

7-2019

jul2019

Robert Kelly
Bard College

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts

Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "jul2019" (2019). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. 1442.
https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts/1442

This Manuscript is brought to you for free and open access by the Robert Kelly Archive at Bard Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Robert Kelly Manuscripts by an authorized administrator of Bard Digital Commons. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@bard.edu.

=====

**head on pillow
in a certain way
I can hear my blood
running upstairs
in the carotid.
Why the hurry?
Am I so demanding
a landlord? Or
such a sluggish tenant
needs to be jogged
to pay the rent of consciousness?**

1 July 2019

DREAM DATUM 1

**The middle bowl
has nothing in it.
Dip the bread in it
last, so it soaks up
the blessing of emptiness.**

1 July 2019

RESOLVE

**Equip myself
with a sturdier will
wide enough for wheat fields
and subtle as the wind
flourishing through the rising grain,
combing a thousand tender stalks
towards what I think I mean.**

1 July 2019

=====

**We are the best
we have always been the best
will always be the best.
But who are we?**

1 July 2019

=====

**The Kidder folk across the wa,
their favorite thing
is making noise in their garage
open on the single street.
They bang on things
to break or fix, saw and drill
or just bellow to one another
in the open doorway
when they run out of things to hammer on.**

1 July 2019

THE EXONERATION

**When all the evidence is hidden completely
the crime itself will disappear.**

**The murdered man gets up and walks away
puzzled by the strange hole in his breast.**

**So flush time away! Fkush it backwards
into the all-forgiving sea of space—
the mediaeval Christians used to say
there is no time beyond the moon.**

1 July 2019

APRIL

Music was bad for her,
poor kid. She had
an affair with one
composer's wife
then fell in love
with another.

He didn't treat her right
so she took her own life.

Early one morning soon after
as I walked through a sunny
room in Rhinebeck she
came to me in a vision and said
Now you can use me as you like.
I still don't know what to make of that.

1 July 2019

TRAKL

for M.E.

**He gave himself
the gift of death.
Only the French
know how to say it**

**how to look up
from the battlefield
or from the wheat
field our ancient
combat with the ground**

**look up and say
enough, I've had enough,
things I wanted
things that hated me,
it is dark enough in me
to crave a different
kind of dawn**

the final light.

1 July 2019

LAST DAYS ON THE ISLAND

**I will carry this sea with me
wherever I go.
the full and pull and knowing of it**

**like the scent of roses
after the roses fade,,**

**the rough wild roses along the shore
and they too are going away.**

1 July 2019

=====

And get to see dawn
itself herself alone
over the island at east.

The sky is brighter
dark right over Nashawena—
dawn's secret vestry
everything is a woman again.

What do you say as you rise
anyone can answer
we all must

Now the land is lighter
I can almost see what I'm seeing
a mixture of barren evergreens
suddenly ripe.

We say: the day *breaks*
we dare to say: the sea.
Its unity shames our politics.

2 July 2019

IN THE DZ

Fleck on window
gull gone by.
Sleep poorly
in the Departure Zone.
Place (any)
(most any)
is too holy
to leave
easy.

Siste, siste

viator domini

I wrote 50 years ago,
stay home
traveler, stay.

The clouds are beautiful
they comfort you,
blanket your uneasy thought.

The blue line
says the sea.

Says stay with me.

2 July 2019

=====

**Waiting, I suppose, for more.
Wind in the window,
air full of air,
 rabbit
hiding in the hedge.
It is the sorrow of summer,
the tender, dangerous
the brief.
 We climb
the time.**

2 July 2019

=====

**I hear it
first thing,
says loud to me
this bright
last morning
you are home
and *here I am*
all your forevers
right now,
I am the first thing
*after all.***

2 July 2019

THE LODGE OF NO REGRETS

we lingered in
imagining our supper
fed us true dreams.
It was summer,
It is summer,
people are coming and going,
luggage always
clumsy [?] by the door,
all possessions
neatly packed
to trip over
on the way out
but no regrets.

3 July 2019

=====

**So loud the sea today.
I try to answer
with a silence of my own,
the word called listening.
Outside, steps of a man
walking down the road.
Then, far off, a bell sings.**

3 July 2019

=====

Maple leaf
held down by stone—
but what a stone,
a two-
toned grey almost
blue, wet with dew—
the kind of morning fresh
you get
only by the sea
where the stone came from
before its quiet
marriage to the leaf.

3 July 2019

=====

**These lines
say one thing
until the next
one comes
tells a different
story of your
same self
using your
pauses to refresh
the golden storehouse
of your mind—
only silence
knows how to do this,
the urgent
silence in between**

3 July 2019

=====

**A scruffy little plane
noises overhead
aimed at the mainland,
mom-land, home.**

3 July 2019

=====

**One third of sleep
is dream,
two-thirds of our
whole lives is
trying to get back to it.**

3 July 2019

=====

**Gnomic trivia,
beautiful highway to nowhere
at the crossroads,
glad.**

3 July 2019

=====

**Look up and see
sea. U call C—
look up! the quick
waves of our
passage shimmer
sun-shaped
on the cabin ceiling.
Everything
is a reflection.**

**3 July 2019
towards New Bedford**

MAINLAND

Flat wind

**trees
pretending
to be seas**

**so many people
choices
choices and soda**

**I ask too much
the outstretched palm
of a nape leaf.**

**3 July 2019
along the Pike**

=====

Being home
being here
the latter
should always
be the former
but here
I woke the same
hour and
no sound of sea,
instead the window
flooded with
the scent of linden
flowers blossoming
in the trees
of home.

4 July 2019

=====

**Wake before heat finds the way.
Summer at last
I did not suffer gladly
but now I wonder
will you be good to me?
A child's question
to the listening earth.**

4 July 2019

=====

The dew of waking
wet wrist on table rim
a steel mesh to meander over
thought by intersect.
And the other way round.
A paltry greeting, this,
to a gloried morning,
linden bloom's cool wafting.

4 July 2019

=====

**Come home to the necessities —
I can't hear the sea here,
I must listen harder
to what the land learned,
tree talk, bird marginalia
on this immense text.**

4 July 2019

=====

Waterlogged energies of beast desire
Pierce me Pierce me
cries a voice in the woods
maidenly, mistakenly—
no message missive muscling in
from outside needed—
madame animal, be your own swain,
listen to the lover inside you
who will never, never leave you.

4 July 2019

NEED

**Somehow I need to touch you
press my face against
all the places you have ever been
all the seas you've swum in
all the rocks beneath you
all the stairs you've climbed
all the too brief summer hours
when you lay in deep cool grass
almost senseless with happiness,
thereness, hereness,
I need to lick the sticky residue
at the bottom of your cup of dreams,
I need to swallow your failures,
half-choke on your other loves,
my hands cling to you
to keep from falling,
I need to understand, I need
to follow all the roads you walked,
I need to see the actual shadows
of the houses those cathedrals
you keep inhabiting, I need to know you.**

4 July 2019

A GROWL FOR THE FOURTH

**Stay, Inter-
dependence
is what
they should have meant,**

**they were smart enough,
why didn't they realize
how we need one another,
nation needs nation,
yes, but black needs white
and this town needs that.**

**No, they went off in a huff
to kill the king as best they could
but left the poison of autocracy
deep in the decent American ground.**

**The sins of slavery and war
are with us still, we are
independent, all by our selves—
God save us from our selves.**

4 July 2019

WANT

I want what comes after
i want to call it the sea
and have it tell me all its stories
so I can spend an hour every evening
analyzing salt,
I want the cloud that skirts the sun
to shimmer now and then
into seductive translucency,
I want all the things I remember
to turn out mostly true,
and be there too.

4 July 2019

=====

Let some other
girl do it for you,
go out half-naked
and insult the moon—
sure, you know
the moon can't hear her
but the moon knows
no such thing,
he giggles in his chilly way
and says Everything
that happens just happens.
You close the window
abruptly. See,
you're doing it again.
Let someone else.
Just for once. Go
back to school and learn
Lenape or Navaho,
Do it for me.

4 July 2019

=====

The weather conditions of warmness—
I hope the crows have not deserted us,
wisest of day birds. The night—
but who really knows about the night?—
the night I think is Athena's,
the undying one, and from the ancient
reason [?] the owls are her kids
at play among our dreams, dream street,
dream-words, calling with that soft
pretending [?] how love must have taught
them,
owl, bird of love? My master
shudders with distaste, after millennia
of doves and bluebirds. Or is it
shivers with fearful awe that I
of all people let out the secret?

5 July 2019

=====

**Friend animals,
do not bother us.
We love the same
truth that you do,
we pray at the same
altar. Friend
living things, depend
on us as we on you.
Little by little
all of us are learning
how to be in the world,
how to be friendly,
how to be.**

5 July 2019

=====

**The first crow!
has come,
and now another,
they parley
over me
in the trees
holy with linden
flowers flavoring this air.**

5 July 2019

CREDO

**I will not turn
my back on a word
even if I cannot
have what it says.**

5 July 2019

=====

**Charge the clock
for telling time
charge it with lèse
majesté against
our sovereign souls,
the soul
keeps its own time
which is no time at all.**

5 July 2019

=====

Somehow the home of things
things lost in time sluice
edge of feeling, beast path
I was the creature you saw in the woods
I was green then
and you were more of a cat than a carl [?],
a vehicle of yes,
 we satyrs understand,
running away is always running towards.
Secret life of a jogger,
 penetrate the time,
pray history out of his tower,
it is time for the middle ages to begin.

Siphons and certainties,
you read about them in a book
now build your own
house of cards,
 the Queen of Thorns
hidden in the cumber of the deck,
High Mass on the pampas,

too many vowels,
 peccaries snouting the newly fall'n,
 colonials, crossless crusaders,
 the migrants are fleeing from their language,
 don't you understand?

Build a wall around us.
 Or across the very center of the world.
 Now try to guess
 which part is you and which
 my hand holding your shoulder,
vis in divisione,
 strength in separateness.

While the priest fussed about
 cleaning the altar gear after Mass
 the natives looked on,
 they understood.

No action
 is ever over, you think
 you're done but it's
 still doing.

And each of us
 is a little leather box
 holding the hallows,

**And going away
back to their practices and crafts [?]
each thinks:**

**No wonder I am holy,
I have a word in my mouth
and a friend at my side.**

5/ 6 July 2019

=====

**Rinse the memory
then the children
will understand you better—
they have so little
to remember, and yet
their Memoria seems fair,
Mnemosyne's impatience
with their sedulous presentness—
help them, help Her,
yield your lore, rinse
their eyes with it.**

5 / 6 July 2019

=====

Canicula parva
in the Valley walls
hot night first time
that once was lust
O the meanings
of every word
unstable. Yet here
at 7:30 not one
leaf trembles,
woods, sealed
in an amber of air.

6 July 2019

=====

**Just make sure you love me
what else is new
the fibers of light
seduce the eyes—
this silent opera
that never quite ends,
the sword
clatters to the stage floor
but all the singers
lustily themselves
look out the window
and see their song.**

6 July 2019

=====

**Forgiven for caring
all the way home
Christians waving
palm leaves in their sleep
long after he passed by—
they stir the air to piety,
wind wakes and eases us.
The crow in the far maple
forgives many things.
Calls five times
to tell me so,
teaches me my penance:
fall in love with
the motionless moment,
eternal paradox of now.
Je t'aime, je t'aime, ich liebe Dich.**

6 July 2019

=====

So as long as we are on the way
the crows will be on our side
their cries ate the hands
that point the way:
river river find the sea
and here we stand
trying to make sense
of what seems to be.

2.
Wait till rhe rain lets up
go to the store
buy the things you need
for supper, or
even better
go out for dinner,
spread your favor
within the goable precincts
talmud of the car,
your chariot no Caesar held.

3.

**Because it's all a matter
of neighborhood,
the *eruv* within which
you are permitted
to be logical afoot.
Go everywhere you can
and try always be home.**

4.

**The firehouse burned down last night
with the fire truck and all its gear
inside but no one hurt.
A hundred years old this year
and time takes back.
I heard the sirens of the neighbor towns
but did not understand.
Last night though i dozed a dream
where smiling young people
slipped down an old-time brass firepole.**

**5.
See, it means nothing.
Our dreams are Puck's broom,
our sense of waking
in the reality room
is so close to the truth
you can't really blame us
for believing it.
I used to too.**

6 July 2-19

A PRAYER TO WHITE TARA

sGrol.dkar.la

**Mother me
and I will mother be.**

**I will take care
of all I can.**

Let me so be.

6 July 2019

NUMEROLOGY

Watch

the numbers

go by.

In this region

**they disguise themselves
as birds.**

he first one

you see in the day

(to sema tes hodou)

is not necessarily One.

**Study them as they feed
on the seed ypu set out for them.**

Mathematics began with birds.

**As with the seven hazelnuts
swallowed by the salmon
who swam in the Well of Knowing
poetry began.**

Or were they the two

**hands of Knowing,
as all twos belong to One?**

*Now count my song
sang Irish Orpheus
no one's sadness
can make you glad as mine.*

**And we, we have to get
all the stories wrong
to save our lives.**

7 July 2019

ARCHITECTURE

**Architecture meant making
arches. Are we buildings
adter all? Do we build
what we want to become?**

**A portal was
your secret entrance.
I made my way
up the common street
the special steps,
squeezed through the door.**

**Dear door,
does it hurt
when I go in?**

**I shrugged off my wolf pelt
sat down at the table
and was at home.
Demanded something to drink.**

Dear cup.
does it hurt
when I sip
so slowly
the quiet water
you offer me?

I called out to you
all my endearments:
you dictionary, you globe
with all the countries
of the world, with seas,
complete, you brass lamp.
you bedside table,
you telescope!

The closer

I get the further
away you seem,
when you're in my arms
you're in another room,
another city, speaking
another language
to a copper-colored alley cat
who slinks by, I see you,

**I know you, my fingers
press into the shallow
meat of your back,
they can see you,
they know where
you really are.**

**And then you're back.
the walls are firm again
around is. Now it's my turn
to go levant, go vague,
I look out the window,
in love with what I see.
On the broken pavement
a dove struts by.**

**2.
Call it a cathedral
but I know better.
Yes, an altar,
but no bishop.
Or I am he,
alone in the shadows
with only your votive candle**

flickering in its dark red glass,
my hands saying Mass
on whatever they can touch.
That night there was only one moon
but no light of it came through the windows.
And the morning after,
the wind swept the sun away.

3.
That is how small cities do it,
I lov you scribbled on a wall.
Think of Innsbruck below the crags
or Whitby climbing from the sea.
Come and go to church in me
that's what a body always begs,
the body, smallest city of all.

Now hurry to the chapel
where we wait for one another
shouting our pagan prayers
we tumble into bliss. This
is what a building's for.

7 July 2019

=====

**But I was here
to model it in clay
so you could shape it after
in living silver bronze
at least they told me it was clay
but I suspected
it was more godly stuff--
flesh or bone or even thought.
So i was more careful
than I usually am--
see how tenderly I wrap
this up and bring it to you.**

7 July 2019

AMORETTO

**It's fun to write poems
playing with ypur body.
And 'fun' is a word
no other language has.
there's nothing really
like it. Or your body.**

7 July 2019

FAR NIENTE

**Mussoline was amused by Pound
(*'divertente'* he said of his work)
but Usonians wanted to hang him.**

**So do nothing. Sit down
and read some book. Almost any
book will tell some of the truth.**

7 July 2019

ANCILLARY ENERGIES

**Child with yo-yo
never too late
to study physics**

**Our inside animal
we keep outside**

**This wind in the trees
says me**

**I live I think
from all around me**

**Twitching in my wrist
his majesty approaches
day by day
but run slow
slow, you horses of the night
as the poet said, here,
I'll say it in the original, *lente*,
lente currite noctis equi,
that'll slow him down.
Or does Death speak Latin too?**

7 July 2019

=====

**Somber blessings,
remembered touch.
Toothache in the heart,
youth-ache, girl gone.
recall water
sprinkled on the wooden
bench in Central PPark
or was it Eastern
Parkway and I was
Jewish already,
poor eyesight.
squinting at the setting sun?**

7 July 2019

=====

Wait for the windmill
to come from the marsh.
I came from *the Old Mill*,
a neighborhood in extreme
southeast Brooklyn, on the marshlands
bordering on Idlewild,
but never
saw the Mill, none was
to be seen.

So all of us
mostly Italians
lived with a name
with no seen referent,
what else is new.

2.
So I suppose the world
owes me a mill.
So I want for it
to come from the marshes,
soft cushioned earth along the Atlantic,

**or for the mill
to bring me there again,
every island feels like home.**

3.

**Or am I the very grain
it's meant to grind,
all these years waiting for me
to find it and be used?
For I think things use us too,
to retune**

**the torpor of the inanimate
and make steel sing,
and wood
and the great old stone that turns and churns
at the heart of the oldest mind [wind?].**

**8 July 2019
my father's 119th birthday
SJK 1900-1990
natus sub Victoria Regina bona**

=====

**Listen, lyric,
I need your fingertips
lightly on my lips
to silence anything
that is not song.
Mute my complaints,
excuses, explanations,
philosophies, surmises,
heresies and rant,
leave just the pure melody
alive before meaning,
a tune that lasts longer than the world.**

8 July 2019

=====

**One patch of grass
yellower than the rest.
Is it sunlight finding it
or some new seed?
Every window
opens on a mystery.
And why do people
do anything we do?**

8 July 2019

=====

Wait gate, gone girl, middle practice
 wetlands soft abode a barrier a borne
 peregrine or falcon home a hedge
 of purest laurel come, a paltry pause
 in mountain music, taught to lie in water
 shallow moonlight special pleading, announce
 whose name at the wait gate, cavil
 with lackeys on the jeweled stairs
 (one of our planes is missing) mount
 sedulous footsteps ivory haunched cloud
 is it moving yet can it taste you
 the nearer come the leafier grow, decade
 by decade treeier woodland interlaced arch
 over roadway green highway habit to flee
 sooner *is* later, dead church on prairie
 remember as the word does the blithering
 sermons
 shudder to pass, as once in Wyndham,
 rattler rock bonjour serpent a sleepy eye
 beachcomber of the grasslands come home
 come home (the ore is in the rift to start with,

ore, no?) pack the tree with sky, arise
from lewd campsites, sweat-dried tent flaps
moveless in no breeze, that too said come
call me home, any word is where you live,
a piece of oak, a pinecone, traveling circus
of the obvious, perched on armchair,
land without paper, half-moon complexion,
nothing says lust as well as silence does,
miracle cure, alone without lonely,
no shadow comes without light
O sister darkness of our mother light,
aunt anthracite hiding in we still call it
mine, in and out of spraying hoses,
the four elements complete the family,
rabbits hide in hedges, come home, come
home,
locust fallen, horsechestnut haughty,
see the names of things resolve all doubt
the revolution came and went, no priest
but the woman's hand, here is your crown,
let noisy starlings bear it to your head.

9 July 2019

A HUMILITY

**I scrawl
in lampblack
my T'ang
dynasty scroll,
my words
among shadows
of live birds,
breaths
of stale air.**

9 July 2019

=====

**Hard to get straight
who rules this world.
The crow knows most things—
ask the crow
and heed what they say.**

9 July 2019

=====

***Not* the interior
the *surface*
is the real secret**

**(glowing human perimeter
round the beast-meat)**

**Learn the surface pore by pore
and then we're there.
And that's who she really
is, you are, I am.**

9 July 2019

Priestess of that fire.

=====

**I'm just looking treeward
the trees look back.
It is a satisfying relationship.**

*

**Or here comes a fisherman
with empty creel
I pity and am glad.**

10 July 2019

=====

So quick to touch the morning light
hint of a fable
lurking in the quiet leaves
it;s not by chance, everything's a book
a solitude to read it in
a mild librarian to take it back
when we're done with reading
as far as we can. Page One
an immense symphony, Page Two
an old man retires from the mill
or bar or court or plow
and by Page Three the leaves
are on your side. Snap out of it,
this is no dream, you've had your share
of too-sweet lemonade, the oily
comforts of the dark— wake up,
the children you dont have
are boisterius beneath the trees,
wake up, the shadows lust for you,
they rub their haunches on your hearing,

**get up, it's time to crown a king,
clean your sneakers, translate Greek.
You're sulking again. If you get up now
I'll teach you how to have, how to be
nobody's hypotenuse in everybody's triangle.**

10 July 2019

=====

**All kinds of transportation
to get to the ball.
Go on bear-back, in wolf-cult,
float on flower petal (yes, you can,
you silly deb, why would I lie?)
tiger taxi, cablecar harpoon,
baby slippers, cranky Pontiacs
and then you're there! The lackey
laughs at you but announces your arrival,
all the dancers and their tedious relations
look up from their inanity and welcome
one more victim to the liturgy,
music by Berlioz, ill-played by long-haired
saxophones.
Relax, you're part of things now,
you've made it, Harry, or is it Harriet,
who are you anyway? The world
is waiting for an accurate answer.**

10 july 2019

=====

**So it this were my house
he said looking out
at an empty field I'd
mow the carpet and buy
a set of walls to lean on
and a pretty little peaky roof
for when it rains. He sighed,
exhausted with desire.
I watched him closely--
I was young and needed
to learn how to deal with space
when all God have us
city kids was time. Time
and men and women hovering
over us. In the shadow
of bridges I grew wise--
I bought my first wall when i was twelve.**

10 July 2019

=====

**Are things different now?
Open the table and spread the chair,
the light needs all the muscles you can spare
to push the little buttons on the phone
and bear to hear the voice that comes next.
If anybody's there! Just hold your breath
till the nice lady answers from the dark.
This is puberty, the first half of liberty.
Wait on the corner and I'll sell you more.**

10 July 2019

SPECULATIVE CHRISTOLOGY*for P.A.S.*

**I hear you'e reading
Aristocles these days
(I hate nicknames)
but I'm still chewing
on the old bone,
Rabbi Jesus in Tibet,
you know, all the stuff
you hate, Miriam
the hooker from Migdal,
mother of the Grail.
A Girl. Speculative
Christology you called it.
said you weren't interested,
frowned at me, as if
I were a fresh victim
of a rather boring heresy.
I can't help it, P,
the world made me think
about him and how
he lives in everyone—
even ancient Greeks**

**those playful poets
pretending at philosophy.
And all philosophy,
as Novalis told us once
is only homesickness.
Still, those drunken talk-shows
keep their antique charms.
I read him too from time to time,
careful not to catch the bacillus
So I guess that makes us even,
old men fighting sadness,
still trusting the leaky ships
that brought us here,
the desert island of each new idea.**

10 July 2019

THEY SPEAK OF THE DEVIL AS A LION*Sicut leo rugiens*

**Beast in the dark roars
we know he's coming.
he warns us
, so that only those
who want the Devil
to do their bidding
will wait for him to come.
Eager their smiles
at the dooryard,
Margarete trembles
in her sleep.**

**2.
But why a lion?
They sleep a lot,
and yawn a lot,
and let their wives
do most of the work,
hunting and such.**

**They do have golden eyes,
and one you have seen
yourself seen by
the lion's golden gaze,
you both are somehow
in the same company.
He doesn't even have to
bother eating you.**

3.

**Sometimes you're a girl
walking by the river.
Sometimes a cowbird
perched on a heifer's rump.
Sometimes you're a doctor
with a neat skinny beard
gazing into a microscope.
What do you see?
What does the girl see
on the river?
Why does she long so fervently
to be on that raft,
that boat, even that
rough log floating down to Chesapeake?**

**What is she fleeing from?
What roaring does she hear?**

4.

**And when he looks up
from his brass optic
confident of the life
he has seen down there,
in the not visible,
where diseases riot,
waiting for our hands and lips?
What does he say
to the frightened person
clutching a magazine
upside down
out in the waiting room?**

**10 July 2019
Kingston**

=====

**Still trying
to figure out
who I am
is
who I am.**

11 July 2019

=====

**When you live there
it is more you
than you are
at first.**

**You have
to peel [?] the streets
and churches away.
Then one day
walking by the canal
through themarshes
out of nowhere
yourself appears,
settles into you
and a blackbird
lands on a tall stalk
of grass.**

**Then
it flies away
but you stay.**

11 July 2019

=====

**We wake with more
than when we slept—
how is that?**

**The grains
of darkness
compress in waking
to form small jewels.
These
 buy your new life.**

11 July 2019

=====

**Waiting for them, looking at them
when they come, the *personaggi*
of inmost opera
you hear them singing
long before you see them,
seldom seldom
close enough to touch.**

11 July 2019

== == == == ==

**The moon cools you
i don't know how
but at the full
moisture leaps up
from around us.
I know there are
explanations but
they don't explain.
Moon breathes with us.**

11 july 2019

=====

**Trucks beep
when they back up.
Six A.M. is
no time to go backwards,
bud. It's a nasty
trick, something no
tree ever does.**

11 July 2019

=====

**Who are we
to each other now?
And who wants to know?**

11 July 2019

=====

**Scraping the barrel
wakes a wondrous
deep resonant call,
a double-bass in trouble—
angels must sound
like that when they groan.
Scrape it out!
Write it down!**

11 July 2019

=====

**Letters are made
from sticks and curves.
What is in the night
the sticks collapsed?
All you'd find at dawn
is the wreckage of the alphabet,
no words anymore,
everything ready to be asserted again.
Learn what time
was trying to tell us when they fell.**

11 July 2019

OF PASSERS-BY IN CROWDED ROOMS

**Their beauty is
that they have nothing
to do with us,
no business, no connection.
Free of all resentment
they pleasingly [?] pass.**

11 July 2019

VESPER**1.**

**Vespertine at morning?
Morgen blatt, newspaper,
the leaf of morning?
Words turn inside out,
our sacred clowns,
unpacking selves from little cars,
chariots in the sky.**

2.

**Means evening, time for Vespers,
next-to-last of the day's
offices, prayer-works,
evening prayer. The time
it all goes west.**

3.

**Cut loss to the measure
of what is found, he said.
Needless to say, I didn't understand —
I'm of the explicit generation.
He smiled at me and closed the door.**

4.

The day hours we used to say
and the night hours, say, recite
often from memory or from the other book
the hand reads first
before the eye, the eye reads
before the brain. And we sing songs—
chants, we say, a bit pompously,
when all we're doing is singing
to you before the end of light.

11 July 2019

THE GREEN MAN

I will be the Green Man
one more time
and leap among the ladies.
But all the girls
will turn out to be trees,
willow, birch or hazel,
not the roughest bark but still
enough to rebuke my frail skin,
but I will fall
at their feet in praise.

11 July 2019

=====

Overt energy—
as from the small
waterfall by which
the Metambesen unpools itself
on its way down
this valley in the valley.
No wheel yet
for it to spin.
I'm sure the consciously
eco-busybodies will get
around to stealing
the stream's fluency
and turn it into one more nouse.

11 July 2019
Kingston

=====

I told the tailor
fit me with futures
foundlings, feathers,
suit me with sin
leave a little dust
of lust in the pocket
but robe me with repentance.
Loom me a scarf
long as a whole afternoon
by the canal
when it isn't event raining,
sew me up some trousers
that will help me fly,
turned-up cuffs repelling gravity.
pockets full of forgiveness.
My ancestor was a hatter
so I speak English and need no hats
all I need for the crown
of my head is some of that
holy chrism your wife gives away.

11 July 2019

THREE HOURS INTO FRIDAY

1.

**Something about organs,
something about windows of a house.
The woman craftsman explained
how each of the houses they built
had eight windows, seven built
normally, the last always finished
in silence, breath from the inside out.**

2,

**Wet wind the window fan
was breathing in on us
the actual sleepers in this
actual house. No dreams
unless this is one. Or your
anxious breath in sleep
betokened one from which
you don't wake easy. Breath
goes out and out, the dream
persists.**

3.

But the word *organ*
was there, the kind you play in church
to keep the people locked away
in their private reverie--speaking
of dreams. The *Motu proprio*
of Pope Pius X spoke ill of it,
the tendency to opera, romance,
style. I still remember how
when i was a kid at Sr Fortunata
when we filed up to communion
it was to the intermezzo from
Mascagni's *Rustic Chivalry*.
And outside, the land soon
gave way go marshes and
the never-ending dream we call the sea.

4.

Memory outlives us.
Seed scattered on the deck.
A wren. A woman promised
and i poured something in a cup.
A pledge. To pawn a cloak
in summer. a stainless pocket watch,

a gold ring, a stone amulet
from Silesia. These are the notes
of the fugue. You are the organ,
do the best you can with them.
If you play right well, the dawn
will come. And even if you don't.

5.

So I said to the pilot
is there no steward,
no one to ease
the passengers' angst,
or bring us linden
blossom tea or whisper
the word *roses* when
we most need it?
Every passenger he said
is an empty house
hurtling through the air,
no other human could
keep up with him or her,
distances pour through
the open windows
but no breath, you hold

**youyr breath until you're
there. And there the house
settles down. You smile
at the open door. Natives
loop leis round your neck.**

**12 July 2019
3:37**

=====

By now it is starting
in Cuttyhunk, the dawn,
the 200 miles east of here
early glimmering. Beyond,
they are breakfasting on cod
in Portugal, women with long
dark hair remembering dreams.
And in Berlin polite cars
invade the empty streets,
a man reads the paper
(The Morning Leaf)
in the Garden of Animals,
no beasts in sight except
the schnauzer at his feet.
He tries to recapture
the orderly quiet pathos
of the past, when you knew
what things are and what
they mean. And in the Polish
marches even further east
a weekday empty church
suddenly makes sound:

**a blackbird in the rafters
by a broken window,
a crow silent on the roof.**

**12 July 2019
ca. 4:00**

=====

**Jesus. Buddha. Lao-tse.
Mila. The Lotus-Born. Orpheus.
Even King Arthur. Even Parsifa.
They all happened,
they all are real.
Why would anybody lie?
*Everything told comes trye.***

12 July 2019

=====

**I think the trees came along with us--
there are no people where there are no trees--
elder brothers standing by our first steps
wise sisters showering us with difference,
wood grain and leaf pattern, lace and fruit,
with meaningful shadows teach to read.
And they were the first to say Respond!**

2.

**Is this more of my pagany,
ingenious backsliding
from a world of numbers
to a world of touch?
I can count I guess as
well as the next person
but I keep coming up with you.**

12 July 2019

8:19

=====

**The awakening
is honor.**

**Steel rails stretched across America,
slice right through our local
desperate urbanity
so we sit on the terrace
sipping cappuccinos
at Panera's, a hundred
car freight chugging
by half a block away.
A railroad is so old!
Old as my childhood,
almost old as a road.**

12 July 2019

ALLEY GATE

1.

Open the alley gate
so the iceman can come in,
a cubic foot or more of
ice on his burlap'd shoulder
past the pansies and the roses,
down the steps into the furnace room
past fire to the kitchen
and there's the great wooden icebox
into which the precious weight is shoved
and milk stays sweet a few more days.

2.

This is the song called *Alley Gate*,
it opens memory
where all kinds of food are stored,
provender for the time-travel
we call our lives.

3.

**Perilous work it is
to clean out the freezer,
the cupboard the hutch.
A dead friend's smile,
a dead friend's touch.**

4.

**Back to the alley
back to the car
safe in the garage,
get in the back seat
and go where they go,
these brings with
unknown agendas
who drive cars
and go places you have
never been before,
who show you mountains
you will never climb,
horses you will never ride
and then home again,
alley evening, old man, collie dog.**

13 July 2019

=====

**I was just getting started
when the sun came up.
Now what to do?
Memories bleaching out,
shadow of a shadow.**

13 July 2019

=====

All the old ink
written away.
Milk for your aunt's tea,
raisins, cinnamon,
too soft buns.
Is it time yet?
the wall clock asked—
I loved the way
it ticked reassurance
that time had not stopped,
some better hour would come,
shouts in the street,
bell rings, somebody
upstairs turns the radio on
and the house is full of singing.
Write it all down
before it waltzes away.

13 July 2019

=====

**Up in time to feed the lion,
his golden eyes regard you.
Then you turn to wash the sky
your dreams have sullied,
can;t help it, people your never
knew are drawn to dreamers,
sit around and behave
all through your sleep
and the sky gets stained
by their identities, let alone
your half-intentional desires.
Now put the ladder away
and come back to bed--
bring your own darkness
with you, it's dawn now,
another desperate day
sumptuously starts. Ahoy!**

13 July 2019

=====

**A star is something like a clitoris
all sensation, no emission,
only an influence it eases through space
we feel it from across the room,
share from far away
the intensity of its own feeling.
No wonder the night is full of dreams.**

13 July 2019

=====

The answer to no question
lingers on the tongue,
like the taste (is it a taste?)
of water you sip at the table
waiting for the food to come.
The answer to no question
fills the air around you subtle
as the scent of linden blossoms
on a humid night. (Could that
be right?) The answer to no
question wears your father's
hat, your mother's fur collar.
your sister's high school ring,
your brother's sneakers,
your lover's favorite sweater.
So there. It drones overhead
but casts no shadow. It smells
like your own hands. You try
to catch it, but you breathe
(we have to breathe) and out
it comes before you can detect

**its archaic vocabulary. Next time
will probably be no luckier
but you can never tell. (Isn't
that the point of it after all?)**

13 July 2019

=====

*I am the moon
I dream you womanly
all over*

it said as I woke,
the male moon,
the one they hid from us
in mythstory,
the one i found revealed
in language, our own,
and even the Germans remember,
der Mond,
and now the Sun
has spread herself all over the woods,
roads, lawns,
glad to be known.

2.
Shake an old schoolbook
at history
the words tell the truth
the story tries to hide,

**go to the language,
sisters, brothers,
blue sky of the vowels**

**in the storm of consonants,
go to the words themselves
not what someone is saying.**

**3.
Because language is our Lascaux,
our Trois-Freres.
In it is inscribed
the First Knowledge,
It's always there,
ocean-wide and all-forgiving.**

14 July 2019

=====

**Last days of the Empire
something better comes,
dove descending, austerity,
words quiet, passing
quick among friends.**

**Preposterous emperors
tumble down golf holes,
ride elevators to the moon,
throw reporters to the lions
shoot the lions.
They'll be finished soon—
Alljuda ver harre
once again we cry,
we who are children of God,
of all the gods.**

14 July 2019

=====

**A tree is a good
cure for a bad mood.
Linden, tulip, maple,
oak. Already
you feel better.
Hard to be glum
near an elm
we used to say
before most of them
went away.
Yet this year is
greener than ever
around us, lifting, lifting,
library of leaves,
soft breeze rustle hosanna.**

14 July 2019

(AT THE JOHN PRUITT MEMORIAL)

**Words on the chancel
wall— are they holy,
are the words made holy
by the place itself,
or the intent of those
who chatter them?**

**Nave, nave,
the ship
that takes us there.
But where is there?**

**A place of things.
yjr things that music
does to us—
hot day, leaflet,
palm leaf fan,**

**fan it all away.
*Silence heals.***

**There should be a big
clock on a church wall—
what are we packing
onto time's mule back
as it passes, seemingly
so regular, so normal.**

**But time goes different
when we all only listen
and not speak.**

14 July 2019

=====

**To be known
after all,
to be the knowledge
in someone's heart
or where do we keep
what we know,
the feel of things,
where they go?**

15 July 2019

=====

The accident of music
happens. The shadow
of the cherry picker stretches
across the highway, everything
is a footnote to everything else—
listen, *arioso dolente*
drifting through the keys,
from the sounding-board, rooftop,
I watch a pure white mist
pour over the town, steeple,
trees, and call your name.
And call again.

15 July 2019

=====

**I feel such gratitude
for the next word
that comes along.
Immeasurable
the scope and reach of it,
the 'simplest' word
a thronged museum,
everything in place
waiting for us.**

15 July 2019

=====

**This rosebud vase
that pale mistake
taken from the old
restaurant for love
of where it's been
gracing tables all
these years, and for
the love of the one
you give it to now,
present tense, pure
air, flower yet to come.**

15 July 2019

=====

**Chain saw at six a.m.
There is a reason
for everything,
the fallen bread,
the broken pitcher.
Reason tells me so,
that Gallic lady
no better than she should be.
And the lopped branches
thud into the truck bed,
why o why?
 Accept this also
as an explanation,
the orchestra
is never out of tune.
Alexander Pope
would have understood--
maybe the last man who could.**

16 July 2019

=====

**The world turned inside out
we call it sleep and do it all the time.
And then the moment comes
when everything turns right again,
the normal world that murders us.
But I have died a few times in my dreams
then woke again apparently alive.
So who knows. The heron flies
from stream to stream. the streams
hurry with reasons of their own.**

16 July 2019

=====

**Slowly taking notes
as the world zips by
paper pad paper pad
soft black black pen
what gets scrawled
may yet rescue us
from the terrible silence
under everything.**

16 July 2019

=====

**Let the sky
do the remembering
for us.
It has the room,
the pliable workforce
of the clouds, the mobile
airs, the boyish thunder.
Let me be a plate of glass
or better just a glass
of cool water
and drink me.**

16 July 2019

=====

**Voices in the woods.
All trees are mine—
leave them alone.**

**I mourn my buckthorn,
my solitary rhamnus
chopped down when we were gone,**

**leave them alone, go home,
leave the trees in peace,
leave them to talk to me.**

16 July 2019

PLAYWEITING 101

**Write the script
full of remembers,
skirts, parasols,
straw hats, cravats,**

**write the script
full of terns and plovers,
lovers, parsons,
mysterious persons,**

**let the doorbell
keep ringing, the shade
trembling on the window,
let the car door slam**

**at midnight nearby,
let the script wander
upstairs to the bedroom,
don't count the people,**

**we all dream alone,
let the script reflect
candlelight on polished wood,
hooked rugs, models**

**of sailboats on the hearth,
marry fire and water,
let the script rub your
hands, nudge your instep**

**with its great toe,
let it go downstairs
again, all the way
to the basement,**

**the coalbin clean
and empty waiting for
God knows what,
just like you,**

**let the script tell
you that, what
you hunger for, then
lead you up again,**

**and in the bright kitchen
safely philosophize,
sit at an empty table,
let it smile at you, a long,

long smile as the curtain falls.**

16 July 2019

SUMMER HOUSE

Among the green
a love-like staying.
Gazebo, summerhouse,
pergola. Shelter
in the shade. Staying
among the going. Green
always ,means go.
The trees are rushing past,
their urgent burdens—
things to feed us (all of us),
things we must be told.

16 July 2019

====

**Locked the hallway bathroom door
and on a yellow pad in pencil wrote**

CAMPAIGNING

for the dead.

**Altar-offered [ale translucent
globules of protein**

each with a letter inside.

roman, capital,

these

in the pewter dish, familiar,

on the shrine.

2.

Then from a house across the lawn

seen from the window

a thin blond woman stepped,

her house, something to do

with music but nothing heard.

3.

**Things we offered once,
so many and so often,
now totally forget.**

**I suppose that's what
offering means, you give
it and it;s gone.**

4.

**In the dream the letters
didn't spell any names or words,
just rolled softly sticky
in the dish and were different.
Waiting to be ordered.
Waiting to be said.**

17 July 2019

=====

**Losing the future
a minute at a time.
The window, the wind.
Your old friends the trees.
Or winning it, really,
making it now, now
goes on forever, pure
space leaves time behind.**

17 July 2019

=====

**When it was time to be me
I woke to be another,
trying always for that union
of heart and sky, mind
and the forms of other people
moving around me. As usual
I failed and was only me.
But hot as the day was, the sky
smiled in a forgiving way—
it must witness so many failures.**

17 July 2019

=====

Sea wave lodging
sign in the sky
red painted flooring
some patched with rain—

who lives in your word
the sound you say?
Is it my sky
you borrowed from my birth,
what kind of bed
does a bone need
to wrest away from darkness
one cool breeze?
On hot days
We ___ of kindness.
Sometimes almost ___
to go back to the sunken raft,
the motionless sea—
let it remember me.

18 July 2019

= = = = = = = = =

If there were a world
would the trees
still be wood
or would they stand
upright holding breath alone?
Could we love them
for their speech, their busy silences,
if there were a world?

18 July 2019

= = = = =

Get the date right
everything else
can shift or shimmy.
And two crows now
hurtle by my window
agreeing but reminding
it's not so easy
to get the date right.
Not everybody knows
it is today. The crows
shout, I must be missing
something. Or everything.
Start again. I'm out
of bed so it must be now.
Me and the crows
seem to be the only
people around. Then a car
comes from the right--
are cars alive?
I'm struggling

**to find a flower
where none grows.
But at least
there are so many crows.**

18 July 2019

= = = = =

for Lila

In ancient Rome the gods
walked an inch above the ground,
never touching it. There is
a special verb for how they move,
the gods *incede* along our streets.
That's why we have to go to Greece
where the gods stepped firmly
on the earth, in it, under it, came
out from time to time to snatch
a girl from the meadow or bring
her smiling back a season after.
The gods move the way we do
and then some, they speak our talk
and whisper in their own--
sometimes we can hear them at it,
oak trees and sycamores and olive
leaves rustle. You have to be there
to hear them. You have to walk

**beside them in their broken houses,
lean on their columns, console them
for all our picturesque neglect.
Walk the stone and dirt of Athens
for us all, listen hard and then come home.**

18 July 2019

=====

Answer everyone.
It needs it.
Things, me,
have feelings too.
The tool, the pen,
the messenger.

2.
Close to the side
the writing's on,
it doesn't matter
which language it is
close your eyes
and taste the air around it.
The ghost of what is written
whispers to you then.

3.
Materiality. The means
mean. Matter matters.
We are pliable
in its hands.

**Nor find
the will
that drives us through.
Deep morality of who you are.**

19 July 2019

= = = = =

Catch the air
before the sun comes
over the trees.

Some men are cutting
green things noisily,
killing mainland growth.
The machine
seems to be the law
in these parts,
chainsaw, weed-whacker.

Once I was a Roman
but then I saw the sea,
the big one, the one
that led us here.
Or are we even here yet?
Through linden leaves

the sun dapples the lawn.
Workmen cry a block away
in some language

that may have been mine
when I went to sleep last night,

but it's morning now
and nobody knows.
And the truck sings,
chirps, only when it backs up.

19 July 2019

=====

A furlong aft
a whale arose,
wave to her, wave to her,
and speed on, ask
her pardon for intruding—
a ship is the oldest sin.

19 July 2019

= = = = =

I begin to think
we should not enter on the sea
or travel on it,
there is no *erun* to the sea
and on the ocean
every day is Sabbath.
Let the sea bring you
what it needs to give.

19 July 2019

VELCRO

headache in the hair
hammock in heaven?
Shadow. Loosestrife
meadows – where water
is. How to obtain.
Things stick to the mind
by dint of word.
Hammock. Suburbs of cities,
of course. Cities exist
only to have suburbs,
then babies full of cash.
Velcro wanted me to say it
and I listened. I try
to do what I am asked.
Efkharisto they say in Greek,
thank'ee kindly, but we
mean something else by it.
97 degrees and I can't mean anything,
the outside and the inside
finally the same.

19 July 2019

TWO SONGS OF THE SAD PILGRIM

1.

He woke then in his narrow bed
the kind they give to cheapskate pilgrims.
Why do love stories end like this,
wounded Abelard staring up.
empty ceiling above his friendless bed?

2.

But even if I were a song
he thought
who would sing me?
That's why at morning
some are wise enough
to go back to sleep.
Or the mountains go on sleeping.

(cut from *The Cup*)
revised 19 July 2019

=====

**Any true story
can be told
just as well backwards**

**just as faithful,
A story is a road
and roads run both ways,**

**and when you reach
the end of the story
bereshith, the book begins.**

-19 July 2019

=====

**I am a plane overhead
I see you
house and yard
bushes shambling up the ridge**

**now I am the water at your feet
a good-sized lake
faithful in my fashion
see yourself in me
I am full of fish and reflections.**

**And then I'll be
the air you breathe
and I'll be home at last.**

20 July 2019

=====

Owl feather
at almost midnight,
bird of almost, bird of night's
wide-eyed wisdom.
Owl feather on the light switch,
where better could it rest,
queen of darkness ___ light,
ATHE it says on the coin,
Athena, the Deathless One,
but spelled with an old E
not the long eta of the grammarians,
a simple E, simple feather
covered with intricate messages
I'm too tired to try to read.

20 July 2019

=====

**Softer maybe
heat of the day—
cotton sky
feels like wool**

*

**I dreamt a friend
and knew I'd never**

*

**nuggets of remorse
in the rich bread of remember**

*

**one more cup
one more cup
I will not drink.**

*

**Close as I can
not one leaf stirs
I'm caught in a photograph
I dare not move.**

**Then slowly the fingers
relax, the fist
is healed**

**sequence of small,
no form
but the sense itself**

**a wife caught
in her husband's karma,**

**co-pilot maybe,
little single engine plane
dodging among the thermals**

**the idiom relaxes,
the horn is silent
no religion but summer**

**clouds
browsing on the trees.**

21 July 2019

=====

**After three days
the heat relents.
Grey sky a while,
and pray for rain.
The thermal nature
of our lives, inside,
outside, fever,
thought dissolves.
Why is the weather
so deep inside us
there is no way out?**

22 July 2019

=====

**Wood and wooden
wool and woolen
which is truth?
Fare on the subway
and fare well,
do the words know
more than we do
who think we rule them?
How far do we fare,
what road do we ride?
How do we breathe,
there is no native word for air.**

22 July 2019

=====

**Augustinian privilege
to be rebuked by angels in person.
Or do we all get that too
but never notice
the ones who chide jus are
not entirely ordinary humans?**

22 July 2019

=====

Circumstances ease
the pilot in her plane
dips over one more valley--
there is no end to difference,
thermals, downdrfts,
great blue herons sailing by.
And then the dream is over,
she's safe on the ground,
the engine cooling. Are we
ever safe on earth? She thinks
of cobras, tigers, landmines,
Soviet republics, street gangs,
tree root stumbles, caves
under the ice. Maybe she
should stay in heaven
where there is ni danger,
or only one, the earth below.

22 July 2019

=====

**It is as if come
to mind again,
thought melts
in hot weather,
will dissolves.
The blessing of
a little breeze
wakes language up.**

22 July 2019

=====

**Amything you can say
you can sing—
that's what nrewath's for,**

**shaping the word flow
all the way over to you,**

**sing it, don't say it,
that's what love's for,**

22 July 2019

=====

**I woke in the southern hemisphere
water went wrong down the simk**

**who are those stars?
is that the same sun
I used to know**

**will she come over the horizon
or straight up out of the ground?**

**I must have slept a wrong sleep—
now how can I wake from waking?**

22 July 2019

CROMARTIE

**Name that kept repeating as I woke
meant nothing when i looked it up
or nothing to me. A place, an earl,,
a comedy, football, firth. It sounded
like a cup of tea, a torment of
irrelevancy, a buzzing in the thought,
mere repetition. What shall I do
with no ao meaning? Sing something,
a Scottish catch, word lost in a green world.**

23 July 2019

=====

**Evidence everywhere—
the lawyer in me
(the Jesuits wanted me to be)
fills boxes of documents,
testimonies, phone taps,
snatches of songs, bawdy dreams,
quotes from the Classics.
It's all here. Now find
the deed from which
all love flows.**

23 July 2019

=====

**One cool breeze
puffs in the window,
says hello.
Then the trees
are quiet again.
Sometimes I think
we are interruptions
they are too polite
to repel. Good
morning, morning,
I love you well.**

23 July 2019

=====

**As if the other side
had nothing on it
like a very old 78 rpm
shellac 10 inch record
say of Caruso singing
Amor ti vieta in 1902.
Say. As if the leaf
fell from no tree at all,
and the wind (impossible)
had nothing to say.
Woke blank-minded,
stuck [?] as a word
that (dare I say?)
meant nothing.
Or nothing to me
(and I was no thing).**

23 July 2019

=====

**I worry things like that.
Empty milk bottle,
bone but no dog.
And things worry right back,
sun with no shadow,
chair in mid-air.**

23 July 2019

=====

**Before the news came on
the wind said something,
and the trees too
and the clouds called me a pagan
as if I had too many gods
and they were some of them
but they smiled. What a language
we live in where the clouds can smile!**

24 July 2019

=====

**Things hurry by
as if there were an end
to everything.**

**Or something,
ever, but the wave
falls, the wave rises
and the sea speaks on.**

24 July 2019

=====

**Speak. Talk. Tell. Say.
How rich we are
in ways of knowing,
ways of getting there.**

24 July 2019

=====

**so let the children
understand
the bron customs
of an eldritch time
the spooky world of grown-ups
ways of passing time
the gambling, the gawking
at dancers, romances,
the neckties, the pants suits,
the going out in the morning,
the coming home at dusk.
Where did their day go?**

24 July 2019

=====

**Inside outside the same
a marble hand
fingers flexed
as if the god had just
let something fall,
something small.
Every object left
from times ago
is pure mystery—
meaning is far ahead of us,
follow the fallen.**

25 July 2019

=====

**(When politics is getting sick
the mind goes to the Castle of Women,
on the Other Island, spring and fall,
talk and touch and listen soft
till the storm troopers bang on your door.)**

25 July 2019

=====

**I told to the specter
the summoner the listener—
your dead parents standing
so often—not always—
at your side. Talk
to them too— they gave
you language, now send
word back to them.
Every poem is also
a letter to the dead.**

25 July 2019

=====

**Don't tell them
how I worshipped thee—
the rule of adoration
is strict—let no one
overhear your prayer.
It is a secret shard
with only one, only the great
Thou of all the world.**

25 July 2019

== == == == ==

**(On pilgrimage, as in most travel,
dreams and “real” experiences are hard
to distinguish. And perhaps should not be
distinguished in the first place.)**

25 July 2019

=====

**Lift up the stone
and see.**

**This has been
waiting for thee.**

**Passage from a Holy Book
too holy to be written,
too holy to write.**

25 July 2019

=====

In some ways a marvelous summer
birds in the trees
and flowers coming, and poems
too, that the Ancients called
flowers of the mind,
anthology
a science of flowers.

2.
Little pain and shapely clouds,
not too many phone calls,
and even once or twice
goes over spiderweb across the welcome mat.

3.
I'm singing grateful
for quiet things and cool weather.
Bad dreams come
but mostly from inside out,
no one to blame for them
except the voodoo of the internet.
No blame. In the woods

**around the house
the shadows talk.
Deep gratitude for how things are—
a little doubt
about what we do with them.**

26 July 2019

=====

**Don't be so philosophical.
Nudge the dog away with your foot,
try to remember
the name of the red-skirted woman
before she leaves the grill.
Or give it up and just say
Hello, Stranger with your second-best smile.**

26 July 2019

=====

**So many good things
have come in the mail,
playful antiquity of cardboard
cartons, could be almost
anything inside. The mailbox
stuffed with useless information,
gorgeously commoditized.
Is that a word? Is that
a woman smirking from a catalogue,
a cruise ship off Antigua,
a box of apples from Oregon?
With mail like this
no need for actual people—
strange friends who leave
nothing when they go
or else grant things
you hate but fear to throw away.**

26 July 2019

CASES OF CONSCIENCE

**What did the sky
say to the fisherman
the hotel keeper overheard
and printed on a little leaflet
each guest received
along with the bill
at check-out when
their own poor journey
had to begin again?**

**2.
Nobody ever asked
me that before.
So many doubts, puzzles,
quandaries. Why
is even now a white
truck parked in the trees?
What kind of work
did they plan, abandon,
now they drive so
quickly away?**

3.

Is something sinful or not.

**That's the question the student has to solve
while distracted by the fluent hair
of the student at the next desk—
and that distraction, attraction,
is that sinful too? And hair,
what is the moral value of hair,
vector as it is of so many thoughts?**

4.

**And where do thoughts (temptations,
memories, desires) go
when you put them out of your head?
Do they migrate into other people,
afflicting them with your reflections?
And isn't that an even worse sin?
Use up your thought before you let it fall.**

27 July 2019

OF WEEKS

Sacred song of a Saturday
the week's weaving
done,

 the cows of weekdays
milked, the milk
cheese already,
 melted on the deep
bread of desire.

What does this mean?

2.

The ferial, then the Sabbath,
then Something New.
After all these years
I am beginning to forgive the Week,
weeks. Or at last
they seem to be true.

**3.
Or telling the truth.
And well I know
how telling
is never the whole story,
the red rose of the lie,
the white rose deeper
in the branches
that may be true.
And the thorns are always true.**

**27 July 2019
End of Notebook 426**

= = = = =

**Making it possible
For the scientist
to walk quietly
where the trees had been
and decide for himself
always himself
whether the crucifix
was just one more curiosity
left over from history
like a totem pole
or a rabbits foot,**

**he'll make up his mind
and before you know it
we will all believe him too.**

27th July 2019

=====

**And if I tried again
would the woods
hear me from their long sleep
and with the small animals
woodchucks Chipmunks
voles om their snug tunnels
recognize in me
someone small and weak
and permanent as they?
Creatures in these quiet proximities
will understand
full well the feelings
of the other that we have learned
to ignore in ourselves,
making us into small religions
walking chapels
stumbling cathedrals
drowning in a sea pf air.**

27 July 2019

=====

**Saves by itself
she said
about the software
I heard it deeply
understanding
that what she said
was what Lord Buddha
said at the very end
work out your own
Deliverance,
i have shwn you the way**

27 July 2019

=====

Things

are ready for us
clouds and such,
the sun's torch
teasing over the trees.

Not
that trees and light and clouds
are things,
far from it,
they are alive
or they are life itself
we thingly use
or try to,
all our grunts and sighs are
music in Someone's ears.

2.

**Deific. This
is the proof
from music.**

**Someone is walking
through the fields
all alone, midnight,
whistling.**

**Someone else
must hear
his song.
Song has to be heard,
ergo, God exists.**

3.

**More serious than you think.
Philosophy is made
of clean white bones
and scraps of cloth
stained so long ago
the stain is their pure color now.
They build skeletons**

**with too few bones,
dress them in scanty clothes.
coax and coax
but the bone work will not walk.
Though sometimes past midnight
you hear it talking in your sleep.**

28 July 2019

=====

**Anthea giggles
as women made
of flowers do
or tend to
when their lovers
made of stones
in their confusion
lose a few pebbles.
And so it went
for fifty million years
until the earth said Yes.**

28 July 2019

=====

We are
what things say,
tell us,
tell us to be.
The stone
talked first
then the tree
then along came
me, the first of me,
just the same
as you, yours,
a million years ago,
how different I seem
now, all
the billions of me,
still we
are still me,
still what the stone
said good-morning to,
bowing its head.

28 July 2019

=====

**Putting things together
later. The little boy
had some books,
he found a wooden
box, an orange crate,
trundled it upstairs
and there it was,
a bookcase, proud
as Vatican.**

28 July 2019

=====

Languid morning
lounging in sunlight
by the sea
though the water itself
is 200 miles away.
Lounging by the thee.

28 July 2019

=====

**Something night remembered
a silver fountain pen under taffeta,
a bowl of strawberries with cream,
intimate priestly talk,
atheist suspicions,
but I get it all wrong,
summer but no sparrows,
the rice paddies of Sacramento,
close, but no cigar.**

29 July 2019

=====

**A pretty summer day
but who's asking?
Confident assertions
in an empty room.
The world is like a mirror
today, room for only one.**

29 July 2019

MONDAY

**The bitter breakfasts
of the working class
are over, the cars
are on their road.
Breathe deep, think shallow—
there is no Freedom yet.**

29 July 2019

=====

**Sometimes the flask
is empty yet
pale smoke keeps coming out**

**like footsteps in an empty
house at night**

**the chemistry of ordinary life
perplexing. The taste
of food unreliable,**

**as if the wood of the door
doesn't care who knocks on it
and where are we then?**

**A world full of strangers
and not a mirror in sight.
Nothing that even smells like me.**

29 July 2019

=====

**Give the man space
and he'll have all the time he needs,
all the time in the world,**

**once long ago in Wyoming
I scooped up a handful of snow
and from the gap it left
a few mosquitoes came right out
I learned all I had to know,
looked up and saw
a pronghorn leap across the meadow,
mountains, eras, all time
spread out around us**

and sleep is our spring rain.

29 July 2019

=====

**Just a few minutes more
to sit abafthe trees
[rayig for this time
to linger, yes, praying to them,
that I can inherit,
inhabit, a different
kind of time
one that lets me stay,
tree-wise nd tree-slow,
maybe even shaping walnuts
for the children of language.
all of you, all of us.**

29 July 2019

====

**Easier eye
a feast of seeing
a lawn is liberty
a green flag
with no sword on it,
sun-dapple only,
a chipmunk stroll.
Exasperate the opposition:
sit perfectly still.**

29 July 2019

=====

**I suspect i am not T'ang enough
to get away with these
quietudes and retreats.
But here I am, only an hour
late for what I should be doing,
trying to let the warm
breeze align my chemicals--
isn't that what happens
when the pulse slows
and you hear a crow talking
ten trees away?**

29 July 2019

TWIN LAKES

the serene the spill
of grass towards a surface
in which they move

*let men be fish again
let the launch of diliness
founder in this small sea*

smallest sea.
A fifteen minute drive,
a picnic table in the trees--

am I still there?
Is the landscape a mere frame
for this compulsion
pure, translucent, obvious?

Thank God for obvious things
they leave us free to find the hidden.

29 July 2019

=====

Spill it,
 it wants
toknow you better
the way substance does,
skin by neuron,
the pores of knowledge
filled with touch.
Otherwise you'll never
know the sea, say,
or what it's like to stand
in the shadow of a eucalyptus
tree on a hill by the Bay
in January, say,
smelling that heal-all air.

30 July 2019

=====

Is it time yet?
Just keep asking—
I needed a tee-shirt urgently,
walked bare-chested
from shop to shop
along a crowded street,
saw lamps, urns,
yabletops, and in one
store a whole wall
of identical shiny black
quart-sized cans
labeled JOTCH (with trap).
Where am i? Who
is that irritable young woman
waiting for me
at the wheel of her car?
And she thought I knew the way.

30 July 2019

=====

for Trakl

**When you get down
to know truth
about yourself,
fear and lust, skin
and circumstance,
all thatweather,**

**you could be anybody
at all. Your boice,
though, yoiur voice!
Only you
could be us so well.**

30 July 2019

=====

**Train from Pittsburgh
you slept right
through to Philadelphia
and there you are.**

**Only two rivers now
but a museum filled
with human beauty,
and the same sky.**

**I reach out to find
you there, fondle
most gently the soft
nape of your neck,**

you child. Little, little child.

30 July 2019

MERE TALK

**In France it means ocean
for us it meant lake.
The mere difference
still lets us in—
does it matter so much
how wide the sea is?
Speak, o Windermere!**

30 July 2019

=====

**The crowded room.
Everyonen packed
tight together.
Each one is the performer,
no person without persona.
No one without a role.
Students mostly
in their clean clothes,
quiet, intelligent, alert.
Iy is a complex drama
made of pure articulation.
What is said is the same
as done. We lean on
each other. That
is the way. A crowded
room. All art comes from this.**

31 July 2019

PONTIFEX

**Build it
the river
lets you.
It let Li
Po, let
John baptist,
let Roebling.
All manner
of things a
riuver allows.
A bridge
is our best
religion.**

31 July 2019

GIVING THANKS

To see rain light
grey after days
of dazzle—
 a gift
from gypsy sky
always on its way.

31 July 2019

NOMINATION

**Never name a child before it's born.
Its true and proper name will gleam
out of the first glance of its opening eye.**

**Then you'll know. A name
from the foundation of the world
waiting for you to say it out loud.**

31 July 2019

GLISSANDO

The thought of rain
then the cars
slithering down the hill
and the sky clears

maybe too soon--
I want my water
from above, the
wet meaning of the world

coming to explain me.
And I need it, let me
make myself clear--
isn't it time I did?

31 July 2019

=====

**I hear people talking
and there are no people here.
Problem. Is it technology
(radio, internet, device)
or hallucination? (What
a strange word--*hallux*
in Latin means the big toe)
And is there a difference?
The rain has stopped
and leaves me lonely.
There must be a lot of us
out there. But here? Here?**

31 July 2019

=====

**Let's get serious.
Go to the bathroom.
Comb your hair.
Get a new mattress,
haul it up the stairs.**

**Now you sleep gentle
and firm, like the sky
asleep over the earth
dreaming its clouds**

**the way we dream each
other, voices of us,
touch of our hands,**

**the vast fields of grain
we saw up Hapeman Road
golden soft on our shared bed.**

31 July2019

IN THE TREES

As the often light
disposes, grace
slipper softly
through the shade,
silhouettes
turn solid and we climb.

Or did. The years ago.
Who knows. Not
question, a name,
the knower is the known
I pray. Trees
did this to me, the necessary
caress, the sense
of being home.

And no house is complete
without a little fear.

31 July 2019

