April 2017

== == == == ==

**To be outside
and be alive**

**a sound leads
me to a hill**

**up in there
beyond the ferns**

**someone dwells.
And dwelling**

**is all. To be
emperor of now.**

**My shadow
comes home.**

27 April 2017

== == == == ==

**The green tree of thr poem
laughs like a tickled
child just beginning.
It promises everything
like a giirl in a fashion ad,
it growls like an old drunk
repeating himself muzzily
word after word and then
sundown on the prairie,
the poem curls up alone
its words pulled tight
round it against the chill
of the silences to come.**

28 April 2017 (Acer)

== == == == ==

**The crow calls
the call knows**

**what crow sees
from the heart of the air**

**and tells, a crow
tells.**

29 April 2017

=====

**Local praises always
enough to begin.
That car cornfield car
pony-tailed jogger fleet
the empty street
still quivering at dawn
from all those dreams within,
all that luscious sin
intemperance, gluttony and lust,
but how quiet house beside house
facing house by house
and all the dusty fragrant
vacancy between,
an empty street!
My endless dream,
I could live anywhere
and behind every window-shade
a room with someone
in it and that one a friend –
why should we ever doubt?
The goodness waits for us.
Somehow the open window
(spring at last!) taught me to say this.**

29 April 2017

=====

**Not what I believe
but what
needs to be said
and tells me so.**

**I praise and thank
and blame the world
for every word
it makes me say,**

**mere scribe I am
of this endless scripture.**

29 April 2017

== == == == ==

**Or am I responsible really
for what I say,
for what I say it makes me say?**

**Listen to the stream outside,
last thing I heard last night
and then the cardinal loud
at first light.**

**Tell me please
the long silences in between.**

29 April 2017

== == == == ==

**Go by, go by,
birth of a flower
GIF from an old movie
red of the rose**

**we tell what we see,
what we want to see
over and over,
GIF of a flower
opening.**

**Our eyes opening.
It's the world again.**

29 April 2017

=====

**I'm always looking
for something I can name.**

**Books are no help here,
only the cloud that
momentarily covers the sun does**

**show the true color of a thing.
And from that chroma
identity arises?**

Scarcely.

**It only tells me over and
over what I don't know.**

**Just say what it is
and it will do the rest.**

29 April 2017

== == == == ==

**Castanets maybe
two chestnuts clacking
in the shaken hand -
music comes from every side—**

**only when somebody starts to make it
do the problems start,
writing their stupid wills across the sky
as if they made the air that sings the ear.**

29 April 2017

=====

(The White Factor)

**I'm afraid to see where she lives.
There's bound to be trees all around
her little old house tso vast inside,
chamber after chamber all the way
down to the throne room of the earth,
but I'm worried about the trees, trees,
all of them tossing in a low wind,
fitful sunshine, the shadows of the leaves
mapping and remapping the ground.
I'm afraid I'll go out walking there
among those trees, and in the shadow
of one of them, a locust maybe, I'll be trapped
by a shadow, shadow with strong arms,
trapped, and then I'll think of the pale soft
skin of her body pressed against the rough
bark of the locust tree and I'll be lost.**

29 April 2017

=====

**The buzz and bother
and big of them,
carpenter bees in the sun
wrecking the eaves,
chew and chew
and blunder, big, big,
at everyone. Man tells me
only females sting,
are not aggressive,
territorial, sing a lot,
just like Swiss. Doesn't help—
they don't like me,
don't want me sitting
on what they think of as
their deck, steps, house.
I wave my deed at them in vain.**

29 April 2017

=====

**Can't get it right every time.
Or any time.**

**Despair
is general in the learned professions.
Maybe Egyptologists can sleep at night.
The rest of us lie there
pondering what we didn't say right,
get right, guess right, make work.**

29 April 2017

== == ==

**The broken
rock she sits on
tells her Stay
look down the valley and**

**2.
all the rest it says
has no, needs no,
words in her.
She looks, from
high over
she understands.**

**3.
Hills and dales
the language of
knowing where you
stand she stands.**

**4.
The glacier brought it
here for you to find.
Everything has a purpose
built in. For you
to find.**

29 April 2017

= = = = =

**The door between
tall white trees
birches bend a little
yesterday's wind
always pressing in.**

Into the kingdom desire leads.

**The door between
one word and the next
is ready for you now.
Find the knob, grasp,
twist, then guess
tug or push to open.**

**The answer['s there
the choice is yours,
reader or lover
with such strong
wrists, the in
between is waiting.**

30 April 2017

== == == == ==

**A metaphor walked down the street
disguised as a priest. At his side
a nun kept pace, disguised as the Sun.
So many strangers on our little street —
I look hard and guess, then guess again.
Always wrong — 's why I love this town.**

30 April 2017

CUTTYHUNK

Rosa rugosa

If it weren't so hard to get to
I wouldn't want to be there.
Island far from mainland only
see the coast of on clear days.
Ferry not many. The air is other.
The sea on each side's a different
sea, same water, wrong vocabulary.
Bay. Sound and open sea. Intimacy
of island thickets, soaring moorland,
hard to walk on shingle beach. There.
And be in time to watch come into
flower, quarter mile of seaside roses.

30 April 2017

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

**Reading the paper's a bad breakfast.
I want to smell the other side of the news
without thinking it. Let it be there
just out of sight, like an old time picture
magazine in the garage. Atrocities
left out. The coffee hasn't even finished
brewing yet and the whole nation hurts.**

30 April 2017

== == == == ==

Baldwin 23: [2014 ... 4/16]

**Inside the cello the thoughts
of the wood quarrel with the sense
of the music some distant hands
are torturing string against string,
gut against horsehair, cruel hands
making the wood a mere instrument
(they even call it that) when in truth
it is a fantastic country of hollow
shadow distance sparse glimmers
pure thought endless resonance.
When you were a child you once
placed your ear close to the hole,
even peered into the cavity, cello
guitar violin mandolin bouzouki,
who knows what children handle,
you know what it is like in there,
so beautiful and far away and lost
like a memory of sunshine, you
remember it well and it shows.**

30 April 2017

=====

Baldwin 24 : [2014 ... 5/16]

**It pierced me and I fell.
As I lay there
dying as I thought, I thought
there was a horse nearby
whose hooves I dodged
a horse would trample me.
Then I forgot
all about the beast and felt
the stiff little barbs
that fletched the arrow in my chest.
Then I rested a little while
and when I thought again
it was to think of her
in whose name —or from whose
hands? — my arrow came.
Lodged in me deep, slowly
it turned into me, just one more
bone in my body and I woke,
rose, was changed. Never
had anyone done that to me before.**

30 April 2017

=====

Baldwin 25: [2014 ... 7/16]

**Why was there a candle
burning in the hip pocket?
Why was that letter shoved there
so important it had to burn,
burn without ever being seen,
not even the flame of it,
not even the ash? Who could
have sent it? Did it hurt so much
that fire seemed less painful,
this little fire, this almost
absent flame? And then even I
finally understood. It was
that fayal letter from nobody,
the nobody of nobody loves me,
nobody cares, and nobody
had finally written to say so.
The letter;'s burnt, the ash
slowly turns to gold, real gold,
the flame still flickers, This
is the part I don't get at all.**

30 April 2017

=====

8Baldwin 26: [2014 ... 8/16]

**I used to live in that town,
had to leave.
Too many windows
and no doors.
But I loved the road ran through it,
dusty in summer, mud in fall,
solid in winter
so kids could skip their way to school.
Really, the road was the only
thing I liked
so I took it with me when I left,
rolled it up like a thread
and off I went,
walking slow walking far,
looking for a place with doors.**

30 April 2017

=====

Baldwin 27: [2014 ...10/16]

**Keep me in your heart
the music said,
I am a man too,
not just something you heard
as you stood a moment
outside a doorway
on a dark street, listening.
Keep me in your heart,
because everything you really hear
becomes a human person
who's in love with you, lives
to make you conscious, happy,
free. Believe me.
Just listen in yourself
and there I am, too close for comfort
but comfort never built a universe.**

30 April 2017