

4-2022

Apr2022

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Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "Apr2022" (2022). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. 1470.
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=====

**Cast. As a stone.
Or as a list
of characters in your story,
only yours.
Or as in concrete,
a heavy block to build
your theater with,
not grand, utilitarian,
walls and a roof.
But the roof must be a wing
poised and sturdy
to shelter under.
Now go write your play.**

1 April 2022

= = = = =

**I was a baptist once
or just a farmer,
I'd sprinkle people
as they [assed and call
out new names on them
until they stopped me
and took ay my glass
of water, now what can I do,
all I can do is call you you.**

1 April 2022

=====

**Of course it's April Fool Day
but what day kisin't?
I've been trying to fool you
all for years, and you fool me.
We end up even, and call it heaven.**

1 April 2022

=====

**How close can I come
to the river and not get wet,
to the honey and not get stung,
to the truth and not get scared?**

1.IV.22

=====

**Wander needless in a week of mist,
kiss your friends goodbye, watch
their private jets take off
for warmer climes,
what the devil is a clime
anyhow and why
can't I have one,
weekless month, monthless yers,
palm tree with pineapples,
bees leaving honey on the rocks
for me. Pacific? The mist
embarrasses the trees. Embraces
I think I meant but truth will out.
And where is Out and who
doth dare to Will it?
Am I a tragic clown gibbering**

**from a well-lost play?
Somebody must have written me
but here I am, spouting my lines,
amazing the trees, I mean amusing.**

1 April 2022

=====

Ostentatious

as a cow

**alone in the middle
of the wide green field.**

empress of Earth:

***She fives me all I need,
I give her my majesty,
my mystery, my milk.***

Black and white cow.

I saw her standing there
when I was five ears old
and already I understood.

1 April 2022

=====

**Don't dawdle, son—
rush ahead
through all your lucent
approximations of desire
and seize the stone,
press against the rock
so it turns back into her
or her or whoever
turned her back on you.
Hurry, this is our only world.**

**2 April 2022
[dreamt]**

=====

Let the sun shine all she wants,
it's secular down here,
car radios belching past
quiet roadside cottages,
mailbox full of catalogues,
you know, the band plays on.
But still I dream, barely one
afternoon away is a palace
of pure air arising on the meadow,
a silent scripture teeming with ideas.
Think me, the world says,
think me hard.

2 April 2022

=====

**Only the words were gone.
The rest were intact, stones,
stamina of living beings,
storm clouds over Cedar Hill,
a dream of two crows.
Windows but no words.
Waterfall. Jogger
in a yellow parka.
Where did the words go?**

3 April 2022

=====

The first song hadn't finished when the second song began. Conflict, their fingers entwined, elbows at each other's ribs, almost a dance. Can songs feel anger? It didn't seem so, seemed as if they knew each other long ago and knew how to get in one another's way in just the right way, and made it seem that music would never end

3 April 2022

=====

**The sky looks grey but the grass
seems to have sunshine in it.
It seems a sweet contradiction,
gives ne hope, cold as morning is.
I hope everything else is listening.**

3.IV.22

=====

**Benedict Arnold went to heaven,
went in through the Traitor's Door.
Lots of them sitting around inside,
praising their efforts at a miracle,
being on two sides at once.
Sometimes the saints came by
and listened to their explications,
marveled at these two-heart men,
gently tried to ooze them into one
so that someday they could
leave the noisy room and enter
the chatterless calm of all the rest of
heaven.**

3 April 2022

=====

**Ballistic youth
a trireme on the sea
we never seem to get over
this fighting thing,
a ladder that leads nowhere,
we climb all the way up and fall.
What sense does it make,
that stick in my hand,
let it fall, let it fall,
we're all just here.
Think of what we could have built
if we had made things and not
killed one another. Think
of what science and technology
could do even now if we stopped,
stopped war and wounding.**

**Think of what all the casualties
could have written, invented,
begotten had they lived.
War is suicide.**

3.IV.22

=====

**I followed her up the stairs,
kept my eyes firmly on her shoes
for fear of lust. And when
I breathless reached
the top she was not there.
And no shoes either. Some dust
sparkled in a corner
and a broom to help it with.**

3.IX.22

=====

**44.4 degrees Fahrenheit
the thermometer explains,
pleased as I am by this rare
single-mindedness in the number tribe
when they look outside and hum
and do their tricks and suddenly
sing the same noye. 4.44
Long as 've lived I've never
seen that number before.
Thank you, weather.**

3.IV.22

=====

**He carved his name
into the air
with huge letters
then sank to his knees
onto the soft grass.
Since he was kneeling
he thought he might
just as well be praying
so he prayed
and this is his prayer.**

3 April 2022

=====

I woke in four o'clock in the dark and a voice, mine
ir like mind, was speaking in my mind. There was
no image at all, I saw nothing, knew then and know
now nothing of who was talking olr to whom about
what. But here are the words the voice said:

*How can I survive
our friendship,
how can I endure
all that I know
about you and me
and all of us,
us, the single target
of your mutiny?*

4 April 2022

=====

**Let me listen
to the other side
of the record
(remember records?)
while this side
is still playing.**

**That's one way of asking.
Or how about a canoe
with an armchair in it
and a table with coffee cups.**

**We live in a world
where air is free, oxygen,
the only thing we need,
given to us by The System.
We can breathe anywhere.
So why am I asking for favors,**

special coins o no real currency,
who cares what I want
when they so kindly give me
everything I need.

Das Lied ist aus. The son is over.
Now flip the effing record
and be normal. I can wait.
First I I'll dig a lake for my canoe.

4 April 2022

THE BOOK I WANT TO READ

is hidden on your shelf.
I want to leaf through it,
let my fingers feel
the pages as they ripple past,
I want to feel the words
rough and smooth long
as hair or brief as breath,
I want to squeeze the book shut,
tuck it under my arm, bring it
with me where I go. read it
on the meadow or in the rain
or in the crowded train, I want
to savor every word of it
in my own way until I understand
it and it understands me.

4 April 2022

A BIRD

**has nested
in the ventilator
opens on the ceiling
of the examination room
where the patient stretches
out uneasy on the cushioned slab
and waits to be dealt with
and the bird chirps.**

**The nurse says it's been there
so long she doesn't even notice.**

The bird chirps again.

**The patient thinks: this
is augury, this is ancient Rome
and I'm still alive! Closes his eyes
grateful as we are for any sign.**

4 April 2022

SHE SAID:

*Feel free
with all you have learned,
stolen or borrowed from me—
it is for you to use.*

**It was a voice
speaking from deep
down in the ground,
a voice that sounded like stone.**

5 April 2022

=====

Make, use.

Accuse.

**A name
is of the other,
you have no name.**

**Why would you need one
in the wolf world
the cabbage world–
no one is listening**

**and your body
talks only to itself.**

5 April 2022

=====

**It's not despair
it's a door
propped open by a chair
wedged under the doorknob.**

**It's not grief,
it is a book to wander in
among the words,
even between the letters.**

**Dry your tears—
the window is watching.**

5 April 2022

=====

Peel the beginning away
layer ny layer,
lichen, time's
lipstick left on stone,
broken bandwidth, get
beyond the elements, all
the wise vascular improvisation
we xall a living body,
find the before,
before the before,
the little snicker
of the oldest furthest,
galactic synagogue where
some togetherring was intended
and we did, we do, we came

along and chanted, what else
is human breathing but a canticle,
our never-ending psalm
praising the before the beginning.
That it began.

2.

Breath says I am praying
though I seldom know it,
praying undistracted by words,
concepts, images, ideas—
just praying, praying.
Religions try to help you breathe,
remind you bead by bead,
word by word, sacred syllables
to take your next breath
and let that breath bring you

**closer to before the beginning.
And we know the sad
thing that happens when
someone stops praying.**

3.

**I saw it once
in a hospital,
the last prayer
breathed out
quiet, the blood
stopped flowing,
nothing happened,
quiet, quiet,
my dearest friend was done.**

4.

I grew up with a poem
that kept quoting
In my end is my beginning.
Critics spoke of circles,
sense of destiny, goal of living,
afterlife as when we really
start living, heaven and all that.
Maybe maybe maybe
do you like my mantra?
all of them and none of me
and what does my own breath
tell me? Between breaths
before spreads out,
vast green meadow
to the horizon where he next
breath waits, but on
this prairie I catch a glimpse

**of someone waiting,
not coming towards me,
not moving much, turning
like a child looking around.
But not a child.**

6 April 2022

THE CHOICES

Waking up is scattering.

Now what. A hundred
destinations proposed

and my compass left
behind in my sleep.

In all the proffered goings
which one is mine?

Climb the hill, keep all
the appointments some other
me has made. Drink the grey light.

2.

The beautiful superstitions
we try to live by—democracy,
liberty, justice—soothe even me
this anxious morning.

Anxious because a day to do
and not sure what or how..

So many avenues in one null town.

3.

A man read to me in Hebrew,
I picked up only one word,
pachad, fear. I knew then
that cowardice is my truth.

4.

I don't want to write about frogs
though I love to see them
this time of year, hopping
across back roads, chirping
in the trees. I don't want
to write about traveling
though I love to ride
always in the passenger seat
and looking sideways out
at the swift moving trees,
meadows stretching tier backs
up to the sky as I pass.
The road has started to shine.
The rain has begun.
I will write about rain.

7 April 2022

=====

My mother was a silent woman, taught children all day in school and was quiet at home, chatted mildly with her many relatives but not too frequently. I learned silence from her but was myself a bad student of it. Still talking but I keep trying to shut up. I have never thanked her enough. Everything I do she made possible, can I let my feeble doings serve as thanks? Even words, even words like this?

A hundred and twenty years ago
she was born, when the forsythia
hedges were in flower,
and just yesterday I saw
their yellow kindness beginning
to light up these grey days.
Once again I have said
too much and not enough,
my usual childish song.

7 April 2022

A GREETING CARD FOR VAISAKHA

**There never was a was
there never will be will be.
There is only now,
glorious and now,
the baby Buddha born
right now in you
pointing up and pointing down.**

7 April 2022

= = = = =

The lawn a lake,

**rain day all night
and now the silver
road glistens uphill.
Paint this for me
you brushy democrats
of the color wheel,
let what I see
live after me.**

8 April 2022

=====

**Lock the mailbox
turn off the internet
there's nobody out there,
they're all in here,
with you, in you, each
pretending to be other
but they're all just you.
You give the funny faces
or sleek hips, accents,
attitudes, but they're all
just you. Now is the time
for you to emigrate,
out of this kingdom of selves,
cross some fishy ocean to find a
democracy of the actual Other.
Now is the hour. The boat**

**is loading at the back of your mind,
hurry, everything you need
is already aboard, hurry,
this is your chance at last
to flee the friends you've feigned.**

8 April 2022

=====

**Spadework. Sympathy.
Walk up the hill.
Vista is wisdom enough for me.
Seeing without knowing!
What a liberty that is,
the vast meadowing earth
quiet in its own affairs
lets me look and see.
And when the road bends
I am led to understand
I too am a part of what it does,
I will be quiet and be
only your landscape now.**

8 April 2022

=====

**I have something to say to the
Sanhedrin**

**if I knew where they're in session,
a discrepancy I noted in scripture,
something important but now
I can't remember.**

**Maybe it will
all come back to me when I face
the bearded judges in satin robes
and me on my knees before them,**

**it was something about weeping,
something about a woman
walking in a field of winter wheat,**

**something about a name
misspelled, it will all come back
eventually. Meanti.me I rest
at roadside and watch
all the slow chariots pass.**

8 April 2022

=====

Rejuvenate. The light
so dim in the leafless
trees it looks like mist.
No mist.

Rejuvenate the obvious,
make it sing like sunshine.
Every morning a different taste:
Monday milk and Tuesday tea,
Wednesday raspberry,
Thursday olive, Friday honey,
Saturday salt, Sunday cinnamon,

we taste the petals fallen
long ago from the flowering Sun,
cool enough now to nibble

the experience of time.

Not time,

but what we

superstitiously imagine time is.

The real time is hidden in the now.

8 April 2022

=====

**Drive slow to see
what isn't me—
that's my motto,
elsewise the speed
of my intention
blurs what is here,
not there, only here,
this place, this sacred
purposeless clump of trees
my instant paradise.**

8 April 2022

=====

The cars are going—
can I go q with them,
a little piece of me
stuck to each windshield
and we go sailing up the hill?
And all the places I will go
more or less simultaneously!
I am a divided man already,
no reason not to go with aloof you
and learn who I will become
when they all get to all
the wheres they're headed to,
and i do mean you.

8 April 2022

=====

hat color are your eyes tonight what
part of the spectrum
as changed so that suddenly
as you appear at me
from the bottom of the stairs
I see another person altogether
one holding something
in the right hand the left hand empty,
its palm stretching out towards me as if
to say put yourself here, come down
the steps,
become something in my hand.

8 April 2022

=====

NOTICE

NOW HAS BROKEN. WE ARE WORKING VIGOROUSLY TO REPAIR THE MECHANISM, BUT FOR THE MOMENT WE URGE YOU TO BE USE EXTREME CAUTION WHEN YOU STEP-PIECES OF PAST AND FRAGMENTS OF FUTURE ARE DRIFTING IN ALL DIRECTIONS. WE HOPE TO HAVE EVERYTHING BACK TO NORMAL BY SUNSET. THANK YOU FOR YOUR PATIENCE.

—YOUR TIME COMPANY

9 April 2022

=====

.

What more can I tell you,
stone lasts a long time
but time lasts longer.
I know London and Paris,
Vienna and Berlin—not Rome,
not Athens. Doesn't that
tell you something? The road
is wet but the rain pool gone,
the flowing away, that old song.
There must be something
I can give you, random letters
cast out of silver or tin, tin
is easier to stick on the wall,
magnets on the fridge, what
are the letters spelling now?
Why do we do this to ourselves,
the clock, the calendar,

**the names we glue on newborn,
all our ever-afters? And why
do I think I have to say anything
at all about this, or have
anything to say? The words insist.
O brothers and sisters, the words insist.**

9 April 2022

=====

**Somebody's son
somebody's brother
nobody's father
or are you my child?**

9.IV.22

=====

**Not a wanderer, a wave
of its own brine uplifted.**

**Now speak to me in Gaelic,
spread the chestnut tears
around the stone table,**

**set an urn on it with fire in it,
a flame. A name is s[eaking.**

**Haunted by habit.
tii mskilled at grieving,
or too weary to mourn**

**Lau down your ideas
and then sleep.**

**The dark is a great democrat,
the anarchic flame,
lifts its protest,**

*see, see,
at least see me.*

9 April 2022

=====

**Nobody here,
nobody there.
Only body lone
making moan.**

**End of story,
start of chapter,
listen for a bird
a bird always
knows you know.**

**Listening makes
a loud noise
in heaven.**

**Hear me
it says, I want**

**to hear you.
Nobody home,
birds are sleeping,
even the door
is fast asleep.**

10.IV.22

=====

It sounds like wind
but why. Under the grass
earth, under earth stone—
no noise there
and the train went by
hours ago.
If it was a train.
Recall how we
even we used to go
lay our ear on the track
to hear far off
the thrill of its coming.
No wind, but the sound
of wind. Why.
Do the trees shudder?
Does the wide earth yawn?

**What is sleep anyway
and why does every living
thing have to have it
or do it or let it be done?
Why can't we be all the time?
Maybe it's wolves
prowling through the woods
like they used to,
breathing loud to give small beasts
a chance to run away.
Wolves. Remember the one
passed us so politely,
on the sidewalk yet, we
and wolf veered apart,
gave each other room to pass.
No sound. No wind
even then.**

10 April 2022

=====

**Remember this:
Spanish coin
in island sand.
You hope silver,
you're not sure.
It's morning now
so it won't matter
much longer. Bronze
is the day. I resist
that language,
something to do
with someone else's
life, a life ago,
one more thing
fallen from a hand.**

10 April 2022

=====

**Palm Sunday. The week
begins, the week of horror
that we call Holy Week.**

**It ends well, a rising up,
a victory. But today
slices of palm leaf,
long stiff yellow strips
children carry out of
church in their happy hands,**

**If there are churches, children,
it all seems so long ago,
my own life seems like
something I read in a book.**

**A hint of blue in the cloud,
who knows what the day
will bring. Cold April.
Valiant flowers. Resurrection
only one more week away.**

10 April 2022

=====

**The golden chariot goes by
with no one in it,
goes by overhead,
its horse is the wind,
a fierce shadow pounding by
silently overhead.
Its passage is news enough,
it wakes what sleeps inside us
and suddenly we are filled
with that alertness we call knowing,
just knowing. Be careful—
what we know might send us back to
sleep.**

10 April 2022

=====

**Vegetate hotel internal
move from suite to suite
rent inside yourself,
you re the furniture
in every room.**

Or stand

**roadside midnight
meadow bathed
by the headlights
of six cars and perform.**

Pain makes me.

**Light tickles skin,
nipples, necessities.**

Who can answer now?

**There is no way out
of what you mean.**

**The desk clerk always watching
that newspaper is transparent
he pretends to be reading,
watch what he does if he
sees you move even slowly
towards th revolving door.**

**Go back upstairs,
bring the forest with you,
dance in the elevator
maybe,**

**maybe,
so many floors
until you're here**

**all over again.
The key feels soft,
wrm in your hand.**

11 April 2022

=====

The armorial bearings
of the present hour
have prehistoric pedigree.

Blue green grey, spring
but chill, Lent relenting,
little joke, flowers small
make their blue way.

Remember to forget winter,
inherit your rights
to go outside unarmed.
Soon, soon.

Weather
is n ancient kingdom,

**we are its thralls,
ineffective revolutionaries.
They feed us blue skies
when we groan too loud.
Or one pretty little cloud
over sleepy tree.**

11 April 2022

=====

**It was my fault–
I looked the other way
and they were gone
like starling from the lawn
all at once, a wave
of them ascending, departing..
Where are they now?
Whose meadow are they meaning?**

11 April 2022

====

**Every time you
close your eyes
you are asleep.
Technically speaking.
Dream finds you
instantly. Hold
tight to it and wake.
What you beheld
helps. Blink again.**

11.IV.22

=====

**They come to my office
but my hat's out on my head.
They call me on the phone
but I'm in the shower.
They text me on my cellphone
but I can't find my glasses.
This is the national anthem
of a man trying to be free.**

11.IV.22

=====

**Susan, isn't it wonderful
we share the world with birds,
and that you share your birds
with us? One flew past
my window just now, glistened
almost silver in sudden sunlight,
I know you know what kind it is,
it must have come from you.
Please leave a few with us
if you really have to go.**

11.IV.22

=====

Winter wilting in the trees,
greenish haze where branches
cluster. Grass soaks up more light.

It's happening again, the great
April consolation, the promises,
crocuses, flocks of blackbirds,
I never thought when I was young
that I would welcome spring
or even say its name with fervor
or understand what the old
poem meant with its *Quando*—
when will my springtime come?
Winter was a good teacher.

11 April 2022

=====

**Asphodels, the Dutch
called them daffodils
and they have just arisen,
new world in our new woods
in this old Dutch colony
the English overwhelmed
and then we came along
carried upstream
on the river of language,
whoever we are. Yellow
daffodil by the ferns,
the lawn lively with blue
Siberian squills. Neighbors
told me that these small beings
began life on this very lawn
and slowly spread up the road**

**until three-quarters of a mile
away, over the river, these
blue eyes wink up this year,
took them close to a century
to get there. And I don't think
the river even helped. Not them,
but it brought the rest of us,
of the whole story, the freight
at midnight grinding south.**

12 April 2022

=====

I decided this morning
we have to secede. And not
just us. Find the actual primal
sacred *temenos*, the true
precincts of the neighborhood
and pick or be an emperor for it.
Secede. I'll take this sprawl
from North River to Stissing Mt.
and rule it justly with imagination.
See if the birds pay attention,
and the mailman hardly noticing
slips through customs.

What will I call this place
stolen from Lenape by new
Americans who stole it from us,

**we latecomers, evening people,
goers of the gloaming, rebels
who ask for no more than lawn,
trees, a freshest rushing by.**

**I own the rain! My flag
waves over the shuttered church
where once my father sang
Ave Maria to the empty nave,
and really empty now, the priests
have slipped away, rich newbies
buy the holy bricks make cafes
and studios. But my flag
flies from the steeple, my flag
is every crow that flies, my flag
is the color of the morning sky
and made of its pure air.**

**I own
this country! And you do too!
Everything you see belongs
to those who see it, think it,
need it, walk it, wake up
telling the rocks to stand firm,
teaching the flowers how to grow.**

12 April 2022

=====

**The roads are veins
and arteries at once.
How the slim grey cars
slip down the hill or go
panting up the other side.
But then the city comes along
and makes its one-way streets,
pure arteries, no turning back!
No wonder sometimes my ankles
hurt when I look out the window.**

12.IV.22

=====

1.

Watch the old window
walk around the woods
the world the weeds
and everything between—
everybody has one good window,
everybody has a tree
it takes maybe, maybe
more than one life to climb.
Guess what it means, don't make
me do all the work
although I dearly want to,
your bark under my hands.

2.

But the window is watching,
it pays to behave—
sit by the fire, sing to your mother,
and when that sun is shining
remember rain
just so that your other hand
feels something like love.

3.

That little word that means *complete*.
Finish the drawing, fill the glass,
drag my river all the way to your sea.
Without you I am only me.

4.

**Forgive the intrusion of theory,
theory likes to slither into poetry
to make the reader think
instead of reading, relaxing
into the real what is read.
Thinking has been bothering us
two thousand years since
angry Greeks invented it,
ran our of Troys to destroy
and turned their spears
on the sounds that come out of our
mouths, all those myriad
pronunciations of a angle kiss-
language. Forget the yelping
of those cynics, tear up their treatises,
just listen to lust and love and trust
one word at a time.
The word will do you.**

5.

**If I'm not mistaken
that's what the window says.**

**I am what happens,
I am what you see.**

What I mean is what you do with me.

**But I might be wrong, I too
sometimes forget to listen
and when you don't listen
you hear the strangest things.**

**So listen hard and listen soft
and sometimes let
the word listen for you.**

6.

**End of sermon, Sorry,
the sun made me do it,**

it seems so clear, so spring,
so flowering. A tiny sprig
of lilac scented the whole room
1st night when friend brought it,
the first of the season, blossoming
on the first really warm day,
when you came back from a walk
even hot
and even I dared sit out in the sun
and all night the scent of lilac
did our thinking for us.

13 April 2022

=====

Save all you can,
be spring with me
he said to the robin
here all winter
but shy to show,
be loud now, Sir
Visible, flutter
my eyes from tree
by thee to tree—
just let me see
you so I know
this is now again,
red breast in a green time.

13 April 2022

=====

The alternative is obvious.
It always is. That's why
nothing random. Waiting
is a method, an instrument,
somehow it summons.
We can't all have pretty eyes
but most of us can see.
At least for now. Wait harder.
Try to know deeply
people you see at roadside
when you drive past not so fast.
I'm trying to say Go on living
without daring to say so.

14 April 2022

MAUNDY THURSDAY

You know the rule—
do for others
what I do for you,
Sounds simple
when he said it.
Being for the other
is how to be you.
I wish I could
set it to music
and hum it always
as I walk along,
letting the words
sing in my heart.

14 April 2022

= = = = =

**Outside edge–
a spinning disk
does not have one.
Yet even at rest
it is always going away
further and further in.**

14.IV.22

=====

1.

**Change the subject.
At least flip the record,
vinyl is single-minded,
out of fashion, only the few
still do. But really,
turn the other cheek,
get that cat off your lap,
wake up, Ro-Bear,
make it all different again.**

2.

**Pain is not the opposite of pleasure.
The two form base of a triangle
whose apex is mind,**

or in the mind, serenity
with no self to bother it.

3.

Find that peak
just after waking
when you remember
not who but what
you are, newborn,
pain slipping away.

14 April 2022

=

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Trees

on the near
horizon, elms I guess
from the wine-glass shape
like Cambridge
long ago but here,
tall, no leaf yet
but here, where I am,
in this soft waiting,
with a spring breeze.

2.

Parking lot,
this wordless *agora*
of our cracy,
now there's a word
for what rules over us—

the road. Bless us
for our endless mutiny
stopping the car
wherever we feel like it,
standing still, being
where we are.

14 April 2022
Red Hook

= = = = =

**So many tales
tell from one happening.
Picture a man
standing by the road
and a woman walks by.
Nothing said, nothing done,
but what can tell
in the minds of each
and the deeds of both
go on forever.
Gay or straight, young or old,
we'll never know, and so
have to go on telling
until they're done.**

15 April 2022

GOOD FRIDAY

The pain of it lingers still.
So hard to understand
how people could do such things,
that someone would let it be done.
We used to sit in church
from noon till three,
Tre Ore they called it,
three hours of Christ's suffering.
until his quiet came.
Centurion's spear then we
stumble out into springtime,
thirsty, wiping our eyes,
forsythia offering its gold.
Or so often huge grey skies
turbulent with cloud
and no wind, a sky like ruin,
end of the world, we walked

from one fear to another.
But a bus would go by
and then it was just another day.

2.

Today on the other hand
nothing happens.
Sky pale blue, calm sun
on the lawns. Slow change
of register in the neighborhood.
Barns with no cows,
silos with no grain.
What is this tune
the relaxed meadow
sings to its horizon?
Why is it, so quiet?

3.

Inferences

abound.

**They come from the mind
like flowers from the ground.**

**Wait till I see me
walking in the field—
then I will believe.**

**Wait till the blackbird
perches on the phone pole—
then I will listen.**

**The empty road whispers
how close I am to going away.**

15 April 2022

=====

**Sometimes the sun
is an asterisk
tells me to look down
to the foot of the page
where the small print
of reality clusters,
hard to read, full
of strange names and numbers,
the real stuff I keep
trying to skim/// my way above.**

15 April 2022

=====

**They pack white mushrooms
in a blue plastic box.**

Agaricus campestris

**and I like the combination,
but why do they and why do I?**

15.IV.22

**FULL MOON HOLY SATURDAY
PASSOVER RAMADAN**

**They converge, They try
to tell us something.
What? Hard to hear, all
the languages speak at once,
so loud, the sound track of reality
shouts, each clear voice
distorts the others, help,
we want the sweet music of sleep.
And I couldn't sleep. Sleep
is a colloquial language
but I lay there struggling
with the formal grammars
of pain and anxiety and just
the otgherness of everything**

**and why is it all now.
I was close to nothing when
I finally slept. Awake now,
now what, Palliation
is the answer. Ease the pain.
Christ asleep in the sepulcher.
The voyage begins.**

16 April 2022

=====

**Look out the vowel,
lean all the way out,
don't be afraid,
the consonants
will keep you from falling.
Now say where you are.
AH or OH or EE or whoever
it may be who holds you
in long quiet breath.
what do you feel before
those artful consonants
cluster round and close in,
keep you safe but at what cost,
the lost abyss of your own breath.**

16 April 2022

=====

**Sometimes I wish I had a piano,
not that I could actually play
recognizable music on it, no,
despite the nuns' earnest
lessons after school.**

**But anybody can press a key,
white or black, anybody
can make a sound come out
and listen to the sound.**

**Anybody can stroke polished wood,
watch the soft hammers
pound the sounding strings,
why do they call them that,
they're wires, metal,
could hurt your skin, can hurt
your ears if your fingers**

press the wrong keys or just
too many of them. I wish
I had a piano, wood and ivory,
copper and felt, pedals to trick
the quick sound into lasting,
wood, wood, black or brown,
so much wood and weighs so much,
no man can carry one alone.
But when I'm alone
no one neary to bother,
I can sit, yes, sit calmly,
and let my fingers
happen to the poor keys.

16 April 2022

=====

**I heard a church bell ring far away.
It's just possible, acoustic trick,
calm air, the trees repeat.
There's one bell a mile south,
a smaller one half a mile north
that never rings, kept locked up
who knows why, but I heard
a church bell ringing,
like that movie by Bela Tarr
where all you see is distance,
the bells of elsewhere you dare to hear.**

16 April 2022

=====

**A roll of cloud
like cloth
across the blue.
Easter Sunday,
small bird
flying very high,
unusual. Usually
we stay in our zones
vertical, horizontal,
this town, the walls
of ancient Rome,
city limits, notes
of the tune. Easter,
rising from the dead,
rising against government,
what do we learn
from our festivals?**

**Come back, bird,
explain your altitude,
I need to learn something
from you before
the day takes me away.**

17 April 2022

=====

The daffodils
by the old freestone
wall look fussy this year,
less chalice-like,
more petal-flaunting,
a hundred yards of them
along the road, the wall,
low wall, yellow river
bright in sudden sunshine,
April. Forsythia. It is important
to learn a foreign language,
one no longer spoken—Greek
will do, or Latin even though
that's not as foreign as it could be,
or Phoenician or Tocharian
or sun-drenched Aztec on this cool day.

**That's what the flowers said,
we are yellow, you know nothing
but the names of things
and qualities and actions
so it behooved you to learn
all the languages of humankind
so you can flower too, and we
have only a few weeks to teach you.
Fetch out your grammar
books and begin
while we wave you on
gently in the sun.**

17 April 2022

=====

It's not wrong to be sentimental

**as long as you really believe what
you say.**

**Otherwise the words will fester
through the day and give you bad
dreams.**

**Fact. So if you can't say what you
mean,
at least don't say what you don't
mean.**

Sentimental goes right to the heart.

17 April 2022

=====

**Now the stone's been rolled away,
the Christ is walking down the road
out of the garden, the Mary
at his side.**

**He is going east and she west,
carrying his word.
To us who need it.**

**That is all we know for sure.
All round the world
stones still stand, reminding us.**

18 April 2022

=====

Not so cold today

I thought you'd want to know.

**Sun and blackbirds
and no gunshots heard.**

**I feel almost calm,
like a Chinese river
with a poet sitting by it
a thousand years ago
one word at a time.**

18 April 2022

= = = = =

secret stevedores transfigure the sea

A phrase from Joel Newberger’s “Jaec Olim” text, a line as I remember it, that’s the gist of it anyhow, but whether it was a question or a statement or a deed the future will bring, should bring, that I can’t remember.

But the future is the easiest thing of all to remember. Any image of it is true, every blank page is a meaningful silence. We say: The day will come.

En tout cas, I see them at work, bold Polacks and Micks and Dagoes stripped to the waist, hauling from the ocean harbor great baskets dripping with what the sea needs no longer, emptying

the sea of all the irrelevance we bring to it by hand or spittle or streams from farmland and factories. And when the half-naked men, muscular, good-humored mostly, only beginning to grey at the temples, when their great baskets come up empty, why then their real work begins, hauling from the eighteen-wheeler that the Temple has filled, hauling cartons and barrels of sacred, or is it secret, matter that will change in a few hours the sea, the whole sea, into what it fundamentally is, mother and child, dining room and library, home of our habits and we will at last bring back the report she sent us out, up, on land, to find, to become.

How can I guess what's in those containers? Isn't it enough to see those brave strong men, who pretend to be Polish or Irish or Italian but really are of no nation we know how to name?

Must language make me guess? Of so, I'll choose matter, pure matter, the word means mother somehow too, pure matter, the stuff of which everything is made, no matter what. So that: half-naked men restore the sea to its first virginity by bringing the purity of matter and casting it with a prayer.

And then they don their garments—remember that the other half of a half-naked man is a woman. Garbed now in pleasant guise they walk with their wives or consorts along the street up

from the docks, and everything they
pass is new, and the lame who limp by
them are instantly healed. Heal mean
whole, whole, like the sea.

18 April 2022

VISTAS OF EDEN

for Raquel Rabinovich, in homage

Eden was not green,
It was a sandy place
full of light and shade
that came from somewhere,

shadows of what was to come.
Nothing grew there until

the thought of it arose
in someone's mind—Adam
we call him, the ruddy earth itself,
or Eve, the living one,
who glanced at nothing
and a tree appeared.

These are the shadows of Eden,
the shadows of the substances
we were and are
and will become,

across the sandy plain
the shadows move,
take shape, rise and fall.
Sand is time and space is time,

**six days of creation
then the silent seventh,
the day that still is now,
holy quiet when the human mind
is allowed to understand all it has seen.**

`8 April 2022

= = = = =

**Get the day wrong
doesn't matter,
theparty lasts forever.
Lust is a must.
Not the doing (what a waste
of time!)mbut the yen itself,
the en/ergy that Paul deplored
and Tanta blesses, the self
striving to transcend itself**

**by sheer knowing
where knowing turns into being
and we are.
Take the world to bed and see.**

19 April 2022

= = = = =

**Go bother the quarryman,
gaze at his new-cut stone,
blow off the marble dust
with your own breath
and study the flat surface
newly revealed and read it.
Read quick and eager,
it has been waiting for you
ages in the mountain,**

**for you or one like you,
someone now.**

**Never mind the Bible,
you're reading a letter
written a million years ago—
what does it tell
your eyes to tell you?**

***Go back to the sea
and begin again,
be beautiful like me.***

Most human letters tell you that.

19 April 2022

=====

Past midnight we saw it snowing fast, it didn't last, not a trace of it this morning except what it made me dream, lots of snow and couldn't go to a distant airport en route to some even further place where some sort of festival more or less included us. So here we are. No sun but plenty light on empty road.

19 April 2022

=====

*The artisan called before the Tribunal
deposed:*

The touch s all I wanted,
one touch tells everything.
The surface *is* the core,
the heart throbs where you can see it,
only there. To touch
is to know, lay a finger on the skin
and the soul of the person
sings a canticle instantly
only the one who touches can hear.

As one glimpse of the sea
tells all we will ever really know
of what she is, our mother,

**so one glimpse of a tree,
a mountain. We see
the entire universe
when we glance up at the sky.**

**Do you understand at last?
Your law books take much too long,
by the time you've read a few pages
you've forgotten the taste,
of the real, the touch.**

19 April 2022

CALL THE DR.

April 2022 123

**New devils, nude evils,
writhing towards us
over the outstretched pain.
I can barely hear themselves think.
And yet I hurt.**

20,IV,22

BIRTHDAY ODE

for Billie

Joachim looked at Anna
spoke almost whispering
What child is this
born from our kisses,
young and pretty
just as I'd expect
from any daughter of yours
and yet who is this
she's married, a joiner,
a turner, a nobody from Nazareth
and we of royal stock,
he's old enough to be her uncle!
But Anna was gentle,
told her husband to look
instead at the lovely newborn,

**their own first grand-child!
The father doesn't count,
only the mother matters
she explained, the mother
and the child, lovely he is
and may yet rise up
like our ancestors to be
a king among his people!
Only the mother matters.**

2.

**I heard this conversation
in my head, along with the trumpet
calls of physiology, the buzz
of witness, the greening
grass of the Triangle, yes,
I live here too, I thought of you,
your birthday on the way,**

coming up the river from the sea,
our time is tide, es verdad, señora, it
floats to us,
its fins so gentle,
step in, stand in the shallows
and see with our feet,
see what time feels like
and how it has brought you here,
there, anywhere,
look down at the clear water,
Mary's eyes looking at her child.

3.

When a friend has a birthday
and you actually remember it,
you say to yourself, Who is she
really? I've know her so long,
tittle tattle, near and far,

books and baskets, hugs and hums,
who is this person really,
heart and soul and habit
and goes home at night
and clubs the stairs?

The question is its own answer.

She goes up the stairs and is gone,
to Calvary or Paradise or to balcony
from which she sees the opera
that never ends,

or where she meets in the dark
her secret friends. Or sleeps.

You hope she';; dream
golden dreams as the Romans say
or maybe even dream of you.

4.

But that's just romance,

**we've gotten past all that,
we live in a crisis of identity,
people live in categories
and the categories hurt.
Shoeboxes for the soul
but convenient for journalists.
But when I ask Who are you
I don;t want to know
where your grandfather came from
or your toys when you were three.
I want to know what the bird
told you when it pierced the wall
with its golden cry,
the word it gave you
and I beg you to tell me.**

20 April 2022

=====

**How slow they roll
majestic,
fat cars down the hill,
pale SUVs and long sedans
all coming my way
till they all pass by.
It is such a privilege
to have a road to mind,
effortless, rewards
of incessant difference.
Change is our favorite song!**

20.IV.22

====

I hear in my head
Poind's voice saying
Stalin or somebody said
I will believe the American.
I forget the context, the meaning,
only the words stay firm.
So I will believe someone too,
I will believe the tree.
A hard language to learn,
it takes so much listening,
but once you get a smattering
the earth is yours.

20 April 2022

= = = = =

**The phone will ring
it will be the king
demanding more tribute.
Everybody is the king.
Or the queen.**

21.IV.22

=====

The fire hydrant
the whole street
archaic cars
LaSalle Studebaker
zeppelin in the sky.

Enough of that.
Now is now.
The hydrant is still here
a girl is leaning on it.

No, none of that either.
Just the street.
Though it's a road.
How many houses
does it take to make a street?

**Or is the fire plug all it needs,
the sense that someone cares,
that there is help somewhere?
Underground connections,
crow in the sky?**

21 April 2022

=====

**Egypt. Walk there.
Just close your eyes.
Egypt. When the body
was knew. Learning
to read. Ankles wet
from the river. Who
did you talk to, what
did they say? Egypt
keeps beginning.
Papyrus in your pocket.
What does the sign say?
Sometimes stone is warm.
Sometimes the sun.
Egypt. Your backyard
stretches to the horizon.
Or is that a tree? No tree**

**in Egypt, or not many.
Pile a stone on a stone
on a stone and so on,
name the day, color it in,
sing the tune the owl gave you.
Egypt. They carry shallow baskets
over their heads, full of fruits,
I'm getting frightened already,
Egypt, Egypt, the gods.**

21 April 2022

=====

The girl said:

**I took my name
from a cloud I heard in the sky
but when I was born
they called me Running Water.
How could I live with that,
everybody wanting me,
to be in me, so I took
a name for myself
so you can call me Silence
and you can watch me
any time of day.**

21 April 2022

=====

**Remove the world
that no one needs
but leave the word alone.
Intact, it generates
out of pure silence
a world to inhabit
friendly enough,
even with flowers.
Soul work, a wonder.**

22.IV.22

=====

**I can give you lessons
in how to be fat, lie flat,
act like a rat, anooze like a cat
but I'm much too lazy to
teach you to fly like a bat.**

22.IV.22

=====

**This is not the face I wanted
this barely detectable smile
looking out of the mirror.
I wanted passion, Pagliacci,
comedy, the visible gestures
of the heart, but no,
I look like a statue
who forgot to turn into stone.
Express yourself, Roberto,
blue sky, thunder and lightning,
tiger roar, simper for the sultan.
Where did I mislay my smile?**

22.IV.22

=====

Crossing into Ontario

he had forgotten his river

He knew this new language,

new dlag, new confusions.

But he needed a river.

Where can he find it?

Where does a littoral creature

find a shore to shelter on?

Inland is scary, scary, continuous,

nothing moving but the weather,

weird. So he began to sing,

Where is my river, mother,

bring me my water,

bring me my movement,

**o my soul is a canoe!
But the trees he passed
only giggled at his song.
But it is not nothing
to make a pine tree laugh
and so the new land let him in,
tolerated his allergy to earth,
put him to work, change his mind,
whisper It how much worse it is in
Arizona.**

22 April 2022

TOWER

Corsetted with flowers
the tower stands.

A modest tower,
even I can climb it,
clambering up the stone
steps inside to teach
a place above the flowers.

Me and sky together at last,
this beautiful assignation
coaxed by morning glories.

Not high above the earth
but high enough, air, sun
and all the other music of space

cleansing me, scrubbing
the me off me and letting
a man stand there in the simple light.

22 April 2022

HE SAID TO HER

Be my river.

She answered:
I am the sea.

He:
There must be some way
that you can come to me
for I am where I am
and know no other way to be

She:
I'll tell you what to do—
close your eyes
think of sad things
—burned-down libraries,

lost religions, the woman
you forgot to approach—
until you weep, just a little
no need for anguish, just
a tear or two. Now open
your eyes and follow the tear
as it rolls down your cheek,
falls onto your wrist, rolls
off onto the ground beneath you,
starts to grow, grow wide,
and flow, it flows, grows,
flows, until you have a river
of your own. And one day
you will be able to move.
Then you can follow it,
follow it all the way to me.

22 April 2022

=====

Can I sleep out loud
using words as snores,
writing them down
like scratching an itch?
Writan once meant scratch
or scrape, the telling blade
digs into obedient surfaces.
Listen. I don't hear anything
either. I must have awakened.

23 April 2022

=====

**Something's supposed
to happen today,
ask the Sun
to wake the trees
so they'll me.
I seem to have
no other almanac,
short of breath,
quick to forget.
At peace, the Sun
wakes the lawn too.**

23 April 2022

=====

**Give the angel
time to speak,
his clock is not like ours,
yours, even the bishop
keeps our same hour
and the rabbi and the lama
even, but the angel's
moment triangulates from ours.
Yours. Wait. The word
is coming, shaped
like a shaft of light, shadow
of a bird blessed upon us.**

23 April 2022

=====

**Time slipped by
we say, where did it go?
Fancy physics
has an answer—
read the paper,
time has a shadow too,
fleeting darkly
backwards, to the beginning.**

23 April 2022

=====

**Why do we have pasts,
that trail of stale crumbs
the ants follow to annoy us now?
Growl. Why can't it
just be now, with no beaky
shadow jabbing us from behind?**

2.

**Growl, as I remarked.
I flee from was into is.
Does that mean I flee from me?
You decide. You have a me too.
There's an ant crawling on your shoe.**

3.

**No easy way to resolve
these problems more
physiological than grammatical.**

**But grammar is all we have.
Or does it have us?**

4.

**Start again. When the past
catches up with me
I run like a crocodile,
lie like an ad on TV.
Anything but then. Anything
but who you are and who
you think I was. I am nobody.
Nobody yet.**

5.

**That's why we have closets,
to shove last year in
and the yea before and before that**

until there is a musty but nice
friendly smell in there
among the leather and the fur
the shabby cotton of past love.
Cark in here. In there, I mean,
comfy in its own way, to lean
onto the memories. Danger.
Growl get out and slam the door.
That ant is on my ankle now.

23 April 2022

=====

I talked to them all and told them
all that they needed to know

**to impersonate the emperor,
ill today, not sitting on his throne.
But dozens ready now through my
skillful instructions to ho out,
thousands of them, standing
on street corners, driving cars,
walking in the woods, and every
one of them a perfect replica
of the emperor, every one of them
saying I, and meaning it, I, I am
ND I must be obeyed.
And I too listened and obeyed.**

24 April 2022

=====

**The girl was made of white stone,
alabaster I guess, leaned
both her arms on the car window**

and spoke a sort of English
could\mostly figure out. She was
in love with someone, not me,
someone I didn't know well enough
to guide jis errant inclinations
towards her pale stone tenderness.
You poor girl, I said, how painful
that mus be, to want love in vaqil—
I did not dare pat her poor arms,
desire is contagious, so is loss.
I'll pray for you I said, she took
her arms away and disappeared
and I've felt guilty ever since.

24 April 2022

=====

The song should be long
as a sword but hide in its scabbard,

long as a river and permit
all the little streams of imagery
to wander their way in,
affluents of meaning.

The song should be true as breath
but not too personal, the song
must survive its singer.

find new mouths to make it live.

If this were itself a song

I wonder would it let me sing it?

24 April 2022

=====

It is a day for saying,
that is to say

**a day is to say,
if I may repeat myself,
I was here yesterday too.**

25.IV.22

=====

**Trusting blondly
the brunette earth
I have come
to my grey time
in a world turning green.
And they were all here
all the while,
crayons in a child's hand.**

25 April 2022

=====

**Light thickens in the trees.
Morning measures.
Is there a woman in the air,
another matter we try
to find each time we wake?
We move and they stand still
but inside it may be the opposite,
they change and we are fixed.
Can't I be a tree and change my mind?**

25 April 2022

=====

**In the weeks
between snow
and lawn mower:
uneasy peace.**

**Things could come
again or come too soon.
Here on an April morning
a man with a hedge-trimmer
eliminates nothing but silence.**

25.IV.22

HOW TO WRITE

Hear a word
and follow it
as you would
a bluebird
through the woods.

Something like that.
All the trees it touches,
all the leaves
in lands among,
all the insolent
silences it majes sing.

And if you don't
hear a word
to start with,

**pretend you do.
No one will know
and the bird will still fly.**

26 April 2022

=====

**Cautiously, through the mire,
wake.**

**It's the day swamp now,
you can see the slither, the slip,
the sludge on all sides, soft
though enough to get through
to where a day goes.**

**Pantomime solutions look like
men at work. Subways
reach out from cities, try
to reach daylight and some do.
I remember a span or trestle
over Jamaica Bay, alas, not coming
this way.**

**But here is still here,
thick round our ankles and no fear
or nothing rain can't wash away.**

26 April 2022

=====

**Raindrops on the window
song enough for both of us,
can't see it raining but behold
the evidence, pan for gold,
secret temples in the Sinai.
Where was I? A window, ours,
with rain on it. Hers. Or his,
gender has its mysteries
it shares with space and time.
Two raindrops tell me all this;
sometimes it's exciting just to be.**

26 April 2022

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

**Across the Adriatic
but this time west to east,
and no pasturing in Ithaca,
a bold enlightenment ever east,
fierce even to understand
what is beyond the land.
They came the long way
to America, the right way,
to where the sun came from.
Their Adriatic was Bering Strait,
it all happened before the book
and we are still confused.
Not everyone born here is native—
that is the problem.
Language changed the mountains,
but rivers did their best**

**to wash us clean. Still do.
Look at you now, in the glory
of identity, the river spoke
and you know who you are!**

27 April 2022

=====

Can't risk being too clear.
They cut their highway
through the anticline,
bridged the river
at its widest point. Wonder why.
Salt water, seals at Saugerties.
open the window, call it a door,
let's all be mammals together,
bring the thermometer, staple
the pages together and tuck them
way in the back of the drawer
behind the gloves and binoculars,
shovel the path, ring the bell,
pretend nobody's home. Sigh.
This is what I tell myself
every day. The game goes on,

turn the page in the book
you forgot to put away. Words
stare at you, the way they do,
always talking, telling, asking.
And you do. Chapter 37
Journey to Greece. Not me,
somebody on their way
to Anatolia, Sunrise City
the Hreeks called it, now
go to find out why.
Bare red hills of beginning.
Close the window. Calm down.
The door swings shut,
be calm, it's only the wind.

27 April 2022

WHY ARE YOU GOING?

**Haven't you been away enough.
long enough to be here a while?
Away is such charmer, music,
images, svelte characters,
swoony marketplaces, stone.
Yes, I understand the appeal
of marble and limestone, yes,
the ruined temples, black sand
by a strange sea, or the same sea
speaking weird languages, yes,
but here has here in it,
here is right here, underfoot,
my hand in your hand, here
has no glamor, only the magic of being.**

27 April 2022

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**The sun has come back.
Now it's up to me.
I'll start with a word
and see where it goes.
It brings me right here,
home under the sun.**

27.IV.22

= = = = =

**Wounded foot,
just like America
the culture's negative
but the wound won't heal.
Small wound, big pain.
Half an inch, if that,
and broken sleep. In and ouch,
harsh gates of doze.
I lay this complaint before language
in the hope it will seem just
silly a month from now.**

28 April 2022

=====

Phone lines quiver in the wind—
who hears that cello playing?
Wind he bow and earth
the old Cremona, listen
hard as we can to understand
what the air is saying, remember
they used to call a song an air,
aria, the breath inside us
in lov with all out there.

28 April 2022

=====

**Reading the paper
and reading a paper
are different animals.**

**One goes in and one goes out,
one washes up on the beach
one lies there like a pretty stone.**

**What do they do in languages
with no articles, like Russian,
War and Peace, Peter and Wolf?**

You never know if you never know.

The paper rustles when you read tt.

**a paper makes you look up yo see
if the audience is still with you—
don't lose your place in the text.**

28 April 2022

=====

**She thought it was a bus
it was a cloud instead
but she got on it anyhow
and headed west. What
comes after Nebraska?
Time will tell. Maybe she
will rain down on some desert town
and make the children happy.
She remembers her childhood,
Goethe could tell jokes too,
and Dostoevski was a clown.
She smiles in heaven so don't we
answer with our own?**

28 April 2022

=====

**I keep thinking about
the black sand of the Algarve,
which I have never seen,
I see, swimmer's sprawled
drying in strong sunshine,
surf nibbling at their toes.
Sometimes a cloud comes over
and I see no more, just hear
the words, sounds like Arabic,
must be Portugal, o words,
o dearest of old friends.**

28 April 2022

THE GRAIL

A girl in wind.

A leaf blows up
against the windowpane
or a moth, whatever
it was is gone.

A boy walking
through the woods.

Headlights at night
quick through trees,
highway beyond the woods.

A man reads the paper on a porch,
a woman watches, half-smiling
with tenderness, a little skeptical.

This is the cup the Lord
hath filled for us, take, drink.

28 April 2022

=====

**And when the water spoke
it went like this:
I wish, I wish
to walk in you
and you beside me
walking home,
always home,
no exile, only island.**

29 April 2022

=====

The outboard motor
is a thing of joy,
I wish I had one
so I could sleep
and we ould go.

29.IV.22

=====

No spots in the sky.
The casual magic of morning,
ceremonial shadows
lapping the lawn.
Calm. The business day
is on its way, I alone
am here to tell it.
Nobody on the grass,
the woodchuck still asleep.
My mind persists in hearing
the subway growl
a hundred miles away, south,
and I am left alone with matter.

29 April 2022

APRIL LUNE

**Anybody could have
said these words,
I just happened to.**

29.IV.22

THE MEMORY HOUSE

so famous in the Renaissance
has another meaning now.
Everything, anything
I remember is where I live.
Everything that ever happened
is still happening. All the lost
things cluster round,
almost palpable, heartfelt,
stuffed in the mind.
It all is lost but all still here,
my feet that make
the floorboards creak,
the door opens by itself,
the dead ask permission to come `in.

29 April 2002

I see the number
and know it's Olson's door.
But is that his sea
the photo shows
or is it my sea too.
Hard to tell from the picture,
the houses could be anybody,
the rock feels right at home,
cold, uncomfortable
but bearing up. Bearing us.
Gloucester on an April day
but who can prove it?
I have walked through that door
but they've repainted it,
I have worshipped that sea
but at night, from the castle—
one is always alone with the sea.

29 April 2022

IT ISN'T RAINING

**so this should be easy:
imagine the trajectory
of a single raindrop
as a silver line
from somewhere.**

Goal: find out where.

Method: Climb the line.

**If it were raining now
you might lose your way,
slip onto another line,
confuse your destination.
But as it is, that single line
stretches unmistakably up
from your thought to its source.
that might be the source of it all.**

29 April 2022

=====

**Sometimes the song goes on
by itself, breath's sediment
slipping from the lips,
the human hum finds words
as if nby accident.
But which comes first
it;s hard to tell.
And no one needs to know,
we are not scientists,
we are people singing naked in the
woods.**

29 April 2022

=====

The armillary sphere
is mostly air.
And how deep is your
atmosphere, senorita,
and yours, monsignor,
the weight of air
holding your biretta in place?
Ah, we are lucky children
in this generous school,
air for all and math for supper.

29 April 2022

APRIL LUNE

Anybody could
write these words,
I just happened to.

29.IV.22

=====

Rileys lived next door
when I was little.
Yes, there were Irish
in the hood back then
but who knows now.
Or even then why were we
here and not in Bay Ridge
or Ocean Parkway
with the money, fancy church,
houses with yards all round them
not just out back on the alley.
Irish. And a German
with his dog. And French
I swear it ip the block
towards Avenue R, probably
from Canada anyhow,

**you know the way things are.
It all has to come out in the end.**

29 April 2022

