

12-2022

**Dec2022**

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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**

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**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 whatevers  
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. Id very 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 s 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**







