

9-2019

## sep2 2019

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=====

I'm doing it the old way  
green glass  
broken in the alley way  
chalk on the sidewalk  
whispers even  
between the pussywillow  
and the rose

all the spaces that have  
words in them you know  
or think you do—

what shall we do with meaning  
when the words are enough,  
the sound of hem alone  
like the horns in Bruckner

sound, the sound of them,  
who needs more?

8 September 2019

=====

**One word at a rime  
you have to be now  
all the time, it's you**

**it's you who have to  
string them all together  
not one of them makes sense.—**

**this is called reading,  
building the house of meaning,  
chambers of guesswork  
sly guests in curious costumes  
only you will ever see.**

**8 September 2019**

=====

**I meant to show you the way  
but the pebbles fell from my hand  
until I had only shadows  
to give you--would they serve?**

*I hit a stone with a stone  
until it sang—*

**follow the sound of it.  
Go there bravely,  
I'll come after and meet you  
as soon as I'm born.**

**8 September 2019**

**SUMMA THEOLOGIAE**

**Faith is gone**

**Hope is no longer a virtue**

**Charity is all that's left to us,  
the only virtue**

**but charity is enough--**

**hurt no one, help everyone,**

**eight billion room-mates on a desert isle.**

**8 September 2019**

## TO THE PARENTS

Waltz in the elevator  
jog on the sea  
we'll make a homeland  
for everyone but me

smile for the papers  
frown at the moon  
your children are hungry  
just give them a spoon

Give them an empty tune, some shiny thing  
they can lick at least before food is invented,  
the taste of metal stifles their cries before you  
give them food, if you ever find it. f

Invention means discovery. Remember how it  
tasted when you were young, and you had a  
first taste of something that made sense? Why  
do you deprive your children of that sudden  
miracle?

**You are nervous and afraid, I don't blame you for that, but in your anxiety you set a price on everything, and sell pleasures to your children that keep them hungry, and keep them from finding pleasures of their own.**

**I beg you, I see them all the time, intelligent, eager, hungry for what you have told them they want, sold them. I watch the sad eyes of their satisfaction.**

**8 September 2019**

## ANTHEM

1.

We had to go and get  
born in America,  
we wanted the deer,  
possums, peccaries,  
the broken calendar  
of stars littering the desert.  
We craved granite,  
long rivers. But the why  
of the matter.  
eludes. Patriotism  
racism war. But I think  
there is a tenderness  
to be found, someday,  
somehow, hinted  
by the autumn rose  
of Sharon, shadow  
of a shaggymaple tree.



2.

Trying to figure,  
to find out.

Where  
could we go,  
there is no  
place that is not here.

3.

Colorado wapiti  
at eleven thousand feet  
grazing patches  
of grass around the ice.  
Don't get too close  
or you might see  
yourself in their faces—  
we are they  
ourselves, bent  
low to feed.

4.

I had some poride  
I left it home  
the better to find  
music, make it  
even, fingers  
on the drum head  
barely moving—  
the touch of leather  
remings us: *I*  
*was skin once too.*

And there is a funeral  
in everything we eat.

5.

So stand there omstead,  
fingers tapping on the shiny  
hood of your nice car.  
ust stand, just play,  
don't get in, don't drive  
away. Right here  
is where the battle is,  
so quiet you care barely  
think it. But you do.

9 September 2019

**THIS**

**If this  
makes anyone  
happy  
I am  
complete.**

**9 September 2019**

=====

**The feeling of sunlight  
creeping over the skin  
or as if you could feel  
inside you clean water  
circling in the sink  
or as if you heard  
music from a passing car  
but there is no road  
by where =====**

**The feeling of sunlight  
creeping over the skin  
or as if you could feel  
inside you clean water  
circling in the sink  
or as if you heard  
music from a passing car  
but there is no road  
by where you live.**

**9 September 2019**

**= = = = =**

**Sweater weather  
swelter after  
later in the endless  
conversation.**

**9 September 2019**

=====

Out of green sleep an answer thrums,  
we know the pattern from the stars  
the drumbeat just repeats.  
Wake, look round. Trees,  
mostly trees, And in the middle distance  
cars going past. fast.  
You knew all this while you were still asleep.

2.

But a hand reaches out  
and touches your knee.  
It is your own. See  
how mysterious sleep is,  
all images and no way home.

3,

I gave you trees now give me gaiety  
the glad of going and of coming back,  
Hecate's daring dancers on Hera's lawn,  
she looks three ways at once  
and right at you,

watch her women aance,  
their moves are words,  
the weave of sense from tree to tree--  
I told you to wake up  
but now it is almost too late.

4.

Because when you have seen them dance  
it changes everything.  
You want to reach out and touch them at least,  
but that of all things is wrong.  
The Dream Deciders told you that  
long ago but you forgot.  
Now say your Mass and wipe your lips  
and thank the trees for telling you all this.

9 September 2019

=====

**What I learned from the Painter:**

**portraits are infamous  
(though she didnt say so)  
whether life-like or otherwise--  
the face you look at  
(I understood her to mean)  
is out there  
but the real space and time  
of painting is in here,  
the inner workshop from  
whichall form and color flood  
out into the seen word,  
the home of all of us.  
A true panting says  
its own space outolud.**

**9 September 2019**



## FRUITS OF THE EARTH

Chestnuts and the old man  
who sold them on the street  
in Paris, late winter light  
snow. Or cherries eaten  
from a paper bag along  
the interesting bleak streets  
round Clignancourt. Or apples  
half-rotten nibbled by deer  
right here, Montgomery Place,  
Cedar Hill, America. Or once  
a kiwi peeled in Oakland,  
nibbled sweet green newly  
imported from somehwre,  
somewhere south of anywhere.  
Or the mango left halfpeaten  
by Miriam Herzl on a subway bench  
dark dark wood uptown, no  
matter when, I taste it still.

9 September 2019

## HURRY-MAN AND MANJ

Hurry-Man and Manj elope  
after they have filled  
all the huge raw red earth  
fields with seeds.

What kind?

All kinds,  
they carry them in canvas sacks  
slung on their back  
and when the bags are empty  
they run away.

2.

Weeks later  
they come back  
for tea.

To see what generosity has done.  
They see the fields now  
all green and greedy  
with all kinds of everything  
reaching for the sky,

flowers and thistles  
grains and goblin trees  
already shaking branchlets  
at the timid sky  
and good old roses and buckwheat too  
and sweet French lavender  
to make all our clothes smell good.

Manj turns to him and says  
A successful marriage  
wouldn't you say? He smiles  
and she revs up the cart  
and they drive away,  
right through all the grasses,  
graces, greens, dodging the palms  
already fanning the late summer air,  
yes, everything grows!

3.

Manj told me this  
when I met her once  
she still goes barefoot,  
loves the way her slender feet  
look in the red earth,

in fact the red earth draws her  
like a music she hears over the hill,  
the smell of it, the tumbled  
fresh-turned furrows of it  
luring her body and mind,  
in fact I met her one day  
as i walked along the rim  
and she told me then  
all that I have told.

10 September 2019

*(Hurry-Man and Manj eloipe: yjose were the dreamt words that woke me, most of the first two parts dictated in dream; the ;latter sections of Part 2 and all of 3 were just composed. right after I got up.)*

=====

Is it enough  
to wait for the obvious,  
good weather, love letters,  
found money, sweeter dreams?  
Some of us are still  
waiting for mommy to come home.

Isn't there some way  
to *energize waiting*  
so the wait itself  
becomes the instrument  
of its own accomplishment?  
Isn't there a way  
of breathing or holding your breath  
or thinking certain thoughts  
or folding your fingers  
into certain geometric figures  
to hurry the hour  
when you hear footsteps,  
the knob squeaking,  
the door opening at last?

10 September 2019

=====

**When the sun came  
we were born  
or did we come with her  
over the hill we call Night?**

**But night always has a day  
before it. doesn't it?  
Where were we then  
before the sun carried us here?**

**10 September 2019  
Rhinebeck**

== == == == ==

**A male child  
is called a Son  
to remind him always  
of his mother,  
the sun in the house,  
the sun in sht sky.**

**10.IX.19, Rhinebeck**

=====

**Things nearby  
buzzsaw in the meadow  
where the cars park  
for the hospital.  
We engrave ourselves  
on the local earth  
but in or dreams  
there is always a mountain  
pure of our presence.  
virgin granite, severe  
sermon, teaching even us  
the silence in the heart of love.**

**10 September 2019  
Rhinebeck**



=====

\*

**Recite the names  
of all the gods you know,  
in order, Athena, Brigid,  
Calliope, Demeter, Eanna,  
Freya, on and on, let  
Ganesh in, and Hecate, Isis.  
all thro,ugh the alephbeth  
and then come back for more.  
Say the names, they ripen  
in your lips, *a god comes  
when you say her name, his name.*  
By Zeus I swear that this is true.**

**10 September 2019  
Rhinebeck**

=====

**But what did I fear?  
The train hooting up the track  
far away. Albany?  
When will I be born?**

**Amd when will *again*  
ever end? Ice  
is still months away  
but there are mounains**

**still. Even the sea  
did not help me sleep  
or woke me by being gone.**

**(But where could the sea go?)  
And I can't tell the difference,  
I'm still mot even born.**

**11 September 2019**

=====

**Thus one supposes  
the waves to be  
mermaid voices—**

**do they lure, or lull?  
*They tell a story we have heard before,  
and like all good children we love to listen.***

**11 September 2019**

=====

Wait for the window  
to open the sky—

tell me something  
I have never heard

a new kind of tree  
or bird, a whisper

made only out of light.

11 September 2019

=====

**A delight  
to talk the gods  
into their places.  
back in the noumenal  
firmament again  
after all these stupid  
skeptical years**

**and now their individual  
very particular lights  
can shine out in us  
down on the daily practice of being,  
our blessedly endless task.**

**I shout their names,  
some of them, and whisper others,  
and stand with my hands outstretched  
top welcome their touch.**

**11 September 2019**

=====

**Waiting**  
    **comes to mind**  
**so many days**  
**at waking,**  
    **as if to wait**  
**was the business of the day.**

**2.**  
**Waiting for wind.**  
**Waiting for the window**  
    **to let the air in,**  
**air is melody**  
    **waiting for the song.**

**3.**  
**Or for the door**  
**to open and they**  
**come in, the ones**  
**you always wait for.**  
**Or you go out at last.**

**12 September 2019**



=====

1.

**Obvious**

**is another word  
that wakes me  
or I wake with  
the obvious things—  
I suppose the word  
meant lying right there  
in front of us  
on our path,  
maybe even blocking the road  
to something else.  
But that's not obvious.**

2.

**The word came again this morning—  
“waiting for the obvious”  
it said that already  
I wrote it down months ago  
but it comes again,  
does it have a dark meaning,**



sickbeds and coffin,  
or a bright,  
springtime and all  
the breakfasts to come?  
The obvious is not obvious enough.

3.  
I'll settle on brightness  
and unlock the door,  
open the window,  
inhale the wind—  
*what comes to you*  
*is meant for you* —  
that much is obvious.

12 September 2019

=====

**He looked at his pen and thought  
Enough ink left for a sonnet  
but the words are too few—  
all he could think was *you*.**

**12 September 2019**

=====

Uranus,  
    one of his years  
is 84 of ours. Mine.  
My birthday,  
    he looms  
out of the shadow we call light.

2.  
Do the stars come round  
to relieve us?  
    deceive us  
into being?  
    being where  
we think we are?

[*dreamt*]

12 September 2019

=====

**As a poet  
I think I am the dancer  
not the choreographer.**

\*

**Nothing to wait for  
it's all now.**

**12 September 2019**

=====

**This glass plate  
reflects and refracts—  
what about you?**

**Are you as single-  
minded as sunlight or  
does chance play a part**

**in this opera called you?  
I never knew till now  
that glass could speak—**

**sing, yes, but these are words.**

**13 September 2019**

=====

*New Bedford. 5:50*

*Les mouettes!* The cries,  
squabbling high  
frequency shapes over us  
on the pier, the gulls,  
gulls!

I love them,  
love the snarl of the gangplank  
being hauled in,  
shudder of the vessel,  
the whole ancient  
ritual of beginning,  
                  each time  
in all this history  
the doing of it,  
                  to enter on the sea!

2.

This holy place—  
shouldn't we be afraid  
to drag our craft

into such primal waters,  
the one condition  
beyond life is \_\_,  
the life we knew,  
                    my life,  
my sea.

13 September 2019

=====

**Or: a man walking into the sea,  
a man daring to use words—  
not just crying out bird!  
lion! rain!  
but stringing them together,  
connecting, cohering,  
a complete sentence is like the sea.**

**13 September 2019**



ON BUZZARD'S BAY

1.

The *skin*

or is it weaving  
the long leaves of water,  
sea-lift, heaven-hurled?

No such words.

And yet,  
and yet.

2.

There is a voice in these things,  
noises in the garage,  
hot spells,  
sea gulls—

angry terns.

Some folks are always angry,  
one-way streets,  
extensive cigars,  
boys vaping into a coma,  
Hitler speaks on Youtube.

3.

Sea makes me talk,  
Confess.

*Sometimes I feel  
like a motherless child*

they sing,  
the little kid with her daddy  
down the aisle.

The sea makes us tell the truth—  
hence bitterness, chemicals, the salt.

13 September 2019

**CUTTYHUNK**

**and here we are,  
10 PM and a full moon over Gay Head  
and the wind and pretty cool  
and the house at peace  
and most things where they should be  
and the sea outside,  
I hear its voice,  
basso in the moonlit night.**

**13 September 2019**

=====

**From afar a photo  
from months ago  
a pen still full of ink.  
And the sea again!**

**See, the sea is a word  
you can say  
that says a whole sentence,  
page of poetry, scripture,  
like the other little  
word *you*,  
which is the last book of the Bible.**

**Going to the sea is always coming home.  
To you.**

**14 September 2019**

=====

**A thing is  
what it makes me think.  
That's what language means.**

**14 September 2019**

**REPLETE**

**Specify— a species  
waiting in the apple tree,  
the old one, with ever-young  
Eve asleep beneath it  
soft among ferns.  
A kind of fruit  
unknown to mankind  
but utterly known.**

**14 September 2019**

=====

**Sea says it all—  
that's what I mean.**

\*

**Life is long enough  
to tell you this.**

**14 Sepyember 2019**

=====

**I remind myself  
of the first things  
two pieces of wood  
nailed together  
and everything came after.**

**14 September 2019**



=====

**When everything is over  
it begins.  
A soup can, a \_\_\_\_,  
a pile of ashes,  
a photograph of a girl in uniform.  
You used to know these things  
all by yourself,  
you used to live here too.  
But now— so much to remember!  
And where *is* the other side?**

**14 September 2019**

=====

**In this old days  
some things were better.  
Records, for instance,  
now music has only one side.**

**14 September 2019**

=====

**What does it want to say  
now I am here?**

**It all changes in the night.  
*Tinieblas*, coast of shadows.  
I wake convinced  
someone left something here,  
something that speaks,  
painful, dark, the end  
of something.**

**Something forgotten.  
Something rotten.**

**14 September 2019**

=====

**Why can't I hear the sea?  
Where did the night go?**

**Rouse a writer  
from belief—  
all belief is false,  
all knowing sacred.  
The night is too quiet—  
I think it's gone away  
and left only its dark.**

**14 September 2019**

**BERLIOZ**

**I keep having *Les Troyens* in my head,  
the dreamy way music lingers,  
as if hearing had little to do with time  
after music so powerfully controlled it,  
shaped time itself in passing.**

**`14 September 2019**

=====

Watching the never  
crest pver the sea,  
coming nearer

and we dare to lie down  
like dogs or servants  
at the foot of the sea

and do right to do so,  
captives of a good idea  
like all pious folk.

and that sound you hear  
from the seashore roaring  
is the meaningful silence of the sea

as over against the penury  
of our sometime music  
glorious as it is in us—

but silence has everything in it.

14 September 2019

=====

So late over spun time  
weaving some clouds  
together from the hilltop  
into the Bible, where ha,  
ha, ha become words  
and who knows what happens  
then? Then is now  
all over again. Sleep wants us.  
we are the cheap call-girls  
of its busy lust. Sleep you  
it says, sleep you deep in me.  
All of us fall for it—still,  
we find a dollar or two  
when we wake, stuck  
into the back of our minds.

14 September 2019

=====

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crest pver the sea,  
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14 September 2019



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of its busy lust. Sleep you  
it says, sleep you deep in me.  
All of us fall for it—still,  
we find a dollar or two  
when we wake, stuck  
into the back of our minds.**

**14 September 2019**

=====

**Dispossessed and languorous  
a subtle people  
living on the edge**

**come back with a brave report  
sinners singing in the chapel  
glad in obloquy**

**brutish before breakfast  
but one swims  
candlelight in strong morning sunlight**

**the human soul  
the sea  
in silence,**

**15 September 2019**

=====

**Resilience  
eternal speakeasy  
the slammed door  
but knock again  
half-empty glass**

**15 September 2019**

=====

Capable of again—  
a lobster claw  
to hold the thought  
at bay—  
        keep  
intelligence at bay  
he cried,  
        give me to feel,  
till I am  
only what I feel.

2.  
At first I pitied him  
then I tried  
to echo  
his silly cry.  
I felt a \_\_\_  
and no more—  
the ancient sin of walking down the street.

15 September 2019

=====

Later

when I am living in the sea

I will teach thee

about houses,

these sealed-tight boxes

in which each

night you have nightmares

and wonder why.

*I will teach thee the window*

*and the wisdom of the door*

but not yet, not now.

When hope used to be a virtue

or at least a girls' name,

czars and scimitars and crusades

swept most of that away

but there is a little thread of it

still left dangling from the heart,

not hope in general but a hope,

one for each one of us,

a frontier we may someday

stumble over into smiling Switzerland.

15 September 2019

=====

**Trying for what matters  
a clown in toga,  
priest in mufti  
where shall I wander  
and the beginning, where is that?**

**15 September 2019**

=====

**Leg in trousers  
hand in pocket  
everything else  
is far away—**

**send this to your parents  
from summer camp  
so they'll do all  
the worrying and you  
can walk by the lake  
suddenly unafraid.**

**15 September 2019**

====

*(les parapenteurs)*

**To fly  
and not fall  
or fall  
into flying—**

**a tarot card  
in your teeth,  
darkness over the sea,  
a verb comes later.**

**15 September 2019**



## THE INLAID SHELL

Gull dropped  
it shattered in the stones.  
Time passed,  
I can't guess how many.  
Charlotte found it  
this noontime  
(speaking of time)  
and gave it to me  
with an explanation  
I didn't quite understand—  
something (again)  
about time, and what time  
does to clam shells  
broken open, lying  
on the shore.

A tiny thing, size  
of my little finger's nail,  
white rimmed round  
black, the 'inlay'  
it brought to her mind

as if, as if an artisan  
in Venice, say, laid  
a coat of resin  
on a silver shell  
and pressed into it  
with his burin  
—or just his fingernail?—  
the initials of his beloved  
or just the customer

or even—so small, fine  
needlepointed lines—  
an image of the three Graces  
lingering on a clifftop  
waiting for some poor  
traveler to inspire.

because beauty is all the muses  
all at once, all together.  
O you're always  
envisioning the Graces,  
Charlotte chides, or is she  
praising? Always seeing  
Graces on the hilltop,

sidewalk, path through the woods,  
looking at her face  
when she's sleeping,  
her face resting on  
the tender reaches  
of her upper arm,  
eyes closed so she does not  
see me watching.

But she knows. The Graces  
always know, always  
are amused by our desires,  
abstentions, timidities,  
bold bull snorting gallop  
making up for doubt by urgency,

they always know.  
Back to the shell.  
The gull. The over  
that lies under,  
the black almost yielding  
oval inside the tiny shell,

what clam lived here

is too sad a question.  
Gulls must eat.  
And Lama Norlha said  
Of course eating is itself  
a sin, no way around it,  
sin or die. And dying  
is probably the worst sin.

Poor clam. Poor gull.  
Poor human shore  
pf glacial scarp and jettisons  
from the never quiet sea.

but the shell is beautiful  
the way things can be  
and we so seldom are  
(the Graces always are),  
I wish I understood  
her explanation when  
she handed me the tiny thing,  
maybe I should ask her.  
Maybe I'm asking her now.

15 September 2019

=====

**I couldn't tell my heart  
from a throb in the sky  
helicopter pulsing over  
the sound, the sound  
of blood in the arteries  
seeking out so urgently  
the furthest Wests within,  
ear on the pillow hears  
inside and outside the same.  
And who is my Heraclitus  
to tell one from the other,  
heart or motor, here or high?  
The wise old man has climbed  
up on his half-tame lion and gone.**

**15 September 2019**

=====

**I used to think this little  
street with its broken  
pavement and sudden jolts  
went everywhere. And now  
I know it. Wheel or footstep,  
only the speed is different,  
soft tread or harsh bounce,  
the journey's end's the same.**

**Eevery thing we think or do  
is a city, and a city is just a tangle  
of ten thousands roads  
all going to the dame place,  
tarnished rooftop, palace of the heart.**

**15 September 2019**

=====

**To be somewhere  
is to be out of history  
sunlight on the wall  
of some other city  
but here you are  
in the amazement of now.**

\*

**It's not a love  
story anymore  
it is the climax  
the completion  
when the story  
folds in around itself—  
you know you're there  
because you're asleep.**

**15 / 16 September 2019**

=====

**I wanted the continuous  
lights twinkling on the bay  
far away or were they stars  
being born out of our waters,  
mother fluid, leap to the sky?  
Can it be that light  
comes out of the earth  
as the Sun appears to  
any moment now?  
I am too dark to know  
let me be known!  
let me be light!**

**15 / 16 September 2019**



=====

Warm strong  
sun  
    acropolis of light  
structuring the city  
we call waking up.

Empty hill, wide fields,  
tradeless sea—  
no one around  
*yet this a city is*  
not even clouds.

16 September 2019

=====

**Or: a city  
is the weather's  
state of mind.**

**16 September 2019**

=====

**A crow on our deck you heard  
in early light, calling  
and another, further, answering—  
our friends! We must  
be somehow home,  
our friends come calling,  
once there were no crows  
on this island. Then a pair  
a few years ago  
over the sea-pools at the West End.  
And yesterday you saw a flock of them,  
nearer, nearer,  
and now aloft,  
descending, blessing  
the roofbeam even.**

**16 September 2019**

=====

Have I this writing written  
or did the gull do that,  
or the bird I never even heard,  
the crow that woke you  
worded its way into my dreams  
I answer now?

                                  The epistemology  
of poetry  
                                  is very strange.

17 September 2019

=====

**So here one is wake  
on the last day  
for a while  
in a place  
that knows more than I do.  
Or is it wrong  
to call the sea a place  
when it is everywhere,  
even inside us.  
all the water of us,  
all the salt?**

**17 September 2019**

=====

Walking is easy,  
standing is hard.  
I ask a tree  
to teach me how,  
the lovely paulownia  
alone in the graveyard  
all these years,  
shed tells me she will  
if I teach her how  
to stroll up the sea cliff  
just past the aspens  
at close of day  
when no one's looking.  
And she laughs at me  
in her sly Russian way.

17 September 2019

**ON THE FERRY, STILL AT THE DOCK**

**It's now or never.  
Or now and never,  
the way the cloud  
shaped itself into  
Velazquez's Venus recumbent  
and then dispersed  
into form-seeking otherness.**

**17 September 2019  
leaving Cuttyhunk**

## TWO ON THE PIKE

Food court rest stop  
built as basilica,  
high dome  
windows all around  
the float the light,,  
huge slow fan  
hgere the Eye  
of Heacen would be,  
maybe is, endless  
circling over  
empty tables.

\*

The sound of Sun  
pouring in  
along the light,  
a good mother, she  
tells us everywhere she goes.

17 September 2019



=====

**The homework begins,  
home now from that school the sea,  
my lessons still shaky  
afterdreamless sleep,  
I woke counting the alphabet,  
starting from the beginning,  
getting my story straight.**

**18 September 2019  
Lindenwood**

=====

**Cloudless sky over Cedar Hill  
now after three days of opulent,  
operatic exuberance aloft.  
clouds acting out all the sciences  
for us, to marvel and not touch,  
to see and believe.**

**18 September 2019**

## TWO ON THE CLOUDS

Really, I must do  
something about the clouds—  
to honor them to bow  
before their myriad  
constrictions, instructions  
for our own slow dance  
down here, where each  
of us thinks *I am all alone*.

We watch them grow,  
take foshape, disperse.  
reorganize again,  
we study form  
and formlessness,  
resemblances and  
absolutes. And then  
they're gone. Sky  
with no clouds.  
No wonder people  
used to say I'm feeling blue.

18 September 2019

=====

*(in our own cemetery by the sea)*

**Glass heart on gravestone  
not broken yet.  
The mourners move away.  
The heart—purple  
in tree light, sea wind—  
lingers.**

**We leave what we love  
with with those we love.  
It is simple, simple as that.  
A heart made out of glass  
no bigger than a coin,  
left on a polished stone.  
It may still be there.**

**18 September 2019**

=====

Now that I think about it  
the rock rolls away  
the sky's the color of it though,  
just like in Verdi's *Othello*—  
but all music and no one.  
No one dies, it says,  
printed across the still  
green leaves. Now  
that I think about it  
it's almost seven o'clock  
on a grey morning in America—  
why don't I think something else?

19 September 2019

=====

**Cars and tragedies,  
gift of the local,  
no feeling  
without a place.  
Mist in the trees.**

**19 September 2019**

=====

**Nobody names their kid  
Othello or Macbeth—  
even parents have some sense  
sometimes. But why Tristan,  
why Cassandra?  
Born for tragedy, what  
can a little Siegfried do?**

**19 September 2019**

=====

**Mist in the trees  
messages everywhere**

**19 September 2019**



====

Lacking affinities  
with elsewhere he  
stayed home.  
But even a boulder  
came here from somewhere,  
so even in him  
glacier-slow.  
Some other place  
was calling him  
come home.  
There is such danger  
in listening to yourself  
thinking. And memory  
is the longest mile.

19 September 2019

=====

**Well, the went blue.  
The bell sang.  
The shape of the maiden voyage  
curled over the horizon.  
We were there.  
No one had come before us.  
Monkey on a palm tree maybe.  
Coconut. Tension in the thigh.  
Eating purple plums in France.  
How can you sit so long in moonlight?**

**19 September 2019**

=====

**Drawing the decisive line across the sky  
you are the most  
you is the most poignant word  
always here always far away  
divisive.**

**The far from me  
that is closer to me than myself.**

**20 September 2019**

=====

**So something got said.  
The pilgrim closed his eyes  
and kept walking.  
How dark the light is,  
his morning thought,  
no wonder I wander.**

**20 September 2019**

=====

The taste is different  
the sky is the same.  
Empty the ink-pots  
and start again.  
(My students dislike religion  
or are indifferent to it,  
listen to music only in short bursts,  
but still compose their poems  
longhand, on paper,  
or in little books they carry  
with them everywhere.  
Poems still come from the body,  
a little, finger and fingertip,  
flip of pages in the wind.)  
Language is naturally pagan  
because anything is possible.  
A grammatical 'mistake' is pure heresy,  
and soon the world follows it.  
And right now the mist is full of trees.

20 September 2019

=====

**Statements  
neither verse nor prose  
trying to be now,  
just now.  
Read me  
and forget me inside.**

**20 September 2019**

=====

Here I thought  
I would be somewhere  
but not so—  
thesun understands these things  
because she too  
has come over the horizon  
time and time again—

there is no place for worry  
she says, or worry is a no-place thing  
a perceptual mistake, a pothole  
in the sleek avenue of human thought.

I thank thee, Lady, for thy clarity.

20 September 2019  
Rhinebeck

=====

**Then the pretty clouds came back  
all crinoline and wifty,  
thin shift of them across the western blue,**

**20 September 2019  
Rhinebeck**



=====

**Am I still talking?  
am I still talking to you?**

**I want to see the images you make  
when you close your eyes.  
want to hear the stories  
you tell yourself on the way to sleep  
and even after,**

**whenever I think of you  
I say Reveal, reveal!**

**because you are the other  
and the other is all I need to know—**

**any self knows that,  
knows it needs the broken mirror,  
the pages of your gospel  
half-illegible, washed away by tears.**

**20 September 2019  
Rhinebeck**

=====

*for C*

**When I saw you first  
though it was autumn  
all the gtreeen came back.**

**20 September 2019  
Rhinebeck**

=====

**And then I went to the Upanishads,  
sought in their language  
the truth that comes before language—  
is there one? I found the stories,  
wisdom, enigmas, consolations,  
just like everyday, city streets,  
dusty fields, children's voices,  
Everest on the horizon, the cat asleep.**

*Everything we ever learned,  
everything we knew or thought we knew  
we put in language—  
go find it there, and find us too,  
the donors, the demons, deities,  
dancers that made you.*

**20 September 2019  
Rhinebeck**

=====

How far we are  
from where we are.

It startles me  
to see  
ground beneath my feet—  
perplexes me  
that there I am  
after all.

20 September 2019  
Rhinebeck

=====

**In a world of measurements  
we tell our fortunes  
by the spaces in between,  
even the gap between  
a number and its real self,**

**say Seeven in a field all by itself,  
bent over, studying the ground  
from which it grew.**

**20 September 2019  
Rhinebeck**

=====

**Pale shy clouds  
slipping across the lower sky  
like the memory of a friend  
not too far away.**

**20 September 2019  
Rhinebeck**

=====

**Of course I'm anxious  
my wife is in the doctor's office  
I'm waiting in the car  
with all the other cars around me  
most of them empty  
like the sky.**

**20 September 2019  
Rhinebeck**

=====

**When the book is full  
you've told the truth.  
The truth wears skirts  
like Greek soldiers or ballerinas.  
The truth has long hair,  
a bald spot hidden,  
or one full page is truth enough,  
where you have filled all  
the white spaces with what you think.  
How can there be  
more truth than that?**

**21 September 2019**



## GRAMMAR LESSONS

Staring out the adjective  
to see— far off,  
unclear, trees between—  
the longed-for noun.

\*

I verb thee  
and thou verbest back.  
The story is complete.

\*

Grasp a pronoun  
by the waist, firmly,  
and hope, hope—  
the answer comes.

21 September 2019

## TRANSCENDENCE

Music bothering the other room  
everybody means so well—  
I have to smile at what offends me,  
the jiggledy non-committal  
music of the low baroque—  
it is important to remember  
it was when the cat had his fiddle  
that the cow jumped over the moon.

21 September 2019  
End of Notebook 427

## LEAVING CHILDHOOD

There must be a ball  
that bounces  
all the way to you,

pale pink rubber  
*spaldeen* we called it.  
We had no name for you.

22 September 2019  
Start of Notebook 428

=====

**(Odd detailed dream— the Anglican Church has “unanimously” re-imposed the ban on women in the priesthood. No more women priests. And the few who have been ordained are not priests at all, but honorable Women Who Should be Depicted and Honored Till they pass away. I shuddered awake.)**

**22 September 2019**

=====

All we can do with a name  
is give it to somebody else

And dreams are like that too,  
you 'have' them  
but they are not you.—

The French say  
you make a dream,  
easier than  
to give it away.

22 September 2019

=====

**Assemble me, resemble me  
but let me sleep a while longer  
till the sun swath  
reaches the old tree  
then I'll tell you who we are.**

**22 September 2019**

=====

**All these people  
who think they have identities—  
if they only knew!  
No one is anybody else—  
there is no noun for *you*.**

**22 September 2019**

**SUNDAY**

**No sugar shall we  
and then the swoon  
of afternoon—  
a ball rolling across the lawn  
until it stops.**

**Geology is like eternity  
isn't it, the cant  
of hillside, the sheen  
of rock. O yes. The sun  
is our mother truly still.**

**22 September 2019**



=====

By health we hope  
or habit.  
Road signs  
built into the ear.  
Caution. Turnings. Intersections.  
But this street  
has no name yet.  
The thing about music  
you can't close your ears—  
we are built  
to hear the truth—  
listen, it may come yet.

22 September 2019

=====

**Each image is a gateway,  
the gate may be opened  
and should be opened.  
Maybe you should go  
all the way in—  
or just stand inside the door  
breathing the new air,  
looking around,  
wondering, being afraid, being  
as they say of two minds,  
Surely, a gate changes the goer.**

**22 September 2019**

=====

**Then say to the thing  
you just did: Please  
don't mean anything,  
just this once,  
be and be done with.**

**22 September 2019**

=====

**Why should one day be special—  
aren't we born every day?  
(and the answer came  
as I looked outside:)  
Wind in one tree  
the others still.**

**23 September 2019**

=====

**Conscientiously filling the alphabet  
with words—  
always more to be made.  
And not just by drug companies  
greedy for trade-marks.  
We all need them, borrow  
from Turkish or Welsh,  
till the page is filled neatly  
with words you don't understand  
or nobody does— then, then  
you will have done. The word-work  
summons! The alphabet is calling you!**

**23 September 2019**

=====

**One word at a time  
and wait. Waiting  
is good for the vocabulary.  
Tile-mongering in the Strand—  
who knew? A strip  
of porcelain says I-love-you.**

**23 September 2019**

**THE ADVICE**

**Do a little bit of work  
for Christ's sake  
before you wake.**

**23 September 2019**

**MERRY-GO-ROUND**

**By noon today  
Uranus will have finished  
his work with me,  
his day done.  
What will I do while he turns round  
and comes again?  
Astrology a carousel,  
the horses high and low,  
the Sun a brass ring?  
No, the sun is the star Calliope  
that makes the whole circus run.**

**24 September 2019**



=====

**Slowly hair grows back  
trees fade down,  
the sky cools.**

**Why do we suppose  
we really know anything?  
It changes and we sleep.**

**24 September 2019**

**= = = = =**

**Unaccountably glad,  
another day  
to say the truth!**

**24 September 2019**

=====

Going into the mountains  
to hunt for there.  
People do that—  
they use up where they are  
until no more here is left.  
Then the car comes out,  
camera, camping gear, compass,  
star map, keg of beer.  
Why is it always hiding up there,  
so far away, so high to climb?  
No wonder I fell in love with the sea.

24 September 2019

=====

**The car gets bigger  
as it comes down the road  
until it's so big  
it's only car and no road.  
Then the car has to stop—  
it has chosen being over going—  
or so it thought.  
But there is no being but to go.  
And now the car is just a ;ifeless thing.**

**24 September 2019**

=====

**I want to hear the hum in your head  
touch you where you touch yourself  
wear the skin that you put on  
when you wake from the long sleep  
of being anybody else.**

**25 September 2019**

**54 DEGREES FAHRENHEITAT 42 DEGREES  
NORTH LATITUDE**

**There should be a poem  
—ode or hymn or threnody or rant—  
for every degree Fahrenheit  
at every degree of latitude.  
What else do we have to celebrate  
left silent [?] by our sciences and poetry?**

**So here goes:  
the window shines,  
the sun is open,  
if it were 20 higher  
we'd still be OK.  
20 lower and we'd shiver.  
So we're OK.  
But that's just us,  
the blathering bores of the planet,  
people, always on about ourselves,  
measuring everything  
by what it does for us.  
To us.**

What about  
the depth [?] in itself  
and what it does for roses  
of Sharon or otherwise,  
trout streams, eagles  
scouring the topography for food?  
What is this precise, cool, lovely, lucid,  
thingless thing that whelms around us  
so quiet and \_\_\_?  
But before I can find an answer  
or wake one up,  
it's slipped away and in saunters 55 degrees.

25 September 2019

=====

**As a meaning a wound  
something twisyed round  
the feeling of being—**

*omnia signa sunt*  
**all things are signs**

**we bear the meanings  
sometimes in the bone  
and the skin speaks.**

**25 / 26 September 2019**



=====

**Welcome rubber band  
holds music together  
fingertip by fingertip  
the human harp?**

*Your thought too often runs  
and ends at the body  
it said in the sky  
when I dared to look up  
seeking yet another skin—*

**it's always saying something  
up there, but I answered  
Where else is there to go?**

*Turn round, it said,  
close your eyes and see.*

**25 / 26 September 2019**

**MYSTICAL**

**Mystical as a carpenter  
with claw-hammer in hand,  
as a Styrofoam panel  
aquawaking in your fingertips,  
as a stopped clock.**

**Mystical as a door  
off its hinges, lying flat  
in a field, mystical  
as The dirt beneath it,  
memory of grass.**

**25 / 26 September 2019**

=====

Even the silent things  
have lots to say.  
Stand on the pier and lisyen—  
it's not all gulls and winches,  
winds and diesel throbbing.  
There's something else.  
something more. between  
the sounds you hear:  
every place on earth  
has its own distinctive silence  
whispering to you between.

25 / 26 September 2019

=====

**1.**

**The last time it was night  
and now the again  
happens and the bird.  
Things still sings summer  
out there in the other.**

**2.**

**I lost my way I thought,  
my animal asleep.  
Render me righteous, I prayed,  
or rigid, or make me a river  
let me flow your way or away  
through the pprincipled geology  
of everything we know.**

3.

Asking for it,  
always a way,  
sensuous confusions,  
maidens like catamounts,  
swains fluteless at bay.  
But when I looked  
up and around  
I was the only leaf on the tree.

4.

Pretty sky  
child of my eyes.  
I willk look at the lady  
long as she lets me.

26 September 2019

**AS IN A SONATA**

**As in a sonata  
the movements move  
to different rhythms  
different tunes  
but somehow all  
the themes torque  
together to seem  
one or be one. One  
house with its rooms.  
a view of the sky.**

**26 September 2019**

**LEAVE ALONE**

**Leave alone.  
A lark let  
sing high  
a dove down  
here. And you  
when you have  
spoken stay  
still, iy waits  
inside you.**

**26 September 2019**

== == == == ==

**Let the think sink in  
till the Chinese  
character of the day  
soaks its clarity  
into the soft paper.**

**You are the paper.  
They are the pen  
out there, the many,  
the many Wielders.  
God knows who is the ink  
that pools in you now.**

**27 September 2019**



=====

**Light in the cupboard  
clean cups  
hang from their hooks,  
brass holding china,  
everything small, near  
as a breeze  
in the kitchen window.  
The mugs mass below  
upside down.  
Spiritual hygiene.  
Smile, close the door,  
let it be dark,  
come away.**

**27 September 2019**

=====

**A little thing you do  
with your fingers  
called music.**

**27 September 2019**

=====

Ocelot  
is called that for his spots—  
*ocelli*, like eyes  
all over his trim fur.  
Why am I called human?  
Have I the earth in me,  
*humus*, the ground  
we walk on?  
I want to fly!

27 September 2019

== == == == ==

1.

Not more  
or some do?  
Delicate peony  
in rain  
sheltering ants.

2.

Car by,  
sound fade.  
What lasts  
lingers.  
Speak in circles  
never end.

3.

In peaceful clarity  
dream of a bone.  
Night has heaven  
hints to show.

4.

You too  
miraculous,  
two.

5.

The ocean  
is what is left  
and we are  
what's left of it.  
O tuneful  
chemistry.

6.

My humidity  
loves us both—  
is that enough  
music?

7.

Why can't they sleep  
and still be me?

8.

In school we learned  
to doubt  
what we are told.  
Then they let us  
go free  
to find  
what we believe.

9.

Only the numbers  
seemed to make sense.  
Always there  
if seldom right.

10.

A triangle  
left in the sky  
by dark bird  
passing.

11.

But who is the light?

12.

Walked into the web  
at midnight  
a strand of it  
strayed,  
poor spider's work undone.

13.

Time is there  
for more.

14.

Before dawn  
truth comes out,  
tests the air,  
shapes the day.  
Wake and watch!

15.

Things I say I said.  
So you.  
Always you.

16.

I mean what you hear  
gives meaning  
to what is said.  
Giving by taking  
in.

17.

And so faith  
begins anew,  
no altars  
no commandments,  
only you.

27 / 28 September 2019



=====

**A window needs a lot of looking out.  
The fox crossing the road needs to be seen.  
So many eyes to see with!  
I celebrate the Mass of Seeing Things,  
come pray with me  
for the blind and for the given light.**

**27 September 2019**

=====

**We are almost where we are  
already not soon enough.  
Fresh breeze in the window  
coaxing us along.  
Spirit is breath.**

**27 / 28 September 2019**

=====

**We can't say:**

**The sun lights up the world.**

**We can say:**

**We see better when the sun has risen.**

**Have we even yet begun to think?**

**27 / 28 September 2019**

=====

**Elegant opposites  
heron on a rock.  
(I thought of you  
so tender and so firm.)  
Loving the stream  
that passes it by,  
always ready though  
to fly away.**

**28 September 2019**

=====

**What happens in the dark?**

**A flower grows.**

**Nothing else.**

**We happen in light.**

**28 September 2019**

=====

**An English dream.  
Girl decoders  
spooking Nazi messages  
eighty years ago  
birds at my window  
snowy rooftops  
Gloucestershire.**

**28 September 2019**

## SOME PRACTICES OF FINNLAND'S SONS

Doubting but determined  
a sort of lost dream  
dragged through the day.  
Irritable was I in dream  
a-cause I couldn't find  
the door. I mean the book.,  
the book's the only  
door I know. And so.

2.

Fabulous everywhere—  
bell towers orgulous and loud,  
boulevards with pretty couples  
strolling nand in hand,  
parasols and beggarmen,  
preachers on apple crates  
but no book anywhere. I need.  
That is how you know  
it's me. I need.

3.

Or books there were  
but only wrong ones,  
wrong because they did not  
speak the words she needed.  
Yes, she needed too.,  
I don't know who she was  
or is but only that she needed  
a book I own but could not find.  
The allegory is obvious.  
The heart cant find the mind.

4.

Now and then the world  
plays hard to get.  
We are adolescents still,  
this earth and people,  
finding our way, or not,  
or sitting at the edge  
like Kierkegaard or else  
whispering in each  
other's ears as we dance.



5.

Dithering mostly,  
 unique poetics  
 pf the hard-of-hearing.  
 her harp my tantrum,  
 but who was she?  
 It doesn't matter a bit  
 the song keeps saying.

6.

We kept looking for the book  
 but who were we? Ah,  
 that would be telling  
 and I was never told. Just look  
 look lookm find the blessèd book  
 and hop for the nest. *Dormir !*  
 the poet cried on the wooden hill  
 to Bedfordshire we used to say,  
 where hret-great-grandfather John  
 held the book in his hand  
 and brushed the Greek clean  
 with English breath.

7.

How does one know  
the things one knows?  
Have you ever had the feeling  
of a cobweb on your face?  
You walked through the wrong door  
came outside at the wrong time,  
you wrecked something small  
a small thing made and now  
you pay the price. And have you  
paid the price for where you are,  
paying the tuition for the afterlife?  
We Irish make a specialty of that.

8.

One island's as good as another  
they say and how wrong they are!  
True, the sea scours them all  
but the secret rock within  
hums heaven hymns on some  
but mutes in others. Follow  
the birds – they know all too well  
the coasts that are quietest.

9.

Write backwards like the Talmud tells  
so ordinary devils can't decipher.  
And later even I can't find the book—  
I goit irritable, I whined,  
I shoved other books arund  
in search of that elusive text.  
Elusive. Elysian. Atlantean. Gone.  
I just wanted to lend it to a friend.  
But friends are dangerous in dreams.

10.

Whenevr you read a book  
it leaves a wake behind.  
Sometimes fgrom the island shore  
ypu can see it still  
slow-dispersing on bay or channel.  
When it's gone the bok  
is all in you now, trapped  
in your imagination, eber changing,  
and where the deuce is it now?  
(Double-talk is a Gaelic guile.)

11.

English or Irish  
am I my DNA?  
Is today still  
yesterday?

12,

I wait by the river  
that flows both ways,  
watch the light watering the trees.  
The woods are good for breathing,  
wood itself a kind of breath  
long held in rapture.

13.

I try. I breathe  
the sky in,  
I pry a vowel  
out of a word,  
the shell of its consonants  
clink-clatters to the floor.

**Now I dare  
to breathe  
the vowel in—  
sweet sin!**

**14.  
Now everything sleeps  
with its oppsite in its arms.**

**29 September 2019**

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**Breathe me, window!  
Wait for me, door.  
Love me, dear world—  
in language I am  
and am a frightened child.**

**29 September 2019**

=====

I dreamed a bottle of blue ink,  
then poured the last violet  
into the black—the color  
makes the darkness flow.  
But something's lost—  
the purity. And something's  
found: the sad beauty  
of the end of things, the empty  
bottle still wet with what it was.

29 September 2019

=====

**Everything dreams me ahead.  
But where is the mountain going?  
And where do ladders  
climb to in the dark?  
Do you have words? Write,  
write the dawn down  
all the way up if it lets you.  
Suddenly the sunray  
tips the top of the tallest tulip tree—  
Yes, it sats, yes, yes, yes.**

**29 September 2019**



**ANSWER ME KINDLY**

**if you will,  
the light is going  
to happen soon  
and then where  
will all the children be  
roots in swamp water  
eyes in the trees  
and books in their hands!**

**Because the morning  
is naked like that,  
and all the things we mean,  
all the things we spent  
our whole lives meaning,  
meaning and wanting,  
all of them are here,  
walking around  
picking shadows off the ground  
trying to whistle a tune  
we gave them we barely remember.**

**30 September 2019**

=====

**Business is the last frontier  
and we are outlaws on it,  
reluctant to invest or insure,  
working for a living just like  
our immigrant ancestors  
every one of them a poet,  
painter, sculptor, musician  
or priestess of aphrodite.  
Our checks come from tired  
businessmen  
but we really work for the sky.**

**30 September 2019**

=====

**If you want to learn  
how to pronounce Irish  
listen to a frog on a cold spring night,  
listen to a birch tree  
creaking in the wind,  
imitate a salmon splashing  
back into a stream, try  
to whistle hoarse as a blackbird,  
snuffle like a priest  
snuffling in a hurry through Mass,  
shout out the window  
at passing cars,  
lick your paws and try again.**

**30 September 2019**

=====

**The orchestra remembers me  
I used to play the bombardon  
they call it tuba here  
so I don't know the sound I  
made I miss it still.  
Can there be a music  
that fits me in, a song  
sustains me and doesn;t bore you?  
I obsess about the loss of melody  
when all I should do is sing to you.**

**30 September 2019**

=====

**Trace elements  
scarce in the day  
the oil of light  
easing the streets.**

**For I was lowland once  
on Gerritsen,  
walked the great pipe  
out into the sea.**

**Now only a taste  
of salt lingers in me  
but it makes me,  
makes me be me.**

**30 September 2019**

=====

**That one we saw  
walking on the sky—  
do we pray to her  
or just listen?**

**I stood in the grotto  
and still gasp for breath,  
a child amazed  
by the beautiful silence.**

**30 September 2019**

## LA MÉTHODE

**Write what you don't know—  
that is the only way  
to tell the whole truth.  
The language knows.**

**30 September 2019**