

12-2022

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== == == == ==

Mel dat rosa apibus

All the vowels
and a star.

The give of things
made clear, all sweet and slow
in the loveliest places,
roses from the East,
beware the stings.

The rose gives honey to the bees
it said. It takes much longer
to say what it means.

The alchemical maxim woke me,
I tried to let the pillow stifle it
but words will have their way.
And which star? Did it mean
all the words breathed out
through its vowels, Ishtar,
Tara, *a star?*

I thought of Duncan
walking with Levi up 19th Street,
poet on the young poet's arm,
the honey of his speech
never pausing long,
the sweetness is the accurate
is what he meant,
what it means,

**I thought
of alchemy again, of all the meanings
wrought
we still don't fully understand,
yes, what this meant in the soul
and this in the love-life, yes,
and this in the test tube, yes,
and this in neurons, blood,
bone.**

**And the bees still feed on
what they feed us
and the rose still thorns,
hands and birds be careful,
the rose still sports its heraldry
in vases on lovers' tables, yes,**

**and honey bears the secret
healing powers of the place
itself in which its flowers grew
the bees gathered, ripened,
the place we share,**

**we still
can bring it home in glass jars
and heal our subtler maladies
if we know how, hint, hint,
Hahnemann, hint, hint Dr. Jung.**

**So much of what we do
endangers bees,
O cure the bees of us,
this disease we sometimes are**

**even to the simplest flower,
we think they're simple.
Winter now, and no bee flies.
And before the alchemists even
the poet said *Quando
ver venit meum?*
And when does my spring come?**

1 December 2022

=====

**Now linger
like a stinkbug
asleep inside
a lampshade
glad of the warmth,**

**sleep with closed eyes,
wake with winter.
Shelter. Time too
hs its quiet walls.
Walks. Waiting,
Writing is waiting
turned into energy.
They told us young:**

**everything means,
we have a life to learn
what they mean,
as many as you can,
what else is time for?**

1.XII.22

== == == == ==

**Blib rejoinders
from outside,
finch or phoebe?
What's the weather?**

1.XII.22

NEWS OF THE DAY

**A little brighter today
than yesterday. Hint
of blue even, pale
as can be? Trust
the north horizon?
And a grey cloud
turning white!
The west is new!**

1.XII.22

=====

**I never climbed a tree,
never learned to swim,
never rode a bike,
never skied or skated.
And et I claim to know
the fact of earth,
the truth of water,
learned the taste
of gravity in little sips.**

2 December 2022

== == == == ==

**Learning lapses
but a dead leaf
is still a leaf.
Louis Napoleon
comes to the throne,
there are no subways yet.**

**But soon. The wind
picks up, the leaf
whoever he is slips
away on the current,
the currency of air,
they begin to dig,
tunnels come to mind,**

**and down the Brenner Pass
peaceable invaders come.**

**Cold water run fast.
Pick the words up
as you hurry past.**

2 December 2022

=====

**Grace before acts
of music,
gratitude
for learning when
to turn around
and when to face
the voice or let
her go on speaking
quietly behind you
facing what comes.**

2.XII.22

=====

**How have they come
to rely on me,
these shadows?
Isn't my own weight
enough to carry?**

**And yet light does this
to me. Or maybe
the shadow actually bears
some of my weight away!**

**Now I need to find a scale
that measures light and shade
while weighing me.**

**I look at the shadow on my wrist
right now, lick it, then shove it
into the light, good-bye shadow,
lick again, tastes the same.
Science is so difficult! No wonder
they don't teach it in school.**

2 December 2022

=====

**Honor the elder,
man or tree,
Honor everyone.**

2.XII.22, *lune*

=====

**I lived on Brown Street
but who was Brown,**

**Haring Street next over
and who was Haring?**

**Then we moved to Crescent
Street but who is the moon?**

**You see, bafflement doesn't
end with childhood.
Some mysteries linger lifetimes.**

What was the name of lame

Mr Hoffman's friendly collie?

**Who owns those two white
horses in the trees all
these years down River Road?**

2 December 2022

=====

**No answer from the void.
But the emptiness
is answer in itself,
adequate, resonant,
a concert hall all
ready to begin.**

**Let the blessing
come from me,
come from thee,
come from the inmost
nature of any I am.,**

3 December 2022

=====

**A dream like Scrabble
but the letters
all had to fit in one
direction, one long line
only the breath
could make shorter,
lines of a poem,
rules of a game.**

3.XII.22

WHAT I LEARNED IN QATAR

The years run round me
like a soccer team,
circles and dashes,
two teams, no ball in sight
and yet they tumble,
memories crashing
against me till I win
some refuge, get
the red card of sleep.

3.XII.22

=====

after R.C.

**Why do we need
any kind of pet?
Couldn't we learn
to love direct?**

**Why is fur required
for us to learn
to revere who they are
from whom we come**

**in whom we live,
womb-whispers
of every mortal thing?**

3.XII.22

== == == == ==

**When poets turn moralists
shove them off in a rowboat
with only one oar,**

**shout: Learn balance,
baby, any shoe
will take you home.**

3.XII.22

=====

**The paradox of going
there becomes here—
what happens now?**

ossia : qua lune:

**Paradox. Going
makes there here
so what happens now?**

3.XII.22

ALBORADA OF THE GREY TREES

**left to me
but I left my lute
in dreamless sleep**

**so there, so where
can i fetch a tune
to tell the morning
how much I love
this day she gives me
even though she hid
the sun away,**

**a tune
demanded, I hear**

**already the wheels
of silence stirring,
soft rain still, listen,
pale sky, soft bed.**

3 December 2022

=====

Yes I can

Yes we can

Yes you can

yes I can

hear the words

words you don't have to say,

don't want to say,

need to say,

that is what language is for

to cast its ardent light

out of our crimson bodies,

**ut of you to me from me to you
to cast shadows,
remember shadows,
meaningful shadows
thrown on the mind
of the other,
you hear me, I hear you
in your sleep
wide awake,
walking up the street,
our fear, our fire, our fantasy**

3 December 2022

=====

**It's not a novel
it's now.**

**And that means
up, as in get,
but not too fast,
fast is strain
and strain is sin.
Every nerve
shouts that.**

**Where was I?
O yes, I was now.**

3.XII.22

=====

Being in the right place
is what time is for.
Moon over Ferncliff fprest
last night, crystal, small,
surprisingly bright.
There is an obligation
in being anywhere at all.
She's playing cards with us,
we look down to see
wat we have in our hand
as they used to call it,
the set of symbols by which
we learn or lose. What I see
id the close-cut cornfield,

**winter waiting. I look up
again, but the car has me
in its clutches, it has
taken the whole moon away.**

3 December 2022

AFTER APULEIUS

She comes across the water
and we see her. Seeing her changes
everything.

Philosophy, at least after
Parmenides, is selfish. Intensely
selfish. All that seems to count is
what goes on in the mind. Matter
outside, mind inside, *schluss*.

In the aridity of post-Renaissance we
see a progressive reluctance to care
about or even pay heed to the
possibility of the Other. Otherness is

reduced to politics, us & them, schools of thought against schools of thought. Even Nietzsche, who knew better, and who invented a prophetic voice (from Otherland, in Othertime) and made it speak, even he grew restive, angry at Wagner for hinting at an other Other.

Philosophy still does not love an Other. The Existentialists (almost a century ago now) tried at least to reckon with the concept, and loved the Other in the person of the other human at the table, wife worker, someone at least else.

**But religion posits an Other,
an Other to whom we are somehow
relevant, an Other the religious
mindset even dares to suppose
speaks to us. appears to us. Walking
across the sea in splendor to take
away our false sense of self, our
asinine delusion.**

**It pleases me that Stein includes
Lucius's radiant and poignant poetic
refutation of all philosophies as we
have come to understand them.**

**Stein sets it in verse, tacit
acknowledgement that we can still
get away with things in poetry
denied to us in academic discourse.
Try to imagine any thinker you value
on his knees before the Temple or
the Cross.**

**Then look up and see Her coming
across the sea. When you see her
everything changes.**

**Even when you see her in your
mind's eye. Or even in the pages of a
book.**

3 / 4 December 2022

=====

**In the middle
of memory**

a puddle—not
a pretty word
but it gleams,
and on it floats
a big dead rose
or is it a living
lotus? Look close,,
the pool laps large,
more flowers
float, you can't
know the names
of all of them but
there they are
and sometimes even
in memory the
sun rises too.

4 December 2022

= = = = =

**Lift the latch—
only garden gates
have latches now
so this must be a place
where things choose to grow.**

**I go inside to breathe in
my share of growing.**

**This must be real, it can't
be a dream, if this were dream
I'd be in a car, passenger seat
counting the bare trees
as the car moves ever faster**

through anything I ever knew.

I lift the latch.

I hear the creak of now.

4 December 2022

=====

**Quick, give
something fast
to the whole world—
all you need to do is want to.
The rest flows by itself.**

4 December 2022

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

**All I want to do
is what a mountain does,
connect earth with the sky
to let the living ones of both
rise up and come down to us.
Beloved readers,
we build with the same stone.**

4 December 2022

BAD DREAM

**Wanted to leave book by a tree
but I was hungry and the door is
locked a young man said
wjen I went round the back
to come in. I was angry,
not very, more disappointed
that this place always open
was not, not my but ours.
What will they close next?
Will Earth close for the season,
so we have to hang out in space
with our books and appetites
and memories of trees?**

4 December 2022

TENETS OF DAYBREAK

**Hold the railing of light,
follow it, firmly,
bow to your table
and make the promises
each day demands,**

**and only then slip
on your clothes, cincture
of that old leather belt
softened by years of you.**

**Be what you have always been,
that way you'll be always new.
Swallow your doubts**

**or spit them out, whichever
feels better in the mouth
now clear enough to say,
the first words begin you.**

5 December 2022

=====

**Sleep onslaught but then
wake again
good to taste the light.**

5.XII.22 *lune*

== == == == ==

**She sings with two voices
the song makes one,
the words free from language
seep into pure feeling.**

5.XII.22

= = = = =

**Go back to Jordan
start singing again,
the wetter your feet
the truer your words,
we learned that from
a heron in a bend of stream,
stand there and sing,
leap up and fly, blue
as the sky you seem to become.**

5 December 2022

=====

**Pound your opinions
till they crack—
what oozes out of them
might just make sense,
might even be music,
and music always runs
the risk of coming true.**

5.XII.22

=====

**Got the name wrong
the smile at least correct—
what day is it,
and why? Anyhow,
didn't we meet
once at a concert,
some pianist playing Schubert
or was it Schumann?
She was blonde, and you
were wearing a green coat.
Some things you can't forget.**

5 December 2022

= = = = = = = = = =

**One thing I do know:
you never
know, you never know.**

6.XII.22, *lune*

=====

**The alarm has struck,
the caliphs of dream
pull back their armies,
peace feels like dim
light in sore eyes.**

**We are all crusaders now
losing day by day our holy
war against Capitalism—
but still we sleep on
through the bright sunshine
buying as fast as we can
hoping one day to drain
the well of stuff. Unlikely.
Sleep on. The subway helps,**

**we know that nothing
below the ground is real,
fairy tale and goblin saga,
and not much clearer out here.**

6.XII.22

== == == == ==

**Woke too early
that's my woe,
got to get back
to that nightclub
twixt billow and sheet,
see who that chanteuse
is who sings such songs.**

5.XII.22

== == == == ==

**What I say today
will only make sense
tomorrow. That
is what architecture
means, marble cliffs,
ancient script of
shadows on the breakfast table.**

6.XII.22

=====

**The brick man and the starling
sat on the old wall thinking.
Stone is best the bird was sure,
the man edgy, a little proud,
give me mud and straw and I
can make my own stone, red,
rugged, lines on it you can
almost read. The bird agreed,
whistled it's good magic, helped
a world where stone was rare
or too heavy for louts to lift
and after all, mud is everywhere.**

6 December 2022

=====

**Worry water
but a loop of white flowers
with a rose here and there
tossed on the wave.
She saw it in her mind thar way,
dark pool, pale blossoms,
hope. Stone wall
along the zoo, Fifth Avenue
she heard the actual lions
growling as she walked.
Or whatever they were.
How wonderful to walk
between cars and busses
on her left side, wild animals**

**on her right and still be safe,
all the growling in the world,
she still had flowers in her mind.**

7 December 2022

== == == == ==

**Every staircase
leads into a museum.
Fact. Even the steps
up from the subway
leads into this diorama
called here and now,
the unseen curators
forever changing the display.
And in this old house
of yours or mine
we climb the stairs
to where dreams are stored.**

7 December 2022

=====

Thousands of fans
at World Cup match
whistling all at once.
Why? Contempt
I guess, like the Devil
at the end of *Mefistofele*
whistling at God's angels.
Or are they just trying
to get their own breath
busy in that hour and a half
of grown men running around
trying to master a scoundrelly
little ball? Exhausting,
losers weeping on their knees,

**the winners whistling.
Sometimes I can't help
getting mad at what we are.**

7.XII.22

COLOR CODE

**When I was a kid
all the cars were black,
now so many I see
are white, especially
at morning, going uphill,
why? The angel answered:
Because you're looking,
counting, noticing– we
will always give you things
to see, sleek anxieties
to fit in busy schedules.
Think white means something?
Who knows, you may be right.**

7.XII.22

== == == == ==

**Clam shell ashtray
once upon a time,
your grandmother had one
though she didn't smoke,
it was a sign, a loyalty,
of living near the sea,
believing in the sea,
the ocean religion
before religions,
mother womb and holy place, holy
speaking
and this little shell
a curve of wave upwelling**

**fixed in space, the sea
you hold in your hands, the sea
that holds the ash of our breath,
marriage of ocean and air.**

8 December 2022

=====

**What is time to a pig?
Punch line of an Irish joke
too long to explain.
But what is time to anyone,
to you say, with your long hair
needing so much brushing, or you
with your thoroughbred
all day groping, or you
with you iPhone playing
Scrabble with a girl in Cathay,
or me closing one more book
and sighing like a girl in love?**

2.

**I suppose that's why they built
Stonehenge,
spent all those years of effort
to get time out of themselves
and set it up out there,
in plain sight, daylight all sides,
out there, so we can be free of it
and watch the Sun come and go
as She pleaseth, and She is pleased
always to come through the same
door.**

3.

**Or later
when we were lazy
almost as lazy as now
we were content
to fashion sundials
of bronze
to guide the Sun around our yard
and a child would stand there
with his finger on the point
of the upright blade and think
Now I am Time, I twist
the metal in its base, be dawn again!
I don't have to go to school.**

6 December 2022

= = = = =

for M.I.

1.

Wood white in sunlight
yes. Old wood whites best.
Old words write best.

2.

he meant but didn't say
so simply said but said
encaustic, words thick
with time's wax, soft
indeed to fingertips
but hard to read for those
who'd read and run.
Any teenager knows that,
you get more love

by being hard to get.

8 December 2022

THE FIG TREE

1.

**How far north
can a fig tree grow?
Gaze into ths egg
of polished onyx
and guess the truth.
O night,
 you tell me
everything,
then I forget.
But you come again,
bring me to mind.**

2.

I swear we had one

**even in the Brooklyn snow,
wrapped in burlap
till early summer then
a tree again. Or was it
peach? Magyars
planted it, and they knew.**

3.

**Name all the cities
where you've been
long enough to have
slept at least one night
and let the place in
the way sleep gathers.
The sandman is not**

**strewing, he's collecting
all the grains you need
for the day to come.**

**So name them carefully,
those burgs and citadels,
those monorail suburbs,
those shacks on riverside.**

4.

**For example take any word
and solve the letters of it
into the initials of people,
ones you know or love or
just heard about in books.**

**This is the cabala of the names,
this is what a word really means**

**to you, and maybe just to you.
Try it, an shiver with fright.
A good scare is good for the soul.**

5.

**It is the ninth of December.
That mens something too—
but you get tired of meanings,
of meaning this and that at all.
Think what a child things
at the window: looks OK
out there, but I'm OK right here.**

6.

**Where does this road leave?
I used to ask, getting the words**

wrong already. They'd laugh
and change the subject. Where
does a word leave me
after it has been spoken?
Roads, words—so hard to tell
some things apart. I'm not
much smarter now.

7.

So it comes down to spelling
yet again, gematria and birthday
cards,
get the year right, spell the numbers,
numbers are the smallest alphabet
but sometimes the words are long,
too long to live to the end,

evening gloom on sunny morning,
Friday is Venus's day,
emerald Her stone but green
polished onyx will do,
see all it told already, see
what evening brings
shen the blue sinks down
back into the trees,
you know what I mean,
count your blessings,
go to *shul*, the night is waiting
to tell you every blessed thing.

8.

The dried figs on my table
are chewy choky, sweet.

They come in plastic wrapper
from Smyrna, a place
I do not know, though
I flew over Turkey once.
Red hills, no tree in sight.
So I know nothing about its tree,,
this ig I nay soon be chewing,
who can I ask if I have forgotten
all the night told me?
All we really know is what
we retain from our sleep,
the sleep called school and the
sleep called night,
I'm wandering away from my tree,
Crescent St, bus roaring north,
the War about to end and then

who will I be?

9 December 2022

== ==

**Robust, as with onions,
one-pointed, as with swords.
But Tarot cards are made to bend
to flip across the table and tell
what's going on in that
dark intriguing cellar, your mind.
asleep beneath the wakefulness.
Here's the Three of Crows—
now you are safe to walk
by the river and come home.
And here's the Nine of Books,
room for a kitten on your knee
as you read . A cat? Well,
let a hand rest there until**

**a page needs to be turned.
Four fingers and a thumb,
four paws and a tail, *uguale*
as Pound says. But you're not
reading poetry. What book
did you slip from the shelf?
At times you can't trust anybody.**

9 December 2022

HIS SON SANG

*Old men like themselves the best
Time took away all the rest*

*Now they sit in December
Trying not to remember*

is how he started
a youngish man standing
by my table,
and suddenly i just knew
he was the son of my old friend
who taught and musick'd

**so many years in this school,
sat in the faculty dining room
so many lunch times,
right here, with me,**

**and my eyes filled with tears
and I wanted to ask the son
about his father, couldn't
suddenly remember his name,
we were so close
that names didn't matter,**

**tell me what happened
I wanted to say, tell me**

**everything that came after.
I reached out for his arm
but he had already
too deep in his song to hear me.**

10 December 2022

{The first two lines are verbatim from, in, the dream that woke me. The rest tries to narrate what happened in the dream. I don't know of whom the dream tried to remind me.}

== == == == ==

**The lion force of sheer analysis
runs in our fingertips
when we touch an object,
thing or being, live or sleeping,
and then the Knowledge
rushes up our arms, swells
in the heart, distributes
its researches in the brain.
Try it sometime—touch
something as if your hands
were virgin, and had never
touched anything till now.**

10 December 2022

=====

I am the noblest character I know,
my father was Duke of Devon
and my mother Queen of Kerry,
they got married in mufti
on Old New York and sang of it
frequently, pretending to be
just Maggie and Jim
but I know better, I could read
through their silences
at suppertime, the faraway\look in
his pale eyes, the quiet
warmth of her own silences,
so very much her own,
so articulate, gentle

**as a fur collar. I could tell.
They left me everything,
except the silence. I still
am searching for my own.**

10 December 2022

=====

**I used to answer politely
when called by nicknames.
No more. Haughtiness
is best. Honor the name
your wise or witty parents
gave you. The name is sacred!
Nomen numen! So John
don't be Jack. And please,
Ricardo, don't be a Dick.**

10.XII.22

=====

**Take a sliver of white pine
soak it in hot black coffee,
leave it there for a month,
take it out, dry it in the sun,
polish it or wax it till it shines.
Coffee wood, timber
of an absent tree, color
of someone's hair, or eyes,
or a message scribbled
on a Christmas card, brown
trying to be black, wood
is always trying to talk.**

10.XII.22

AZOTH

**Solomon on his sickbed
tried to, had to,
remember all his wives,
thousand wives,
their names at least,
from aleph to tav,
that's what the alphabet
is for, so we don't forget
all those who gave us
what they give, life and love
means and meaning , all
the glorious whatever
of being together, if only
one night a year, one day**

**of a life. Hours he spent
arranging their names,
constantly distracted
by their faces features,
dialects their bodies spoke.
A thousand wives! And when
he had finished his remembering
only then would the Lord
let him pass away. Or live—
let the king if he so chose
name himself among the living.**

11 December 2022

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

**Mist in the trees
drifts into mind.
No. Shake the head,
clear the skull–
bones are white
for a reason, see
clear, see the real
structure of things.
Breathe out now.
Let brightness linger.**

11 December 2022

=====

**Was it snow
or someone else?
O wake-up is a fearful time,
who dark'd the window,
who spoke the sudden silence?
Fear is common,
it lasts to be alive
is to be afraid.
Or so the morning said,
snow on the phone lines
nothing on the ground.**

11 December 2022

=====

**Brave enough to be wrong,
belted with pondweed,
cowl'd in cloud,
ever hoping, ever fearful,
what else is new
but to be and be you?**

11.XII.22

SNOW DAY

Snow on the ledger
lines of white
across and through the trees
write the journal of this day,
voyage of the k light
just begun,
the journey.

2.

The word comes from French,
jour, a day, Latin *diurnus*,
daily, from *dies*, two syllables,
a day. That's how it looks.
Sunset, a day dies in Latin,

**one syllable now,
because they always do.**

3.

**Not yet. It is morning now,
first light weltering in snow,
windless the infinite inscriptions
in the bare branches. See.
See, I am describing what I see,
what more can it ask of me?**

4.

**If I could just
let myself look
at the sudden
beauty of it,**

**everything
turned white,
patterns everywhere
I look, why
can't I just delight
in what is seen?
Worry what's
to come? Why
isn't now enough
always and always?**

5.

**So, doctor, the anxiety
doesn't go away,
coiled or slithering
it undercuts the day.**

**No, doctor, I don't want
to take a pill to make
it sleep or go away.
I want the day to cure me,
reassure me, this is
how it is, and this is me
seeing it, and all
I have to do is witness.
So teach me delight.
Start with the pure white.**

12 December 2022

=====

**The storm comes in, the snow,
and suddenly we understand
we are intruders in this place,
vermin the usually patient earth
puts up with or doesn't notice
and then the weather comes.
We are outsiders, not built
for cold, this immobility.
What is our real homeland?
Tomorrow or the next day
we'll ease up, and once again
forget to find the answer.**

12.XII.22

=====

**Hair on the head
for a reason?
I can see it on the back
and arms and chest
but why just up po top,
up here, where I try
to figure such things out,
hairy problems as they say,
mysterious as dandelions
any month now.**

12.XII.22

= = = = =

**White as it was it's
brighter now
but trees still quiet.**

12.XII.22 *lune*

== == == == ==

**Lopsided energy,
to talk about what is seen—
shouldn't I be shouting
about what nobody knows,
least of all me?**

**We are tools against ignorance,
the process uses us
to make things up, tell lies
that turn into truth, why not,**

**they know what's in our faces,
no need to tell them
what everybody knows..**

**Time for new languages,
of tree bark and nau5ilus,
time for the sun to come out of the
snow.**

12.XII.22

= =

=====

**I'm dreaming of a green Christmas
where no trees get chopped down
and carted home with ornaments
then burned. A season when
no bird or beast is murdered
to grace the festive table,
when nothing is bought and nothing
is sold,
where we walk on gentle fields
or quiet syteets and listen
to the world itself alone.
No ice, no snow, no jingling bells—or
maybe far off one church bell booms
for those
who pray in special places.**

**I'm dreaming of a green world where
we pray everywhere
and all the time so all we do
and think and say
becomes our prayer.**

13.XII.22

== == == == ==

**Everything writes.
Snow on branches,
suns noble scrawls
of shadow on snow.
The alphabet itself
is just a beginning.**

13.XII.22

=====

Using the animal
part of the soul
to rest in sunshine,
a trick so many
of us find so hard.
Be still. Be here.
And all that wisdom
trembling underneath
the jitters of all
the way things are.
Or seem. Be soul instead.

13.XII.22

== == == == ==

**When you hear a voice
but no one there
it's likely to be a tree.
Or is that just me?**

13.XII.22

== == == ==

Amour, amor,
what's always beginning,
love is a womby thing
s pregnancy of mind
from the world is born
fresh and messy, full of wonder.

14 December 2022

=====

**A technicality, not
winter yet, a week away
and I yearn for spring,
I want to stand
outside my house
not wrapped like a mummy,
smoke billowing out of my mouth
without even a cigarette.
But that they say about children,
always wanting what is not?
Adulthood seems a shaky state,
any minute now I'll start to cry.**

14.XII.22

== == == == ==

**Assignment: write a poem
long enough to fit
Pennsylvania in
all the way to Ohio
and from Lake Erie down
to the Mason-Dixon Line.
Be rectangular about it
so we can tell north from south,
Quakers from Poles in Scranton,
hear the liberty Bell even in
quiet synagogues of Squirrel Hill.
I'm just giving you the size,
not the subject, what the poem
is about is up to you,**

**those ballet dancers prancing
in your mind, the lion hunters
prowling through your woods.
Don't ask me what poems
are supposed to be about—
you know all the answers.
What you lack are the questions.**

14 December 2022

=====

**Waiting for
the winter wildflower,
you know what I mean,
the lovable unlikely,
the frem in daylight,
your hand in mine
under the blanket,
quiet morning
free of all necessities.**

14.XII.22

== == == == ==

**Through brushstrokes of light
I see a landscape
that needs me
if only to behold it
from where I am, I am its other
in its parlor, the guest
I feel like whenever I see trees.**

14 December 2022

=====

for G.C.

**You must understand
this is not a poem,
this is a cartoon.
These words appear
floating in a big balloon
over a whole chain
of little bubbles
arising from a brain.
We do not see the brain.
We do not see the mind
of waking person
or sleeping beast from
which these words**

**are being thought
out here, where you
can see them, clear,
nothing to distract
from what they say,
nothing to prevent you
from reading between
the lines the way we do,
all of us read the special
meaning that only you
can see, the one
that tells you these
words are meant for you.**

15 December 2022

= = = = =

**It is immoral
to read
a newspaper
outdoors,
act of denial
of all
the real news all round.**

15.XII.22

=====

I've said it all
so many times
all that's left
is to say it again.

That's what the opera is,
basso buffo and French horn,
soprano squeal, lecherous duets,
and here's me in the dark
adoring everything I hear
and was born to listen.

I mean music, I mean
that first wild man on his

**bone flute singing with one puff
of Neolithic breath all the songs
that ever were or will be,
every music from the breath
donated to the silent world.**

15 December 2022

== == == == ==

**Gurdjieff says the moon
runs on us, we are the battery
from which it fuels its light,
maybe fades with us, grows
full with what we do and say
then fades again. Our fault.
Our floundering midnight glory.**

15.XII.22

=====

The grain of wood
guides the eye.
We read the lines
without consciously knowing
what they're saying.
But we will still reach
the _____ they are pointing to.

15 December 2022

=====

**When the south said
to the azimuth I love thee
Sarah, the raincloud
was shocked into silence.**

**Some things we mustn't utter,
the ancient truths of tone
don't have to be spoken,
they're there for all to hear
just by being here.**

**But south protested,
everyone must have a name
and names are what I love,**

**names parse us through each other,
without them who would I be,
and she, and east, and the pale
moon?**

16 December 2022

=====

**Call it September
live in denial,
the tumult of witness
lock out of the courtroom.
your bleak auditorium
with a mural of the sun at noon.
Fear is the oxalic acid
nibbling away at your bones.
Revise! Be now! Kiss the snow!**

16 December 2022

AFTER BUSONI

Arbeit,
heilende Welle,
in dir
bad' ich mich rein
Faust sings,
so hard
to say it right
in our tongue,
“Work,
healing wave,
in you
I wash myself clean”
is one way
but clean meant pure

**and I don't wash,
wash is common,
bathing is solemn,
total immersion,
I bathe myself pure
in you,
you healing wave,
ocean of all we make
and sing anddo,
the Work.**

16.XII.22

DATE

**The woman looks across
the table at the man and asks
Who would you be
if you could be me?**

**But only asks silently,
it's the real question,
watches his eyes
to catch the answer—
the only way to know
who he really is.**

16 December 2022

== == == == ==

**North sky white word,
light washed the rain away.
Now that my report is finished
I can go on sleeping deep
into what it says, whoever it is.**

17 December 2022

== == == == ==

**Trees and rivers
both have branches
climb the one
and swim the other
either way will work
reach the sea or else
that upside-down ocean
we live deep down in
and breathe it all in.**

17 December 2022

=====

**I murmur now what I sang before
and tht sounds sd and old but
maybe more polite. Murmuring
makes you listen close,, hear
intensely, but only if you want.
Otherwise I'm just landscape
no harm I hopeto man or beast.**

17.XII.22

=====

**The little boy stood
on the tank car in Callicoon
while the train paused.
Hard to scramble up there
brave to stand. Photo shot
and down he came.
So much for childhood. Later
he read some books. Even
in winter the day is ;ong.**

17 December 2022

=====

**I want everybody to be a priest,
every meal a Mass or seder,
every tune a sacred hymn,
sleeper's snore an organ drone.
No more boxed-in crowds
on Sunday morning, no more
pilgrimage but the livelong day,
apocalypse of sunset, gospel
that birds chant to us,
holy holy holy right at home,
we're there already,
look up, smile, say Amen.**

17 December 2022

=====

Walked a line, East Germany,
walked on the frozen Baltic,
Kant in the distance,
saw old Hansa ships in Wismar
not just in mind, that place
more dangerous than mines
or ice, a swoon of remember,
images, I still hold my breath
as I cross the empty field.

17 December 2022

= = = = =

**Brightness, come back to be day.
Let me sit here shaping silence,
count without numbers,**

**send my love letters in envelopes
with no name or address on them
this sweet answerless morning.**

2.

**Yes, sculpt the silence
till even your fingers begin
to understand the world.**

3.

**The chorus takes over,,
the soloist sits down.**

**Now everybody talks at once—
how else could we make a word?**

**And we have to say something, don't
we?**

17 December 2022

== == == == ==

**Who shields their eyes
a little from the rising sun
understands the dialect of stone,
to be here, just be here,
to be walked on, slept on,
built on, prayed on, and ever
echo clearly every thought
that passes by. Then see.**

18 December 2022

== == == == ==

**Echo the garden,
echo the stream.
There is a statue
for each month of the year
nudes cared in ancient times,
they walk among us now
politely clothes. See if you can
recognize a few of them
as they wanderin your crowd.
They smile at you often
but their skin is very cold.**

18 December 2022

== == == == ==

**See the green again,
our meadow
throws off its blanket.**

18.XII.22, *lune*

=====

**If a name means what it says
I have a good reputation
but walk a little lame,
go to church and like to quarrel..
Is this me? I need a new mirror.**

18.XII.22

= = = = =

**Coaster sticks
to bottom of glass,
falls ff when you drink.
Coaster skims to the floor,
lies flat on turkish carpet.
Now what's gravity done to me,
isn't climbing the stairs
or carrying rock salt from te car
paying tribute enough to a force
that sends cardboard sailing?**

18.XII.22

=====

**Love lace but wear wool–
December
is so logical.**

18.XII.22, *lune*

====

from & for C

**They speak Selfish
but I speak Youish.
At least I try,
accent gets better
by the day, but still
has traces of that
bad old lingo—I come
from a Self-speaking town.**

18 December n2022

=====

All night watching in sleep a continuous film, an examination, a test?, images carefully drawn in detail, like old-time serious comic books, monochrome though, Il a dusty bluish grey, images passing and sometimes stopping, stop, looked close, yes detail, some connection felt, but no touching, not allowed to reach out, don't stroke the elephant, admire the fluffy pair of gloves but don't touch to feel the soft, don't put them on. I had to go on watching, that's all I know. Someone or some

ones were watching, don't ask e who, they were supervising, judging, diagnosing, my every sensation a sign of something, every emotion a proof. Then they swept all the evidence away and I woke.

19 December 2022

= = = == =

**A fox in the yard last night,
I should have known it was you,
we lend our minds to
all sorts of birds and animals
so they can keep an eye
o those we love far away,
distance is nothing to birds,
they speak the air and the air
is everywhere, and the fox
whispers to the whole earth
soft beneath her paws
Your friend is well, now go to sleep.**

19 December 2022

= = = = =

**Weaponry on paper
neat on shelves—**

**who now dares to read
all these books today?**

**Don't we know that all
who wrote them are gone,**

**what did their wisdom
serve them?**

**Live words
of the dead—we are taught
that they live on.**

So does

a stone, a river, an oyster shell.

**Which should we choose
to read, or to believe?**

**Skeptical afternoon in winter
sun. But I will believe the song.**

19 December 2022

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

**Two sticks
stuck in the ground.
Stakes. String
a rubber band between,
pluck and sing.**

**It begins, but only
the earth hears
it clearly, song
lost in the air
sounds everywhere.**

20 December 2022

=====

You have to start somewhere.

**Or do you? Isn't there
a start without a place,
just as there might be a road
that has no end.?**

**Every morning a complex
equation, it solves itself
while you worry your head
with calculus and pebbles,
garnet gravel of Gore Mountain,
minnows of Minetta Brook,
all the shimmering maybes.**

20 December 2022

=====

**She leaned on the windowsill
and poked her head out,
looked down at the street
three floors down. So this
is Brooklyn, a car parked
in every space, others
cruising by. An umbrella
over somebody but it's not
raining—it seems to float
all alone over the sidewalk.
Suddenly she wants,
really wants, to know
who's under that umbrella
or is it a parasol? People**

**can be afraid of the sun.
She wonders what her own
true feelings are. Across
the street a kid walks
bouncing a basketball—
ugliest sound she knows.
But why? And why here?
She closes the window,
sits down on the couch,
works to find her answers.**

20 December 2022

=====

Sometimes when you can't see the road through foliage or through mist, a car going uphill seems to be flying slow into the sky, slower than wasps or stinkbugs, but straight up they go. Am I the only one who can't fly?

20 December 2022

=

ACTS OF HUMILITY

1.

**I have built my pyramids,
my Stonehenge.**

**Now it's time to arrange
my spoons and forks
neatly in the kitchen drawer.**

2.

**My wife does the real work,
turns one language into another
teaches Dharma, feeds the birds.**

3.

**I sit in the car,
watch her roll
a shopping cart
full of birdseed bags
out of the Agway store.**

3.

**Or I crouch at the window
and try in this lovely sunlight
where one tree ends, where
the next begins,
I've always loved edges,
boundaries you can leap across
or sneak past in the night.**

4.

Now i cup my eyes,
hands cupped
over cheekbones and brow,
never dress on the eye itself,
a trick I learned from Huxley.
I do it to relax in private dark
but people watching think
I'm grieving. They may be right.

21 December 2022

=====

**Sometimes lies
are the only
way to tell the truth.
Think of Proust.**

21.XII.22

== == == == ==

Late this afternoon
the solstice moment.
Then even in the dark
Sun begins to come back.
Tomorrow will be longer
but be winter.. Is weather
a real part of the truth
the way the Sun is, or
is it just the muzak of life,
sometimes glorious,
sometimes ttry
to turn the thing off?

21.XII.22

== == == == ==

Keep me away from calendars,
I don't want to know when it is,
I want toe girl across the room,
a cottage on the coast, the bird
to perch on my rooftop and sing.
Leave me free to name
everything it my own way,
I just have to figure out
whch way is that.

21.XII.22

=====

**The immigration policy has failed
the sleeper woke, stumbles
over the border into a new day.
Now what should he do?
No work for him here,
rusty images weigh him down,
the only tools he has.
The landscape around him,
looks so strange, so familiar.
No human person insight.
Slowly the light increases.**

22 December 2022

== == == == ==

**Look out the door.
Yes. Walk
out the window. No.
Reasonable apertures
can frequently be found.
Scale the fence. Swim
the Delaware. Go
no further. Safety sings.
I hear it even now, a hum
heard best sitting still
with my dear old sringless lute.**

22 December 2022

=====

I was walking briskly on a street
and there on the sidewalk
an upright piano
just dumped there as junk,
old, painted greyish blue
or bluish grey, hard to tell.

I aimed to flip the keyboard open
a play how it sounded
but someone had placed two stones
to keep the it closed—

I respected the intention
and kept going, but let

**my finger trail along the top
in case there was some
music still left. Interpretation:
I want a piano. I can't play.**

22.XII.22

=====

**When Time comes home
she'll tell her spouse
I stoo naked in the window
and no one saw me,
I ran through the crowds
and no one even glances at me—
what can I do to make
people aware of me as I pass?
But her wife will have fallen
asleep on her daybed
and their child Space
will be off playing outside.**

22 December 2022

=====

**Waiting for reason
or a reason. Waiting
for or waiting on.
Morning has so man
options, believe me.
Deceive me. The child;s
tower of alphabet clocks
topples, the words
breathe esy, go back to sleep.
They're made of the same
wood we are.**

22.XII.22

== == == == ==

The look of things
borrow from the Greeks
the island blood
the taste of sun.
I am is a shadow
over this shoulder
worrying the morning
word after word
to wonder, only wonder
and never know,
o let me not know.

2.

**Deft translation
from the unsaid.
A cow flies past,
that's proof enough,
scandalous mercies,
touch of a hand.**

3.

**The mystery may
solve the crime
but never understand
the reason for it all.
But in The Magic Flute
the opera can end**

**when the ordinary
prosper, lad and lass
unite, birds fly,
priests triumph.
The ordinary
is the glory. story
lives in all music,
democracy, every
ear knows to hear.**

**4.
And so Sappho
on her island could
make the rocks
remember, o not**

**every word but just
the gist of her song
and ocean understood.**

23 December 2022

HER SONG

Came here
a hundred years ago
did what he had
todo, now here
I am, his
consequence
with yellow hair.

24.XII.22, *dreamt*

=====

**Living by treaty,
accepting the meaning
of words as in
the thickest book,
never swayed
by their sound or how
they swim together.
The treaty tells
the sky is blue
the grass still green
most of the snow
is gone. And we believe,
i guess, like everybody else
but I want to raise a challenge,**

**lift my shield, shout
against the tyranny of meaning—
the Christ Child will be born
again tomorrow and we still
have not found the words to say.**

24 December 20

=====

**I wanted to tell you a story
but it got too short.**

**I had to lengthen it,
work in Minerva and reverence
and Rome and long empty rods,
birder skirmishes, sudden
rose gardens in late spring.**

**And still the story wasn't
long enough to reach you.
So I bought an ocean
and blessed it with seagulls,
pelicans, dolphins saving**

swimmers from the wave.

**I go on working, where work
means bringing things in
till it's all full enough for you.
I hope you'll hear from me soon.**

24 December 2022

= = = = =

**I write what I wish U could read,
mysteries , beautiful solutions
never quite convincing but
still breathtaking for a moment
until you think again.**

Pilgrimages to Tibet!

Watching seals off Oregon!

Where should I begin again?

24.XII.22

== ==

The trouble with arrows—
they can hit the target.
Cupid fires warning shots
to let us know. Pray they miss.
Marksmen mar marriages
it said on the wall in Swedish
but nobody speaks that here.

24 December 2022

A CHRISTMAS CARD

Dear B,

Miriam has had her child!

I know you'd want to know how they're doing. She says it was an easy birth, but there's some pain in her eyes, when she speaks of it. But the child is healthy and peaceful, sleeps a lot, but also lies there with big eyes wide open. Never a whimper.

Joe is busy all the time—when he's not busy fixing someone's chair or building a table, he's sitting at one

writing away steadily. From what I glimpsed, he's writing the whole story of traveling down here and finding a place, and then an account of the birth. As usual, he doesn't mention his own role in the proceedings —he always leaves himself out.

They are both a little worried though— there's a lot of social unrest in the district, so they're planning to move again, south this time, better weather, safer conditions, maybe as far down as the Gulf. They're leaving in a few days, as soon as some people from out East get here for a visit.

Don't know who they are, not sure Joe knows ether. But politeness obliges.

And our dear Miriam! Lovely as ever, keeps busy, watches the baby constantly but doesn't fuss over him. She seems happy and healthy. We talk a lot when I come by late afternoon. I'll tell her I've written to you, and she'll be pleased. You know how she cares about you.

Yours,

R.

24 December 2022

=====

**Why is the jewel in the lotus?
Because Buddha nature is in you
and me and everyone, all of us
borne on the same vast lake, unfold
all our petals to find
Christians call it immortal soul.**

Christmas 2022

=====

**The orchestra keeps playing
Don Giovanni screams as he falls
into hell and the orchestra
keeps playing, friends and foes
sing their heads off, then softer,
then almost simple, as if song
could be part of opera too
and the orchestra keeps playing.
Are they making all this happen,
are all the poor sopranos just
slaves of the string section,
the man waving his arms with
his back to the audience, is he
the real devil who makes all this**

**happen, sorrow and vengeance,
even a tear of orgiveness?
What will happen if the orchestra
ever suddenly stops?**

25 December 2022

=====

**In her dream she rode a tiger.
When she told it at breakfast
all the men at the table suddenly
had to be somewhere else
they said, so she was left
alone with her soft-boiled egg,
a slice of toast with damson jam.**

25 December 2022

THE ISLAND I'M AFTER

can float by night,
seek out the latitude
appropriate for my day.
The island I mean
is on such good
terms with the sea
that waves come in
and wash every
coast at once. I'll
walk and hear what
the cliffs have to say
and try to tell
you as well as I can.

25 December 2022

=====

**In our summer place
we have a fireplace
but here in winter
the walls are solid, cold
and we make do
with stem pipes
and buzzing heaters.
Paradox on all sides,
and windows let
all the birds look in.
Cardinal now demanding food,
stern look in a bird's eye.**

25 December 2022

= = = = =

**The roads scary white
under salt
nobody on them.**

25.XII.22, *lune*

=====

**A piece of paper,
write on it.
Nothing more to do.**

25.XII.22, *lune*

== == == == ==

**I folded the flame back
to inspect the fire itself,
found nothing but brightness
and it just hurt my eyes.
The tree knows how
to protect its leaves—
we're the ones who need
lessons in common sense
that rarest of natural gifts.**

25 December 2022

== == == == ==

**Smoking is good for you—
just leave out the tobacco,
the paper, the fire.
The real pleasure of the habit
is shaped breathing.**

25.XII.22

== = = = = = =

**Some people go
to church today,
fewer and fewer
I guess, from what
the media reveal
or conceal. Some
people come to church
right here in the heart,
or in the house—
no numbers available
for such worshippers.
Give us more mysteries!**

25.XII.22

PARACLETE

for J,N.

The comforter. Is in every one of us. Given that grace from above, we comfort one another.

Self comforts other. Every bird is the dove. Comfort means being strong with. The flickering light above a friend's head tells us the comforter is near.

25.XII.22

=====

**Yes, shepherds,
for the sheep.
Wise women
for the oil they bring,
pressed from unknown fruit.
Visitors from the East
to show us where we are.**

**We need all this
just to begin—
the fleece of time
soft round our newish skim.
Now tell me your dream too
so I can try to understand
not what the story says,**

**those sorry bones,
but what it means
to think them, feel them
wake on the other side
and still be sad.
Then let me be your tears.**

26 December 2022

== == == == ==

**I read my own palm
or would if I could
but all I see is white
bones bulging up
from under snow.**

**Five fingers, each
pointing a different
direction. It takes
my breath away—
I have to follow all
of hem at once or
not move at all.**

Philosophy has to get born.

25.XII.22

== == == == ==

Om the way there
a leaf blew off the windshield,
whipped in the updraft.
gone. I missed it,
didn't even catch its name,
maple? locust? I suppose
the mind is the place
where such things go,
patiently assembled
into what we are.

26 December 2022

=====

**Sky. Clearing
is nearing.
Mound on earth
music meant
all the minds
that minded here,
minding earth
as we mind a child
and being minded,
amount and maintain
it's all in the sound
it says in you.**

27 December 2022

=====

**Yellow coat
running fast up the hill
don't sk me who
or why, the sky
is relaxed, even blue
here and there,
I see no one in pursuit.
Nothing up here
and only here down here.
Yellow coat, human
running into mystery.**

27 December 2022

=====

I said to the scientist
what color are you?
He said he was now,
and now is a color
between yellow and blue.
I'm sorry, I said, I really meant what
tree do you come from,
or who wove your wool
or where the stone is buried
and will you help me
raise it up? He barely smiled.

27 December 2022

IN SANTASTAN PRESENTS GROW

**along both sides of the road.
Elves come by and gather them,
wrap them in paper leaves
from the temporary tree.
sunshine obligatory, and all
round the fields a special
kind of cold-free snow.
Every year the country's exports
multiply, folk all over the planet
wants aost anything hat comes
from there and comes on time.
bionic reindeer quiver in their pen.**

27.XII.22

= = = = =

**After all we all
come from the middle—
of the east, tht is,
not from the west,
that huge open window
on the empty sky.**

27.XII.22

=====

**A Russian woman
walking towards me
over the ice.
There's an opera.
Or through the cornfield,
crows adoring.
And there's another.
They're all around and always,
just waiting for our music,
our brash glorious Rossinis.
Now there's a man with a spade
studying ground at his feet.
He starts to dig. I mean sing.**

27 December 2022

== == == == ==

Then now happened
and it was gone
whatever it had been,
rose or rams horn,
something the eye
heard from the mind,
childhood, chalk,
crushed gingkoes
on the sidewalk
o rose my last religion.

28 December 2022

=====

**Don't we live for this
this sky at morning,
the blank horoscope
where all lore is stored
we read by blinking
our eyes and saying
with love's excitement
whatever comes to mind?**

28.XII.22

=====

**Watching over the alphabet
the snow geese fly slow,
calling out the correct
pronunciation of each sign.**

**From Cruger's Island to
the Sawkill's bend they
circle over the vast
empty fields of Elmendorph,
right by the village school
where they're needed.**

**But they're needed everywhere—
listen, listen! They write**

**the letters as they shift
in their formation, they cry
what they've tried to make
clear to us so many \years,**

28 December 2022

CORDYCEPS

**The mushroom that looks
like an animal and means us well.
Why do I think of you,
Himalayan pet? We take
you in as pills or unashamedly
just as you are.**

**But why
do I think of you this
bright morning when it
(that famous it we live in)
almost lets us stop freezing?
Is it my memory of your
mountain long ago? Is it
somehow your own voice,**

**the voice of what we need,
telling me to take?**

**The sun is coming out
and that always means yes.**

28 December.2022

=====

**The river's waiting for you
like an old song,
the river wants you back,
nobody like you
to walk beside her,
she trusts you most of all
with her reflections
as you walk with her,
sometimes fast but mostly
slower, the river misses you,
she wants you back.**

28.XII.22

=====

**Look into my eyes,
you see better than I do,
look into my eyes
and tell me what I see,
tell me what I should be seeing
when I see you,
don't tell me the sun is shining,
I know that kind of thing,
tell me where the moon
went last night and what he saw
in the flooded cellars of Dhaka
or when he glared down on Baku.
Tell me too what I remember,
remind me of my mind,**

**where the gondolas are drifting
and the old Pope bows his head.
But tell me most of all
how I can see you better,
understand my understander,
please the one love most of all.**

28 December 2022

= = = = =

**But there in December
that tree had leaves,
vaguely heart-shaped
but not linden, each leaf
with tiny pin holes all over,
by nature, not by damage.
And the trunk, rugged,
I tried to get my phone
to stck to the bark, no go,
wanted to hear what it said.
Who are you, standing so
close to the porch I used to have,
talking to the man I used to be?**

29 December2022

== == == ==

**Earth uploads the Sun.
We live well
in this old program.**

29.XII.22, *lune*

THE EXPEDITION

The expedition set out a little after daybreak—a few overslept but no big worry. The first stage was an old road, Roman maybe, layers of gravel, layers of stones, layer of time.

2.

But that led only to the base of the cliff they meant to climb, let alone to the great marsh they hoped to glimpse up there. Now the scramble began,

**silently, by prior agreement
no talk up Vulture Peak,
too close to the sky, don't
want to be overheard.**

3.

**A day later they were there,
looking everywhere seeing
what amounted to their whole
universe, this and only this.
A river they never n knew—
go there some day. And that
amber glowing marsh , the one
they needed, clear at sunset.**

4.

**So they knew which way to go,
only one day more
and they'd be among the reeds,
hear the bitterns booming,
taste the tassels of the grasses,
settle down.**

5

Logic

**led them here. If all this
is here, then there is room
for us too. Tentative
settlement—they built a hut
and thatched it over,
sat inside, talked freely**

**but a little nervously,
waited They were
where they met to be.
But were they really
meant to be there?
They took out their notebooks
and begin to write the answer.**

29 December 2022

=====

**The skeleton shows
through the skin—
no sense in hiding.**

29.XII.22, *lune*

=====

**She comes across the vast field
naked and slow,
her pale skin
the sacred vestments of truth.
This is who we are,
this is where we walk,
and someone is always
coming towards us.
Look up and praise.**

29 December 2022

=====

**No eggs in Rotterdam
it said today, and
people born on New Year's
have the softest skin
it said, but only if the day
remembers, so I woke
and found my slippers
the same color as the rug,
we live in colors, so much
information. No eggs
in Rotterdam, so I will obey,
I'll eat my eggs in Annandale,
barefoot if need be,
depending o the news.**

**and I'd better do it soon
before the next message comes,
maybe High Mass in Assisi.**

30 December 2022

=====

**Evolution is a pest
he said, in a million
years we'll have no toes,
no appendixes at least,
but probably no hair.
Why can't we manage
just as we are, or seem,
or strive, or fail? Who
wrote this program anyhow?
Are we just prisoners
of our chemistry? Go back
to bed I told him—
you're safe for a while.**

30 December 2022

I FEEL MY SKULL

**lurk behind my face,
wonder what else
is hiding in there,
arsenal of snarls, smiles,
skeptical glances,
romances in the eyes.**

**Is the skin a sly
deceit, a mask
behind all the other
masks of commerce,
crime, amusement?**

**And the gleaming mirror
is just part of the plot.**

30 December 2022

= = = = =

*What I want
is bad enough
but what I get
is even worse.*

**Sing that song at the bank
and in the parliament,
brothel, butcher shop,
jet to Oahu. O isn't there
a joy without wanting,
a wave that comes in
all by itself and laves our toes
clean of where we've been,
look to the clean horizon,
not een an island in sight.**

30 December 2022

=====

Waiting on the corner for the coroner to arrive driving his old Mercedes up to the traffic light and waiting there for all the living and the dead to cross.

Then last I can stand still and watch them cross and slowly learn the difference between them.

30.XII.22

oral experiment

AERIAL

**Flying over the city
is residence enough.
I live in the sky
as long as I can, I feed
on vistas, swoops
of drone flight through
arches and angles, high
over the problematic,
the populous, the built.**

2.

**Riyadh. Dhaka. Lagos.
You've seen them all
Every citypokes
a finger into the sky,**

**or more than one,
more fingers than hands.**

3.

**Did it begin in Chicago,
or the Woolworth Building,
our island with a Man Hat On,
puffed up, almost innocent,
pride to pile up our bricks,
pointed spires, spindles,
steeples with no bells.**

**To build a house no one can
live in at the top, an empty room
pointed at heaven?**

Did they mean

Come fill me with God?

4.

**Maybe it's simple—
they all like big.**

Big spread. Big head.

**Streets stretched to the horizon,
office buildings you strain
your neck to see the top
from the land you'd stand on
the m only nwaay to go in,
trap yourself breathless
in elevators. rise and still
hope to walk on earth again.**

5.

**Not for me. I see it all I need
through other people's eyes
(that's what culture means),
see it from the smart little drone
who leaves me a radiant video.
Technology is part of theology.**

41 December 2022

=====

**You don't have to walk
far off the road
to be in the woods.**

**The woods are big by nature—
a few dozen trees close growing
make sudden wilderness enough.
Not far away yu hear cars go by—
they could be bears growling,
wind in the Black Forest.**

Stand

**still is all you have to do,
be in amity with what you see
and don't be insolent,
don't look too close. Trees**

**show what they choose,
and woods are the all of them
not each one. Nothing on earth
is like the intelligent silence
of standing alone in the trees..**

31 December 2022

= = = = =

**Where did the light come from
before it came here
and what did it see
along the way?**

**I asked the scientist politely
but I had come with Jesus
and the man in the white coat
gave a sketchy answer,
barely polite. The next day
I came with a bodhisattva
and the scientist was of course
polite to Asians, but still give
no real answers. Is it possible**

**that he doesn't know?
What's the point of his big
zillion dollar telescope
if he can't see the albatrosses
of Aldebaran, the billion sacred
athletes of the Pleiades at play?
I'll try again, and next time
bring a rabbi with me**

31 December 2022

