

3-2020

**mar2020**

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=====

**Blue. The agreement  
holds. Samphire  
by the Dorset coast  
he saw. Lightship  
in the Narrows.  
Snowdrops by the old brick wall,  
Blithewood garden.  
All the wild world at the doorsill,  
all we care about.  
And a car goes by.**

**1 March 2020**

=====

**Determined  
to be enough  
I waited.  
All a bird can do  
let alone a flower—  
lateral sunshine  
strict through trees  
means She's coming  
over the horizon,  
mother of all this,  
it is enough to be  
here when she comes.**

**1 March 2020**

=====

**I don't endure too well  
being just by myself—  
that hated neighborhood  
where all the news is old.**

**1 March 2020**

## IN THE BEGINNING

\  
.

By now the Child  
has put the crayons  
back in the box  
and saunters back to sleep.  
The day is complete.  
Yes, it is a pilgrimage,  
to *sainte terre*, the holy land  
wherever the Child chooses,  
supposes, that to be.  
*Everything we want is holy!*  
the Child thinks, sacred  
by dint of wanting it,  
sacred by being far.

2.

Once or twice I found  
a bit of crayon on the ground,  
picked it up, drew a bird on the sky,

**dropped the color,  
frightened of my magic.  
The things we do!  
And where the bird is now  
you know better than I do.**

**3.  
Even so, it;s worth beginning.  
It;s just a catnap  
the Child is taking,  
*wake soon and resume*  
it claims above the threshold  
of the Somnium--  
can you tell the difference  
between sleep and dream?**

**4.  
Now the Child's awake again  
the irresistible evidence  
sprawled on all sides.  
Delicately the engine shudders on.**

**For the Child this is all  
one big picture book, understand--  
no matter how long we live  
we are rich with the insights  
woke us when we were young,  
the things we knew know us still,  
die young, die old, the wisdom  
is complete. I wonder  
if the Child knows what already.  
Eagerly turns the pages of the book.**

**5.**

**The Child sees a drawing  
old Goethe with his million pages,  
young John Keats with his scattered few.  
The Child smiles and understands:  
we all die at exactly the same age:  
the minute that our work is done.  
Out come the crayons  
and the sky turns blue.**

**1 March 2020**

***AIUTO, AIUTO!***

**sings Scarpia stabbed  
to death by Tosca,  
be careful who you fall  
in love with,  
it's too late to call for help,  
help then , love  
is all about falling,  
falling for and falling out  
and just falling, falling,  
like Tosca later in the play,  
off the wall of the castle,  
and that too had something  
to say about love.**

**1 March 2020**



=====

**A stone fell  
from the sky  
and it was me.**

**I lie here still  
dreaming clearly  
my responsibilities**

***Respond, respond*  
os what I hear,  
all I ever hear.**

**2 March 2020**

**S= = = = =**

**I try to keep my promises  
but glass has a will of its own,  
a tension, that]s all it is,  
light held in tension  
and then a word is spoken,  
the tension eases, the pieces fall.  
Religion cracks, the old gods  
tumble out of new churches,  
everhything is the same  
with different names—  
is that what you mean?  
I wouldn't dare. Meaning  
is not something we  
are allowed to have, meaning  
wanders off through the treest,  
more like a fox than a thesis.  
We wake hungry, remembering  
that meaning has soft lips.**

**2.**

**They have forgotten all that,  
the theologians with their neat  
distinctions,, they should linger  
longer in dreams, listen to Mahler,  
neglect assertion, impose  
a little Len on their quarrels,  
they should try to remember virginity,  
how god happened in them then,  
happens in them now, Amen.**

**2 March 2020**

=====

**The wolf has come to the center of the world.**

**A spring.  
He licks gently  
at the mossy cleft  
the wter bubbles from.**

**It tastes so good,  
he didn't know he was thirsty,  
tastes so good  
he drinks a mouthful more  
and falls asleep.**

**Sleep is not an easy school to learn,  
he has always had trouble with his lessons.  
But now how.  
He wakes refreshed  
and knows something is changed.  
Licks again at the spring.  
still tastes good but he's**

**not thirsty anymore.  
He is awake now.  
And when the time comes  
he will sleep.  
That is what it means  
to be at the center of the world.  
  
To drink from that spring.**

**2 March 2020**

=====

**Her thought was strong enough,  
long enough,  
to slip like fingers  
between layers of bedrock  
so a little long-trapped water  
would seep out.  
In the night it froze,  
icy tresses drifting down the cliff  
The cleft.**

**Her thought  
was hungry enough and strong enough  
to drink that water when by morning  
it had come back to itself again,  
and all the years it slept inside the rock  
could be her dream now,  
slightly acid on the tongue, no more  
than the thought of a lemon,  
not even that.**

**Her thought was strong  
enough to drink what came from time  
and turn it all inside herself,**

gently as her own hand caressing  
casually the soft hollow of the knee,

everything became oart of her—  
that's what happens when you open the rock.  
When your thought is long  
and slips between things,  
touching but not changing much,  
No more than the moon changes the  
mountain—  
but it does, a little, doesn't it?  
Everything changes—she whispered  
that to the quiet rock she had opened..

2 March 2020

=====

**As long as the light is there  
(I hear the light, it sounds  
like the autobiography of a piano)  
no, the light is grey,  
warm for March, a variation  
on the *Dies Irae*. What gender  
does that make the day?  
And this sky above me,  
whose house is that through which  
she comes through to give us light?  
*I would be nothing without you.***

**3 March 2020**



**FOX**

**The fox walks cautiously  
we call it stealthily  
but what do we really know**

**walks through the world we have made  
all around it, the fox  
moves through this 3D movie  
*Human Life on Earth*  
and does the best it can.**

**Its job is to eat food and make more foxes  
and feed them too.**

**It does its job with energy and intelligence—  
even we notice that foxes are smart  
though we use unpleasant words to say so—  
cunning,, sly, sneaky, foxy—  
but they find their food.**

**For some of us, it's a blessing  
to see one of them in the woods  
or trotting across the meadow**

or even, once, teaching its little  
fox cubs how to jump  
straight up into the air,  
on the lawn over the river,  
nobody nearby but me.

Some people don't like them,  
trap them, shoot them even,  
or at least string wire fences  
to keep their intelligence away.

The fox observes all this,  
understands it, they ate smart,  
des o what it can  
yo avoid our baleful attitudes.  
dodge our gunshots,  
keep their little sideways world intact.

But foxes too would like to be loved,  
we're all like that, hungry  
for something we can't name  
or are afraid to name,  
afraid to want so much

**it hurts even more not to have it.**

**Even the fox some nights  
creeps out of the suburban woods  
into our deserted parks,  
hops up onto an empty picnic table,  
stretches out there, dozes,  
wishes someone would come along,  
someone who cared, who could admire,  
someone who could stroke so gently  
that glowing red fur, that amazing tail.**

**3 March 2020**

## LION

The lion shivers,  
laxes, flanks  
smooth out again.

The golden  
eyes almost angry  
open.

*Why am I awake?*

We seem  
to each other  
in a kind dream

but not sleep

Who will I take  
into my body today?  
Shelter  
their little lives  
in my great roar,  
their bones

**in my bones,**

**I will chase them  
by the shore  
until they have no choice  
but sea or me**

**I think I am the sea  
the golden wave  
the whole sea  
I carry deep inland**

**as I will carry that lucky beast  
I catch up with and consume--**

**how safe he'll always be  
in me!**

**I have room for all their lives in me.**

**4 March 2020**

=====

**Can you recall  
the last day  
you could go swimming?  
There, that's what I mean,  
that's what winter means—  
they say it was so mild  
but I froze in October.  
I write with an icicle  
dipped in dwindling hope.**

**4 March 2020**

## **HORSE**

**Horses think of themselves  
as very small.**

**They measure themselves against the sky.  
So they're always surprised  
when a human hops on their back,  
a big tall human with eyes!**

**Even a slender young woman  
with hands on the reins—  
their outside-the-body nervous system—**

**how did we ever get those  
the horse thinks.**

**A horse  
because it is always so little,  
so young, tries always  
to do what it's told—**

**I think that horses think  
they are our children—  
*why else would they sit on us,  
ride us around,  
make us race against each other?  
Why? Why?  
We were so happy alone with the sky.***

**4 March 2020**



**CAT**

**He said:**

**there are already too many cats in the  
discussion**

**leave some out**

**there is a price to be paid  
every time a living creature is removed from  
the discussion**

**banished**

**what is the porice?**

**something a little like a cat**

**a cat in fact**

**one goes out another comes in**

wouldn't you?

wouldn't I what?

sneak into a place  
a space where you are noit wanted,

all the great lovers did that,  
Lancelot by her tower,

who is that knocking on my door  
she cried

who indeed

it is I, the cat,  
he answered in his deep voice

you are no cat i know

I am the cat that no one knows  
thart's why you love me.  
so you see the discyussion

always sucks the cat back in,  
like a highway goibg nowhere  
but with such shiny cars on it  
purring in sunlight north  
or east

to meet somebody  
but will she be there  
she always is, that cat.

But you have told me  
Nothing about the animal itself

What mmakes you think it has a self

It is only your own idea  
with soft fur all over it.

4 March 2020

=====

1.

it would come towards me  
palm fronds and schoolboy poems  
seacoasts of all the Bohemias,  
just start shuffling along  
it's bound to see you coming,  
bound to come to meet you,  
there, at the midpoint of the world.

2.

You're there now,  
relaxed, stretched out  
on a cliché, trying  
not to think. Is it real,  
this place after all?  
Or is it a place?  
Get up and keep going.  
It's bound to be there.

**3.**

**The only place it can ever be  
is in front of you.**

**It's the word you don't know,  
the one burning your tongue to speak.**

**4.**

**You never read it in a book.**

***I'm waiting for you***

***on the next page***

**she always said,**

**you turned eagerly**

**but true to her calling**

**she was always a page ahead,**

**you never found her,**

**you're still turning,**

**sometimes you just close your**

**eyes and flip the book inside.**

5.

**Moth flutters at the LED  
the ancient world  
comes home.**

**This is a thinly disguised  
clue for going on.**

**You are a cruise-ship in the desert  
packed with identities,  
you call the rising sun your sea,  
sunset your sister  
and then you try to sleep.**

**Those things up there are stars--  
each one is the word you're looking for.**

**5 March 2020**

=====

**Sometimes it's not  
the heart we need  
but the hand.  
the quiet skin,  
the fond in fondle.**

**5.III.20**

=====

**Not being sure  
what the other one is  
wait at the gate**

**Gaze at the space  
between the posts—  
that's where the other  
one will appear**

**framed by your expectations  
framed by your stare.  
Make it appear.  
That's what gates are for.**

**5 March 2020**



**= == =**

**The maiden led the merchant  
up the long stairs to her room,  
Buy Me she said I;be your mother,  
money always needs a mother,  
do it. The merchant had camels,  
barrels of salt, no gold in his pocket,  
what can I buy you with?  
Just say the word and I am yours.  
From that day on the merchant  
always did what he was told.**

**6.III.20**

**THE SHIP**

lay empty at her dock  
one whole year. rime froze  
on its hawsers, melted in spring,  
by August a hot smell came off it  
that people passing would notice,  
hot but not evil. By October  
people dared to creep aboard,  
cabins empty, hold empty,  
the bridge in shambles  
as if the crew had mutinied  
not against the captain but  
against geography itself.  
No binnacle. No wheel. No chart.  
And the big windows smeared with paint--  
*the ocean is real enough*  
*but people only, imagine it*  
one scrawl said, and another  
said simply *Stay hom and be wise.*  
The ship is still there. Seagulls  
like it but people look the other way.

6 March 2020

== == == == ==

**It could even be tonight.  
The rule in the riule book,  
the bat in the linden tree.  
These things happen, same  
way you got here, or me.  
At any moment, any thing.  
Because we don't ourselves  
know the structure of the game.  
Let alone who plays it.  
With us. Inside us. My very  
doubt is part of the play.**

**6 March 2020**

=====

**With closed eyes I see  
the white cliffs of Gayhead  
on the Vineyard—no wonder  
colonists called it Dover.  
The mind when the eyes are closed  
is like a telescope  
held by the heart  
to see again what has been seen.  
*The oure white of the dark inside,*  
see the cliffs clearly, hear  
the waves mumble on the island rock—  
the mind hears too,  
if only it had hands.**

**6 March 2020**

=====

**Sleeping to Mahler,  
Mahler's Goethe,  
*all things that go away  
are only symbols*  
and I was gone.**

**6.III.20**

=====

**Preposterous antecedents  
and yet here we are,  
dry between the toes even,  
speaking island language  
on this strange continent,**

**kids on a rock  
a raft  
burning our skins on politics.  
the drekh we should have left behind,  
no one should rule us!  
Be birds!**

**6.III.20**

=====

**When you dream  
of talking politics  
it is a relief to wake  
into ancient weather,  
the same sun! The beautiful  
scrappy lawn all winter wan,  
the phone lines legal through the trees.**

**6.III.20**

=====

*for C*

**The lights came on  
when you came home.  
They must have read  
my mind. I mean my heart.**

**6 March 2020**



=====

**1.**  
**The responsibility**  
**is afternoon.**  
**when the light**  
**seems mutinous**  
**but we rightly**  
**blame only ourselves.**

**2.**  
**the trees so numerous**  
**young and talkative**  
**tell all they have learned**  
**all winter watching**  
**feeling waiting and now are**  
**ready, so ready, to declare.**  
**It is them I hear.**

**3.**

**That doesn't say it right,**

**Sounds cutesy, easy.**

**I mean the trees are people**

**Ad they talk, and I can hear them**

**As I pass by. You can too.**

**Just listen. That's**

**What I'm trying to say: just listen.**

**6 March 2020**

## **A FIELD OF LUNES**

**Open the door wide  
see the bears  
dancing in mid-air.**

**\***

**If you can't see them  
look again  
they might be beavers**

**\***

**hear the waterfall now?  
They live close  
build their lodge from light**

**\***

**keep your heart safe home  
when you look,  
out is full of brides**

**\***

**don't marry what you see  
or else do,  
call me to the feast.**

**\*/**

**Some real animals  
no names please,  
their dance will explain**

**\***

**bird on an oak branch?  
don't need doors  
to let you see that**

**\***

**stop imagining  
make it up  
from what you found there**

**\***

**I thought you said bears  
or beavers—  
you must have dreamt me**

**\***

**all the beasts are safe  
in poems  
those small city zoos**

**\***

**beavers survive on  
coats of arms  
or old turns of phrase**

\*

**can a word stand all  
by itself  
and hold up the sky?**

**8 March 2020**

=====

**The virtuous blacksmith  
lets his Sunday fire go out,  
his anvil cold.**

**The horses are all at prayer  
— the meadow,  
white-fenced by rich men's houses,**

**all of them from far away.  
Like the horses.  
Only the blacksmith is native.**

**Only a native has hands.**

**8 March 2020**

## **LOVE LUNES**

**Know the thrill you touch  
can give to  
accidental hands**

**\***

**(Don't know how to tell  
you who I  
think you really are)**

**\***

**Open the rock he said  
I am there—  
I am your hands too**

**8 March 2020**



## DAWN LUNES

**Venison version  
horizon  
with a herd of deer**

\*

**Called back to pillow—  
never wake  
longer than you must**

\*

**Sun in empty trees  
coaxing spring's  
eternal answer**

\*

**Have I words enough  
to answer  
all our silences?**

\*

**Sometimes to lie low  
goes further—  
shadow at sunrise**

\*

**You can see how hard  
I find it  
to stop making sense**

\*

**So much to worry!  
and only  
me to do it right**

**9 March 2020**

## PHARAONIC

**Carriers hurry up the slope  
toting cubes for pyramids—  
geometry was our first mistake—  
but at least they get to hear  
ibises chatter on the canal.  
The foreman yawns  
and shows his brilliant teeth.**

**9 March 2020**

=====

**I told you something in the night,  
and wonder did you hear me?  
I used plain English words  
but didn't actually say them,  
just thought them very clear,  
close, into your hair, close  
to your ear, clear as I could  
then said them again urgently  
no louder than before.**

**9 March 2020**

**LOVE LUNES**

**Know the thrill you touch  
can give to  
accidental hands**

**\***

**(Don't know how to tell  
you who I  
think you really are)**

**\***

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I am there—  
I am your hands too**

**8 March 2020**

**DAWN LUNES**

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\*

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I find it  
to stop making sense**

\*

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and only  
me to do it right**

**9 March 2020**

== == == == ==

**A birthday is a barn  
with all sorts of lovely  
beasts inside steeds tu ride,  
kine to nourish with sweet milk,  
mice to keep you on your toes,  
fowl to flutter round your hair,  
the air you breathe, fresh  
from their breaths, you come  
into the richness of their gift,  
and in the big bright doorway  
all kinds of us are waiting for you too.**

**10 March 2020**



=====

**One day a shark  
swallowed the whole sea.  
From this mistake  
a planet was born  
we live on still.**

**10 March 2020**

=====

**Come closer  
it means you now,  
  
this word waiting  
just before you woke.  
  
Waking is forgetting.**

**10 March 2020**

## LUNES IN THE DARK

**Play music gently—  
that ancient  
replacement for now.**

\*

**Back to my pillow  
keep the dream  
safe inside my sleep.**

\*

**The opening door  
an angel  
of maybe, maybe.**

\*

**Close enough to taste  
your name on  
the tip of the tongue**

\*

**You are the fullest  
cup of all—  
you hold everything.**

\*

**The grass in the yard  
is dreaming,  
the sky is asleep.**

\*

**The end of the line  
where the fun  
starts over again.**

**10 March 2020**

**LUNES *AUX LECTEURS***

**I listen as long  
as I can—  
then it's up to you.**

**\***

**a hundred thousand  
yesses and  
one diamond-hard no.**

**\***

**in the night place you  
keep going  
further than the stars**

\*

**all language becomes  
a love song  
if you just let it.**

\*

**Dawn keeps company  
with the dark—  
we make our own light.**

\*

**there'll be time for this  
tomorrow,  
we'll lie and name Now.**

**10 March 2020**

**LOVE SONG**

**Me big, you little—  
I held you  
safe in just one hand.**

**But you had to be  
a small bird  
to fit this picture**

**do you know which kind?  
or am I  
still telling you lies?**

**10 March 2020**

== == == ==

**Peel the shadow  
off the desk,  
soak it in  
a little glass—  
don't drink.**

**Dip a feather in it  
and paint a simple  
word with it  
and all your life  
obey that brilliant word.**

**10 March 2020**



## LUNES AT DAYBREAK

Prayer's a good way to  
start the day,  
knowing the unknown.

\*

Fox yelp in the trees—  
I'd know that  
girl anywhere asleep.

10 March 2020

## LATE LUNES

Circumference cloud  
my gray hair  
Spring wind in my face

\*

A game that plays all  
by itself  
I watch the trees pass

\*

I wait in the car  
while you shop  
the road hurries past

\*

Girls go in the store  
Boys come out  
O dangerous doors!

\*

**Hyperboloid: Shape  
of women.  
Eternal chalice.**

**10 March 2020**  
*End of NB 430*

## **LUNE AT MATINS**

**Now more than ever  
each sunrise  
says its prayers in me.**

**11 March 2020**

== == == == ==

**Everything gets lost enough  
all by itself  
then our vocation calls  
us to find it.  
We find what we never lost.  
So the sun rises.**

**11 March 2020**

## LINGUAL LUNE

**Let your face relax—  
your lips form  
words all by themselves.**

**11 March 2020**

=====

**The same sky!**

**I am consoled  
through my window**

**glass never lies.**

**12 March 2020**

=====

I don't want to think  
what I'm thinking about  
so I'll think about you.

You're wearing brown  
and walking on a hill,  
not up, not down,  
along the swerve of it  
you move.

Seeing you  
helps me forget.  
You look like you're looking  
for something, stones or flowers  
signs of wildlife,

signs. I wonder  
what's on your mind  
but don't want to know.  
Enough to watch you



**going slowly, pausing  
now and then.**

**I can't see  
who you actually are,  
forgive me, hope it doesn't  
really matter. You save me  
from myself, dear friend.**

**12 March 2020**

=====

**Day, dark day,  
what do you have to say  
to us all ill at ease  
in sickness season,  
9 AM and grey as dusk,  
you must have something  
on my mind  
I wake to know.**

**13 March 2020**

=====

**Young men playing in the jungle  
pretending to be jaguars,  
chasing each other by the river  
pouncing on shadows,  
shouting songs in a language  
they just made up—  
watch them, hold them in mind.**

**13 March 2020**

=====

***Glamour*: a property  
of flowers  
and certain animals  
in the middle distance,  
lustrous, unafraid.**

**13 March 2020**

=====

***Skill*, the bones  
of knowing  
even if not why.**

**13 March 2020**

=====

**This  
is what I am  
supposed to do.  
Or do I mean be.**

**13 March 2020**

=====

**Suddenly everything  
is an island  
we're on, not  
tropical, not arctic,  
not far out to sea.**

**13 March 2020**

=====

Your *sous*  
will find the mind

my little coins  
he meant,  
my own two cents

a bottle labeled  
*from the dead*  
drink this  
he said  
and find right now—

accept your holy past  
and everyone's  
and you will suddenly  
be your actual self.

14 March 2020



=====

**I wrote I thought  
a page but all  
the words in it  
have gone back  
to sleep in me,  
maybe they  
will wake me too.**

**14 March 2020**

=====

**Be warm  
be over winter,  
beavers  
pray that too,  
their work to do,  
join our voices,  
let the tre frogs sing.**

**14 March 2020**

## **MONEY**

**the merry  
motive of our gloom,  
agglomerates of wedding bells,  
magic spells,  
abbreviated symphonies.  
Look out the door before!  
the manipulated water  
washes up to your sill.**

**14 March 2020**

=====

**I don't know  
what it means—  
isn't hearing  
it enough  
like music  
like it or not?**

**14 March 2020**

**EXTRALINEAR TO A POEM CAME IN THE MAIL**

***Alyssum*, we need that  
in our crazy time,  
it heals or holds off madness  
as its name implies.**

**I wonder if a girl named Alyssa  
saves her lover, saves her lovers  
from that *divine madness* some  
Frenchman calls love,  
or whether she lets them suffer  
but holds herself immune,  
safe and beautiful, a bright  
flower on a rocky mountainside.**

**\***

**When I say you  
I don't really know  
who you are or who**

**I am, we are mysteries  
at least to me, who dare  
to say our name, *you*,  
*I*, holy names I think  
but can't say why.  
Can I touch you  
the way you touch yourself?  
I mean can I know you  
the way you know you?**

**\***

**I reach through the rock of words  
to find the cloth at least  
that guards the skin.  
*The one who is within.*  
My hands hurt with having.  
Not having.**

**(14 March 2020)**

## TESTIMONY

**The anonymous answer  
loves us best.**

**Beethoven-era, coda,  
resonant final thrum—  
do you believe me, Sanhedrin?**

**I have testified all my life  
street after street  
this ancient rock.**

**You holy fellows sitting on a bench  
deciding and deciding  
while I wander dusty-toed  
all day and most nights researching  
where the wild words  
are going now, go next  
so fast—do you believe me?**

**15 March 2020**

=====

**They say a seal at Saugerties  
basking on the lighthouse rock  
a harbor seal they say they saw--  
the sea is coming back!  
The Hudson fjord renews  
its marriage to the sea, the sea  
comes closer, comes  
to me! I want my sea,  
I am all of islands made,  
feel no comfort far from waves,  
my sea comes back to me!  
Remember once in Galway  
how a seal came right up  
and greeted us explicit in the bay,  
that's how I knew I must be near home,  
now home has come up the river  
to bring me to myself.**

**15 March 2020**



=====

**Far away as you all are  
I want to know what your husband  
ate for supper, what  
your wife saw in the parking lot.  
what you thought about  
between movements of the concerto  
(Bruch, violin) on the radio last night.  
If I can't learn these things  
I'll never know who I am.**

**15 March 2020**

=====

**The lead jumped out of the pencil  
hurried into the ice rings of Saturn  
to learn from what he is waiting for**

**came back and tried  
to write me warm again  
Write your way to the sun  
I write your way to heat  
Write your way to everyone.**

**15 March 2020**

## LIMINALMLUNES

**Words lost in thinking  
hawk flies by  
makes it feel better**

\*

**Pounce on the moment  
go ahead,  
be a beast for once**

\*

**When days grow longer  
nights do too—  
when can the mind sleep?**

**16 March 2020**

=====

**Try to find a picture  
of the other side—  
a train along the river,  
castle on a hill,  
a raft with building stones  
tugged north.  
Close to shore only water,  
water subtly moving,  
a duck settles, paddles, flies away,  
only water moving slow,  
water. This is what is ours.**

**16 March 2020**

=====

**O let all my times be *now* in me again.**

**Find a face  
to put the dream on,**

**find a landing slip  
to moor the meaning—  
the sea means so much!**

**Moths and chandeliers,  
waves and the rocky shore**

**the dream tells everything.**

**17 March 2020**

=====

**Sand in your slippers  
where have you been?**

**There is always another door  
up to you to open it  
Open by waiting  
open by hope alone,  
that cosmic maybe—**

**I too am waiting for.**

**2.**

**Who would have said this before?  
Frightened Poe, luminous Coleridge?  
I follow a furrow  
in an earth I made  
but was I me when I made it?**

**17 March 2020**

=====

**Hard times, these.  
The grey sky  
perhaps too patient.**

**In epidemic time  
fear rules the mind.  
Is it a good guide?**

**How much time  
will it take to tell?**

**17 March 2020**

=====

Once when I was little  
most cars were black.  
Now most are white  
or light grey—  
what am I to make of that?  
Are they trying to be  
invisible on pale roads?  
or birds in some sky?  
Color changes everything.

17 March 2020



## LOVE IN A FRIGHTENED TIME

Touch far friends  
by sheer knowing  
think them hard  
safe from afar.

Make new friends  
by finding *images*  
then much later  
when this is over  
hold them firmly  
in mind, find  
their originals outside.

*(Versions of a dream that woke me this  
morning in a time of social distancing.)*

18 March 2020

=====

**Look for the link  
night sound  
purl of the stream  
across the road  
passing, growl  
of the freight train  
over in Ulster  
along the quiet river,  
no birds to blame  
but bad dreams do  
trouble the breath.  
silenced by a touch  
where do they go?  
where are sounds stored?  
look to the link,  
don't use bad words—  
figure out if any words  
could be bad and why.  
The link is already in your hands.**

**18 March 2020**

=====

Reach as far  
as go will go.  
Wait there  
for me,  
have horses ready  
I do not ride,  
I will walk  
alongside you  
all the way  
and when the mountain  
comes closer  
it will walk with us  
so far, so far  
we're almost there,  
lift the latch  
and lead us in,  
horses and hill and sun  
in with me,  
please let me in,  
please let me in.

18 March 2020

**A RECORD OF IT**

whatever it is  
voice of Caruso  
in 1902, child  
in the street  
with his toy drum  
where is your mother?  
*Serioso.* You ask that  
of everyone and each thing.  
dpm't be silly,  
or are you just eager,  
am I your brother?  
You never can tell.  
*Love forbids you  
not to love me*  
he sang, what is this  
*anima* beyond animal  
who lets or not lets us  
depending on the music?

**18 March 2020**

## PHOTO

Woman on a mountain ridge,  
rim of a glacial lake.  
It is cold, she's warm  
wrapped snug  
in wool, blacker  
than the volcanic rock  
all round. mountains  
under the vast  
cloud-congressed sky.

Look close. Her eyes  
are skies too. They see  
us, they let us walk  
under their clouds,  
their brightness.

Look closer—see us  
inside her, room  
for all of us there,  
she holds us in mind.

Maybe this rock  
was a volcano once,  
burnt out, water came  
from earth and sky  
to fill its crater, old  
Greek word for cup  
or chalice. The water  
remembers fire  
the way night remembers  
the day. The way  
she remembers us.

But she is smiling, her lips  
pursed a little as if  
she were about to laugh.  
Or just giggle at the silly  
camera that sees only  
the skin of what it sees

18 March 2020

## **FESTA DI SAN GIUSEPPE**

**Things catch hold  
or take the mind  
that desert citadel**

**rock above the plain.  
Saint Joseph's Day  
so we know who we must be.  
It comes to us  
to be again  
and be only for others.  
How hard that is,  
rock in the desert  
when everything else is flat.**

**2.  
You'll look in some book  
and tell me it's just a Spring Feast  
special to the Italians,  
the way Patrick was to us**

when I was us. Or Easter  
for everyone, Passover,  
daffodils, asphodels.  
But this day is different:  
to be for the other  
the way spring is for the world.

3.  
Not sure you like  
my explanation.  
And it is mine,  
like any real mistake.

4.  
Raining now a little  
not so cold  
the roadway glistens.  
Nothing moving.  
It's all a huge answer.



5.  
Go to Joseph  
the Pope said.  
Not the Joseph of Genesis.  
that tormented tricky man,  
but the carpenter,  
the not-so-simple man,  
the seeming father  
of the One we need to be.  
Not a simple man either--  
like any father  
living for the other.

6.  
I write about him every year  
and try to understand.  
The *festa* at the parish church,  
the Calabrian trombones,  
the silence of the man himself.  
his patience at the margin,  
and never know what comes later.  
Go to Joseph to understand

**what it means to live  
in someone else's story  
and be your truest self,  
silence of flowers growing on the hill.**

**19 March 2020**

====

**Can you hear the stream  
hurrying northwest,  
can you hear the rain,  
the old house creak its bones,  
the air pass the window,  
can you hear the streetlight  
glisten on the wet road?  
Night asks so much of us.  
I sit at my desk in the dark  
and try to answer.  
But there are no colors in the dark.**

**19 March 2020**

**[A VOROSEK SYMPHONY]**

**Sometimes an orchestra  
wants to march across the border  
guns and drums  
hard to tell apart.  
Conqueror music,  
Caesar in brass,  
no glade safe from that cry.  
*My mind is coming at you  
you have nowhere to hide.***

**19 March 2020**

=====

**Outside it seems  
to be falling apart  
but my world  
stays what I can say.**

**19 March 2020**

=====

**The evidence accumulates:  
this is now,**

**the actual after all—**

**measure by daylight,  
rip the slipcovers off.**

**19 March 2020**

== ==

**Wait for the water  
the sky holds  
that other air  
it breathes us to live**

**o beast of me  
my parapet heart  
surveying so many distances**

**mountains of ocean  
Andes of pure air**

**20 March 2020**

=====

learn how to do things  
then come back  
as rain

grey sky  
her almost eye.

20 March 2020



====

**Time  
is to be  
another place**

**feel of water  
even if.**

**20 March 2020**

## **NURSERY RHYME**

**No more pudding,  
no more pie.  
I kissed the girl,  
she made me cry.**

**20 March 2020**

## DEAD ROSES

sounds like a sad piece  
by Sorabji or Scriabin  
but here they are  
vivid dark still dead  
but there is to them  
some kind of life,

it comes from seeing them:  
a life they bring  
into the room  
by shape and color  
(dark room on a spring da)  
and one more thing,  
the memory of when  
they were fresh and came  
first time to live with us

dead roses red roses  
welcome, not so sad  
you have been and you are.

**Now we have the task,  
sacred task, of living  
your life for you,  
meaning of roses,  
meaning of red.**

**20 March 2020**

**CAN WE EVER KNOW**

**can we ever even know?  
The sky takes  
so much away  
almost before we see.  
Or dare to look.  
I confess, I stood  
on the crowded balcony,  
a girl leaned over the rail  
ro smile and wave  
at a friend down there.  
And her body smiled at me—  
is that maybe the same  
as the sound of a cello  
from a house I pass at night,  
all the quick joys no one  
is entitled to, but there they are?  
I ask you because no one else  
can endure all my questions.  
Or do they give you pleasure too?**

**20 March 2020**

**CEREMONY**

**French press**

**colander**

**ballet**

**of what we learn to need**

**prancing**

**O whistle in my woods**

**almost see what I see**

**pour hot water in  
let old water out**

**thirteen dancers on the rim  
you never knew moonlight was so bright  
can almost see the things you see**

**many ways to hold a candle**

**cloud**

**Who wrote the music?  
Who put it in?**

**the mind an oven  
life is a kitchen**

**muffin tin  
the dictionary**

**words were pressed  
before we knew**

**we break our fast  
on what the night brought  
bought**

**commerce of dancers  
unveiled unstaged**

**their movements mean us**

**mean me**

**we belong to what we see**

**2.**

**This piece needs music  
wouldn't you say  
who will fetch it for me  
from what fountain poured  
mountain roared  
whistle in the woods?**

**O sound me please.**

**(In Zeffirelli's *Turandot* blue clumps of people stir, restless in semi-dark. It is the opposite of Puccini's music then, as if he tried at last to cure us of what we hear, the senses deny each other. Spare the light.)**



**3.**

**Thirteen dancers looking down at once  
at one**

**I never knew I could move  
moth-nimble from thing to thing,**

**am I a word?**

**In someone else's mouth?**

**Speak me, I pray.**

**The brew I am must be ready now.**

**4.**

**There are better ways  
to tell  
the age of a tree.**

**Guess**

**is best,**

**guess is mind-gauge**

**God's accurate machine.**

5.

Pour the coffee now at last—  
it's lingered till full strength  
and gone a little past.

Pour and pass.

Sometimes a morning  
is too quiet, too quiet,  
I want to hear  
ducks quack on the stream out there  
or in here the gurgle  
pale water turned dark in the coffee pot—

pour, pour,  
we die from silences.

6.

We speak as if,  
and as if all these  
were mere amusements,  
poesy and all the Muse-y stuff

**but they are the red  
cells in our blood.**

**Money and all the rest,  
that's just plasma.**

**This is an ad for blood  
the quiet religion  
that believes in you**

**you hear it sometimes  
on quiet mornings,  
the dancers still asleep.**

**21 March 2020**

=====

**The real  
estate  
the roller skate  
the ocean wave**

**the potted plant  
drying out  
too near the radiator**

**the universe is made of heat  
no more  
what was that flower?**

**22 March 2020**

## **GNOMIKA**

**The line that runs  
from here to there—  
who knows its mother?**

**\***

**To touch the ski  
is to be halfway in.**

**\***

**Passing bird  
makes the wire tremble.  
Information  
is pure risk.**

**\***

**Narration is the thief of mind.**

**22 March 2020**

=====

**I wanted to walk by the water  
I wanted to drink from this cup .  
the sun was in it  
Her robes fluttered  
in the form of clouds**

**I was allowed to want  
and this one thing  
is a great permission—  
just by my being allowed  
to desire, desire  
itself becomes real  
and its object comes  
into being, there  
on the horizon  
or just over it  
where water comes from  
that fills this cup,  
this cup I drink.**

**22 March 2020**

=====

**Lose it in dream  
go back to sleep  
to find it again.**

**23.III.20**

## SPRING SNOW

A little snow  
so far  
*shofar*  
last quiet  
horn call of winter

words lead us  
through the night,  
you call them puns  
I can't them pundits,  
prophets, soft skin  
of a guide's hand.

23 March 2020



=====

**All the blue light  
is trapped  
in a tiny bottle  
on my windowsill—**

**I'm sure I'll let it out  
when the sun comes  
out and calls for it—  
I have always been  
an obedient child—**

**how else could I have learned  
what light is for?**

**23 March 2020**

**WINTER WIEDER**

**Or this weather  
wounds us  
anew—**

**“snowball fight”  
he said,  
“girls against boy”**

**are people  
still living on this plane?**

**I love you, I throw  
a cold packed heart at you  
yearning to hit,  
hear. As if to say  
let me be again.**

**24 March 2020**

=====

**Someone shoveling snow.  
Music to my edges,  
frayed,  
the sound of maybe.  
Sunshine blue sky arrangement  
God knows who made  
the first tune.**

**24 March 2020**

=====

**Delicate dependencies,  
thoughts in words.  
Every word  
a last will and testament—  
we are the heirs of it,  
study our inheritance—  
poets are lawyers in this process  
or priests, or pretty  
flowers when the snow lets through.**

**24 March 2020**

## LEARNING

a new language  
is getting a whole new mind

everything is different  
Over There  
that how is in here,,  
right here,  
in you

so that you walk  
like a total stranger  
through your own woods  
dream at night  
in a strange bed  
you've slept in for years.

Everything different.

24 March 2020

=====

**A rose  
running up the stairs  
purple iris leaning on white wall**

**but where is the lily in all this?**

**the door creaks open  
with the sound of an old  
man trying to learn the cello,  
the red-winged blackbird  
shivers at the squeak**

**blue squills tremnbe in slight breeze  
but where is the lily in all this?**

**Soft and white and far away  
veiled in the future  
and time has the softest touch.**

**24 March 2020**

=====

**She got the news today  
she was pregnant  
by a stranger,**

**a touch she never felt  
a whisper she had never heard**

**and suddenly someone  
else was in her**

**a stranger, yes,  
but she felt somehow calm  
as if she somehow knew  
the mind that makes such matters,**

**calm enough to answer  
I will happen as you say.**

**25 March 2020**

***Feast of the Annunciation***

=====

**When I was Babylon  
or my grandfather  
the fields were lots  
fate chose for me  
by a private sea.**

**That is what it means  
to wake any morning  
and the dream is gone  
but all the vanished evidence  
leaves shadows in the mind—**

**that's why today  
is always somewhere else**

**somewhere in cyberspace  
a steersman listens  
but not always to me  
speaking, not always  
to you listening  
to what turns out to be**



**both of us,  
                  songs  
          made of words,  
words made of silence.  
How can he live without breath?  
Is the world itself  
a lung that knows him?**

**25 March 2020**

=====

**The prick of silence  
stabs deep.  
When it reaches the core  
we speak.**

**25 March 2020**

## THE POET

Curator of the obvious  
attorney for the meaningless  
I am a museum  
of things so commonplace  
you forget them as soon as you pass  
each glittering exhibit.  
And so (ha!) you have to  
keep coming back  
again and again to witness  
the marvelous ordinary I have on show.

26 March 2020

***WHEN THINGS ARE OPEN***  
***they are as doors***

**the book said  
in the maiden's hand  
in a painting as if by Giotto  
but why in English then?**

**And who was she  
who knew the open spaces in all things  
or didn't know them yet but read  
a book of them to learn?**

**No, I know she knew. She knows.  
And Giotto knew,  
the words probably  
wrote their way onto the page,  
into the painting  
all by themselves  
because images are open too  
and all kinds of you walk in and out.**

**26 March 2020**

=====

**Baby blue is the coldest sky,  
we have such fun on earth  
no wonder it's a grief to go.  
Out there up in the chill  
where the light comes from.  
Is that our original home  
or the unknown goal of all,  
all this, all the colors and tastes  
and touches and *endless Melody*  
that finally has no room left  
for my mere one more song?**

**26 March 2020**

=====

**Force of habit  
force of destiny  
do what you do  
until you're done.**

**26 March 2020**

## WEIRD WAKINGS

Let me be me again!  
I cried out as I woke  
silent as ever.

\*

Then I thought  
*non omis moriar*  
but it didn't feel  
as if it meant my  
books and teachings  
(as Horace meant  
when he wrote  
*I will not die completely*)  
but some other fraction  
or some other me.

27 March 2020

## COMFORTS OF RHYME

Bright sun  
time for a run.  
I creep down the stair  
rest out on a chair,  
watch a small cloud  
speak out loud  
till even my head  
can hear what it said.  
I'll sit here in the sun  
and let the wind run.

\*

Sharper ears  
bring more fears.

27 March 2020



=====

Ot is something else—  
I know it, or I knew it  
when I began  
to taste this day.  
Have I forgotten already  
what it means to be now,  
am I lost in remembering,  
a mute Proust  
with nothing more to recapture  
than a girl on a bus in Paris,  
a crowded A train paused  
in the tunnel between stations.  
What is wrong? What was her name.

27 March 2020

=====

**I tend to be skeptical  
about myself  
and wouldn't you?  
All the gods are safe  
from my suspicion.  
But this character  
in the mirror, I know  
too much about him  
already. Cautiously,  
slowly, we try to come  
to an understanding.  
I need help, a capable  
attorney, or just a friend.**

**27 March 2020**

=====

**Knowing as much as we need**

**the weather  
your father's name**

**we can watch the sparrows  
with confidence,  
blackbirds come back,  
finches turn gold  
we wake in wonder.**

**2.  
What is this pain  
that knows my arm?  
Is a deed I'm left to do?  
Or, left undone, now  
aches inside me?  
The rot of time?**

**3.**  
Feel better later,  
after you have named  
each passing cloud,  
drunk fresh water,  
refused the cup—  
now you are holy again—  
that means careful.  
That means pay attention.  
Listen to me.

**4.**  
You had a phone call from the dead.  
You answered it,  
you still are answering it,  
word by word,  
the line is still open,  
they're still listening.  
Don't stop speaking now.

5.  
Wind and asphalt  
Connecticut over the hill,  
walk your pony,  
ride your dog.

Something's wrong,  
it's been too long.  
*Mercy me!* they used to say,  
old women from south of me.

Check each driveway,  
each might be the one.  
But none is yet,  
go home in dream,

squeeze all you know  
inside yourself and sleep.  
Even the quietest dream  
is a shout in the night.

**6.  
Remembering Olson  
sitting around mostly  
walking our heads off  
in the kitchen  
in the bar.**

**The size of language  
welcomed us,  
I was big and he was great,**

**he knew all about the sea  
but for me the sea  
was just my mother's house  
I loved but left  
without really knowing why.**

**He made me come back home.**

**28 March 2020**

=====

**They sat me down  
and made me write this,  
this forced confession  
of who I am  
when I stop to think about it.  
Perilous pause!  
I am only what you hear.**

**28 March 2020**

=====

**A yellow string  
wrapped around a locket  
but not tied to it**

**Earth in space  
safe in those windings.  
speak to me**

**I'm only here for you  
that is the cave  
from which I come**

**all of us, outline  
of a hand on the wall,  
see, we have hands now**

**now we are ready to begin.**

**28 March 2020**



=====

I've got a lot to tell you  
but I don't want to talk  
and I think you don't want to listen  
so we're even,  
                                  but we both know  
the expression: Time will tell.  
So It time do its work, time,  
the single skin we live inside,  
the only skin we're allowed to touch.

28 March 2020

=====

**Horn cry  
in ancient woods I hear**

*it is I*

*It is I*

**I hear it.**

**And You did too  
.a call  
from the world before we are.**

**28 March 2020**

=====

**We're not as busy  
as bees ought to be  
and yet there comes  
some hum from the hive.**

**Just give us time—  
the days get longer:  
so much more silence  
we need to fill.**

**29 March 2020**

## GERRITSEN BEACH

Is this where I began,  
a beach in the rain,  
sea blending with sky  
and a whisper of wind?  
Is this the bowl of bay  
where I for the first time  
saw? I thought I was home  
but I was just beginning.  
And the wind was cold.

29 March 2020

=====

**Words lead us through the woods  
but when we fet to a clearing  
what then? What guides us  
in such brightness, what  
leads us through openness?**

**29 March 2020**

=====

**The sky is a slippery  
road today, the light  
slides down past me  
so I shall walk today  
on the ground instead.**

**29 March 2020**

=====

**It isn't mist.  
It happens in the trees  
at twilight.  
It isn't mist—  
it doesn't drift or waft  
or blow away or move  
when you walk in there,  
just between the trees  
themselves, the trunks  
not the crowns,  
as if the bark at last  
breathed out  
the long breath of the day.**

**29 March 2020**

=====

**Spring inside  
happens too.  
A sound from out  
reminds  
in to begin.  
All the birds  
flock in you now.**

**30 March 2020**



=====

**How vague and delicate  
far bare branches seem  
woven together just now  
in pale morning light.  
Unwrap this cloth!**

**30 March 2020**

=====

**I've done what I could.  
Now it's time  
to do what I can't.  
That is a soul's real job.**

**30 March 2020**

=====

**These scenes scratched out of *Faust*  
I scribble now,**

**confess to more sins than I own  
deep as they are.**

**A word, onea word more!  
A word is forgiveness.**

**30 March 2020**

## **SISTINE DOUBT**

**My hands reach up  
desperately for God's hand  
or is it Adam's  
fingers I touch?**

**30 March 2020**

=====

**Don't blame me for this  
the secret tabernacle  
with all the wilderness  
inside it**

**can get here  
following the bone  
all by yourself,  
hollow bone. chicken bone,  
hustle down the shaft  
follow the compulsory tunnel**

**you bought the light with you  
make the habit if language  
a brown cloth over your knees**

**to be here!  
before the day comes!  
the bone!**

**don't blame me  
dream is a bone  
won't bend  
holds you firm  
to stand**

**or go there  
over and over**

**to find the place  
so quiet on the outside  
all the ravines within  
loud with your own waters,  
listen!**

**don't blame me  
for the miracle  
you find in there  
when you finally  
close the only door.**

**31 March 2020**

=====

**Account you wary,  
pilgrims, rocks  
and furniture alternate  
to halt your quest,**

**be cautious  
of the comforts  
of remorse.**

**31 March 2020**

=====

**there is a simple song I know  
called being still,  
being in that time called here.**

**Sometimes going is a sad excuse.**

**31 March 2020**



=====

**How can we hurt  
each other more  
than by being together?**

**Ask yourself that  
in the quiet moment  
before take-off,  
before you leave the earth yet again.**

**31 March 2020**

=====

Through the haunches  
to the sea  
there are no birds  
in that dark space  
*nacreous*: pearly  
gleam of a fingernail

how the hand  
dares to reach out  
a miracle

2.  
the last story  
always comes first  
only then are we ready  
(short-breath)  
to begin.

3.  
I saw a tiger once where you walked

**and never looked again, the sea  
dissolves all that. All this.  
In mist you bend to stroke a daffodil.**

▪

**31 March 2020**