

4-2023

April 2023

Robert Kelly

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**Remember:
you met a young friend
who had a sexy mother.
Life is confusing.
Your father
wired for a living
so you do too.
There is little choosing
in a lame republic.
Remember the rabbi
shaved but had
an explanation. Dishes
tend to topple off tables.
In my own case,**

**everything falls. Discuss
this with the resident.**

**The woodpecker
picks at the wall with a sound
like far-off phone call.**

Can I get there in time to answer?

1 April 2023

=====

**I don't have to tell you
everything or di U?
Is this some sort of music
where every key on the piano
has to be played or dancers
topples listless down?
Every impulse is an Iliad
If by itself, I'd hve to go on
talking forever. I will
go om talking forever.**

1 April 2023

=====

**Because rhymes tell
the truth so fast
we tend these days
to eschew them in poetry—
above all we want
to go on and go on
but after you've said
in long song be free
what more needs saying?**

1 April 2023

=====

**Boy Scouts start fires
rubbing sticks.**

**Girl Scouts bake cookies
or at least sell them.**

**We need a change,
no more hot-hand
patriarchs, no more
modest maidens.**

**We need *They Scouts*
who shout in the forest
and rush through town
curing diseases with song.**

1 April 2023

== == == == ==

**We stepped out of the gondola
there at the end of the canal.
This is where again and again
it has to begin. White of church,
white of surf, the cloud
a subtle moving commentary.**

**This is where
every sentence starts.
Fishing boat
or noisy ferry,
Max Nodifference
is here to say.**

**O liminal animal
come wash your words
in me says the sea.
And we are everyone,
Sheepshead Bay or Baltic,
the word is always ready
to wash in. Begin. It
is always, we have to begin.**

1 April 2023

== == == == ==

**How to get there
if the grass is green,
how can we breathe
in all his fresh air?**

**Mysterious symmetries
of typing shoelaces,
applauding at the opera
even if the tenor bleated a bit.**

**We need to heal all we can
but it's not all hard work—
we don't have to climb a tree
to eat an avocado. Peeling**

**and coring re labor enough.
And then there's the road
goes there all by itself,
doesn't need me, I can sit
right here and watch it run.**

1 April 2023

== == == == ==

**Speaking of roads
a little rain
makes them shine,
sparkling eyes
of the alluring distance.**

1.IV.23

=====

**Why is America money green,
what does it tell us
about our dreams?
Green is peaceful and permission,
quiet Sundays after Pentecost,
moss on gravestones, merry eyes
of Scottish girls and tiger cubs.
Be green as you can
the dollar tells us,
I am the first President
and there is no other.**

1 April 2023

=====

**Sanctuary, symmetry,
the woman brought
the mountain home with her
the way they do,
the way they do,
geology is one long song.
we learn to sing it
not just with our feet,
clouds explain mountains,
the lake explains the sky,
deep strata of uncounted years
specify this rock wall,
anticline by river, road
a blasphemy through solid rock.
She brought the mountain home**

and held it on her knee,
take care of things
the crows kept saying, the way
they do to wake us, make us
do the right thing, now wake
the stone they cawed
and she did. So quiet
for so hard a thing it spoke,
said its name, said brief
soft things about sleep and time
and who am I and who are you
before she let it sleep again—
its long work not nearly done.

1 April 2023

=====

**Water oak all alone
in the empty meadow
al these years, and even
longer the Blithewood
maple, already noted
as our oldest tree in
a guidebook written
eighty years ago, and still,
and still, and the tulip tree
across the street, no,
up here I ave to call it road,
like *Quercus nigra* and
Liriodendron tulipifera
or the nameless hybrid
vigorous maple**

**seven hundred years old.
It's easy to love my neighbors.**

1 April 2023

=====

The ointments,
the oils called essential
because they bear
the essences of their origin,
flower, sap, wounded tree
or musk of beast, and these
she brings to such a quiet desk
and writes with them
into tiny vials or just daps
some on her wrist and raises
it to me sometimes
so I can read it too
the essences interwoven
in a new odor ever before

**smelled in this green world—
her magic of waving
ancient ointments into
the utterly fresh and new.
You see why I call what
she does writing—and each
new scent deserves a name
and sometimes hours later
it will say itself in a dark room.**

1 April 2023

=====

**Scared of the mummy
ran to the men's room,
lingered by candy stand,
sight of a pretty girl
in green slacks relaxed him,
went back to his seat
with a Mars bar in hand
ready for the images
that will rule his whole life.**

2 April 2023

=====

**Spill April on your garden
right now, don't wait for
the permission of May.
This is now, and you've got
pot after pot of that precious
commodity, spill it, soak
the ground with seeing,
watch the little blue-eyed grass,
squills that say April, April.**

2 April 2023

REMEMBER RADIO?

**Wat a strange thing it was,
mostly telling stories
with sound ef facts,
unseen voices pretending
to be whole people busy
at unlikely deeds, air and sea,
crime and tenderness.
It was wonderful, and we
listened! We believed!
What else could we do?
And we still listen, but now
it all pretends to be music
or that sinister fiction, the news.**

2 April 2023

== == == == ==

**Bought her a fiddle
but she wouldn't play,
bought her woodpecker
but it flew away.
Bought her yellow roses
but what color are they now?
It's the thought that counts
she says, trying not to look
sad, but I'm not fooled,
I love her and mean well,
but I have a nearsighted heart.**

2 April 2023

=====

The glamor lives inside.
A Gaelic word I think,
the spell something seen
casts on the eye of the seer.
Something like that.
We live in witchcraft
though we know it not.
And witches are often
the indiest people, relieve
the tedium of the norm
with spectacular displays
of you've-never-seen-anything
like-this before. Shimmer
and sake, sole and slippery,

**flies past too fast to focus on,
wraps round you soft as paisley.
Glamor. Gladness of the actual
seen for the first time clear.**

2 April 2023

=====

**Now I lay me down to sleep.
Protect me from the other side
of me. Don't let me dream
or if I do, let me not recall them—
leave that other person over in
maybe-land, maybe more real
than I know. Or want to know.**

2 Aoril 2023

=====

**Webster means a weaver
who gave us almost
all the whole fabric,
left out a few scrappy threads
he thought we shouldn't use.
But most of it works, most
of us can live our lives without some
of the words he left out.
Or we can shout them but
seldom have to write them down.**

2 April 2023

=====

**Why are we worried
and why is a wolf?
why is what we're good
at asking, answering
is less our style, we
leave that to scientists
but don't read their answers.
Why is enough of a song
to greet the marvels
of every single day, why
is our music, a little whiny
maybe but still true, sing it
loud enough and fear goes away**

2 April 2023

=====

**I'm three months older
than Sandy Koufax
and was at one of his first games.
Ninety volumes later
Im still watching baseball—
wat is wrong with the kid?**

2.IV.23

THE DOOR AGAIN

opens.. Light
lets itself in.
And what more?
I wrote the saga
of the opening door,
who or what
dared to come in
or stood there
and just stared
or glanced through
and walked away.

2.

**I still sit here
stunned by these variations
possible, stunned
and scared when I remember
the terrifying two-way passage
a door allows, encourages even,
tempts me to be gone
from this place into the sci-fi
land of Out, where they
waiting, a letter in their hands.**

3.

**U went there once,
raindrops on the windshield,
bare trees shimmered green.**

**We drove towards town,
two deer at roadside,
an eagle over. Red-tiled hawk
on a ranch watching.**

Could this be real?

**Is this what a door does
when you listen to the charm
of its softly swaying music
and go through?**

**We bought bread and eggs
then Hurry home Hurry home
the brick wall said, Pray you have
a key to your own glad door.**

3 April 2023

=====

**A cup is reverence
taken to the lip.
Full or less or empty even
it is a tiny sacrament of love
accepting love, cold glass
or hot porcelain, the calm
vocabulary of ecstasy.**

3 April 2023

=====

**It was a ship last night
with a bookstore in it
strange gaps on the shelves
you could watch people through
moving and standing still
but no one sitting, no one
lying down.**

**And then a phone
fell from a small airplane
and smashed on the street,
almost hit pedestrians
who scarcely noticed it
bursting behind them,**

**so many noises in a city.
But all over the world
the contact numbers rang at once.**

3 April 2023

=====

**I have to be clearer than this.
When I say coffee
I mea the way I drink it
but how can you know that?
When I saw tree
what do you see?
Don't youmgeel annoyed a little
when I don't specify?
Or don't you care what tree it is,
they all are holy, or else
they all are over there.
So you know how to be a tree
or what that could mean?
Black and sweet I ike to drink it**

**but does it help to know that?
And how sweet is sweet?
And is it Atabica or Brazil,
strong or weak, perked
or drizzled or espresso?
I think you need to know
so I think I need to say.
But where can I begin,
there was a coffee tree in Eden,
and where will it all end?**

3 April 2023

=====

**Have friends all over the world
and none nearby. That way
love is not tainted with reality.**

3.IV.23

=====

**On the dark green oily waters
of the East River we say they said
a garbage scow. What is a scow.
Heaps of pale trash floating—
where are they taking it?
Why is there so much garbage,
why do we throw so much away?
We can almost smell it even here
but why does it smell so bad?
What do we do to things to make
them rot and spoil and stink?
Who steers that boat, how brave
they are. It seems headed East
but why? And what is a scow?**

3 April 2023

=====

**It is disconcerting
to wake in the dark
and see a tablet
oozing light beside me,
glowing like Moses's
stores in te night, wonder
what new laws are being
beamed into space, why
does sleep have flimsy curtains,**

3.IV.23

=====

**Walking there
I heard
but they meant waltzing,
well, I tried
to think the rhythm
as I stepped, cautious
as ever through
the undergrowth of everyday
and call it music.**

4 April 2023

= = = ==

**Leave a letter out
make the reader doubt—,
uncertainty is good for the soul
keeps the muscles of the mind
nimble. Leave a word out
though, and the whole
Pyramid trembles, new
tunnels open, the dead
begin to walk in sunlight.
Think of the power then
of saying nothing at all—
leave it to the mountain.**

4 April 2023

= = = == =

**What I am not allowed to say
walks beside me, hand
on my shoulder, friendly pushes
this way or that, gently
but clearly, where I should go.**

**What I am not permitted to say
still helps me navigate
the old streets pf my home town,
you van never altogether leave the
place where you were born,
cows on Fountain Avenue,
homework on the subway
in the long ride to school**

**trying to make sense
of Greek grammar and the girls
across the aisle, ads overhead
for chewing gum and Mexico
just for a moment close my eyes.
I'm not allowed to say more than
that.**

4 April 2023

== == == == ==

**Dragging the words
in from some sea
in a fishnet of letters,
ancient net, lively fish,
wet and silver and saying it all.**

4.IV.2023

=====

But was he happy when he went away. The question asks itself when you look at his stone. Name he couldn't help, dates like most of us he didn't choose.

Name and dates and some words in Latin or Hebrew or poetry, hard to carve italics in granite but there they are. But when he left, what was the mood or music of his going? That's what ancient mausoleums and pyramids and such try to communicate, tell us not just who lies there but what he felt about

**this world he was leaving on the road
out, what he saw
as he finally closed his eyes.**

4 April 2023

PRIVATE SCHOOL

**I'm not sure I have to know
the student said
but tell me anyhow just in case.**

4.IV.2023

=====

**If love were only
dirty laundry shared
and tassels over the TV remote
and quarrels about the color
of the next used car
it would still be worth
a sonnet sequence or
the rest of anybody's life.
Because the other is
the one thing the self needs.
Bitching at breakfast
is still a kind of quiet music.**

4 April 2023

=====

**I'm wrong and I know it,
they're right and I'm wrong.
wrong to hate football and pop,
electro pop especially and C&W,
wrong to find basketball both
pretentious and ridiculous
(r watch ants on picnic table),
pr find novels a waste of time.
wrong to complain most movies give
nothing to see, really see.
I'm wrong to love salty things,
wrong to walk slow, to sit still,
wrong to think swimming pools
are cauldrons of bacteria,**

**wrong to switch off the news,
wrong to have opinions at all
in the first place, wrong to speak
and wrong to shut up,
somebody has to keep silence,
cherish it, enshrine it —
I never thought it would be me.**

4 April 2023

LESSON PLAN

Let me tell you what to do.
I spak with confidence
because I don't know
anything but the sound of words.
music is enough for both of us.

2.

Or if you doubt my bona fides
(rhymes with Fridays as we say
those lucky days in Brooklyn)
(;icky: work is done, lust is in)
then try to honorable ancestry:
I was born of humans on planet
Earth.

3.

As I was saying—

This is what you have to do:

**Take every word you hear
as gospel truth.**

**Accept it, smile, take
down another book and open it.**

Every religion says the same:

It's all up to ,you.

4,

**But we were speaking of
what I want to tell you,
instructions that should last you
all the way to the end of today**

**when the golden sun sinks
beneath the greening horizon
and another truth comes along,
just as true but much darker,
rub your hands and sing along.**

5.

**There, that's what I've been trying to
tell you: sing along,
muzzle your skeptic twitches
and sing along with what comes.
Don't ,make me say it all again,
sing along, sing along,
it's the magic way of listening.**

4 April 2023

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**Let the miracle begin.
But there were too many men
three of them at least
at the table with me
on the awkward roof of building
in town, not my town,
too many men and a man
can turn mean, but these
were jolly, educated, playful,
I yearned to get away,
one of them wrote with big
black Mont Blanc his name
pressing too hard, too hard
on the poor nib, the soft paper,**

**I hated it, his name unfamiliar,
said he was Irish, no wonder,
we hate one another, how to get
down from the roof?**

**He wore a grey suit
and did most of the talking,
left first and the others
made small talk. Dream
is such a frightening place
even when nothing happens.
But it isn't a place, really, is it?
I hope not. Those men seemed
content, no woman nearby,
just wooden table, just the sky.**

5 April 2023

LA PALOMA

I assume, golub,
golubky, little one,
dove, why so many

and all the names so
different, columba,
taube, and yet it

always sings the same?

White in Waikiki
and in the rainy garden
mediaeval lake so why

**so many tunes
for its one song?**

**Heard the other day
one made glad,**

they sing for spring.

5 April 2023

=====

**In German all nouns
begin with capital letters
as if they all were people,
not just God in Heaven
but the Oil Slick on the Road
and the Schoolboy studying it.
We all are people in this world,
some of us can speak and sing
or stand still thousand years
pr turm blue in April or fall
gently from the far-off sky.**

5 April2023

=====

I woke up mad at skyscrapers.
their wasteful useless upthrust
arrogance in an empty sky,
I woke up grateful for that long
horizontal skyscraper
Steven Holl built in China
–the truth of it,
we walk on the ground
faithful to the shape of earth,
no elevators shooting us up,
the quiet longitude of life
secure in all its extension,
rooms like day after day,
corridors like the spine.

**We hug the ground—it loves us
as we should love it back,
leave the sky alone, gods
are everywhere not just up there,
leave the sky to birds and cloud,
don't jab our finger in God's eye.
Let's get over this adolescent
predilection for erection,
let us move mannerly on
the garden we were given.**

5 April 2023

CHATAUQUA

and so what?

Ashbery came from Sodus,
Ives from Rochester,

poetry is the genuine
conversation of our time,
all the rest seems just
just old men arguing on TV.

No more lectures plesse,
no conferences or colloquia.
Just write the poem, set it free,
write another and another
and read the scribbled gospels

**that come back. Talk
has lost its form. Form
lives in poetry, the form
the form! The song!**

5 April 2023

=====

The home plate umpire has strong arms, youngish man who hardly has to use them, arms, I mean, lift one to say out, two wings spread to say safe. He can stand hands in his pockets, count beads for all I know.

Why so strong? maybe that's later, when back home and shows what arms are for.

5 April 2023

== == == == ==

**Passover begins tonight,
I know all about that
but nothing about it.
What is is or says or feels
to celebrate a deliverance
came three thousand years ago
and is still to come for us.
How to pretend to be
yourself before you ever were
and celebrate a liberation
ou yearn for still.**

**How strange religion is,
calling the future the past**

**and still sitting down right now,
at table, food on it tonight,
moon in Libra, wind in the west.**

5 April 2023

EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION

**Let the cats and dogs go free.
Put food out on awn or street
the wya you'd feed the squirrels
or toss birdseed or leave eftovers
for the woodchucks and the fox.**

**Set dogs free! Set cats free!
You have no moral right
to own a a living creature.
This is slavery, time to end it,
leave the window open,
let the cat come home
or stay or go as Its soul says.
Freedom now! It hurts**

**to think of slavery. How long
will it take us to let them go,
so every living being will be free?**

5 April 2023

=====

**And so we stood
alone in the rain
on the broad piazza
in front of the temple,
bronze horses on the roof.
Though we were married
it married us again
to be there, the Adriatic
lapping at the stone,
we couldn't hear it
but we could feel it,
the way you hear music
when somebody says Bach.
Then we went back**

to the suburbs, friend's house,
human insistence on the small.
Thank God for little things,
Tiny communion wafer—
we call it Bread
and see in the mind's eye
a great brown loaf
that feeds our billions
if we consent to eat.

Suburbs like Old Mill in Brooklyn,
I was shocked, little canal, scattered
brick cottages
in empty fields—my childhood
suddenly was all around me
and speaking Italian too.

**Though not the dialects I heard,
chopped off vowels of Sicilian,
but the water smelled the same.**

2.

So why does anybody get arried?

**Because a place is most real
when you're together. Shades
deeper, bricks firmer, rain
refreshing, all the playful
teasing of the actual.**

**Of course it has to be Venice,
the clitoris of Europe,
there in the crowds before
Sammarco or the white beauty
of Santa Maria della Salute**

where we stood all alone
on the stone that holds the sea.

Of course be married—
how else can you know
what's really there
without another self to tell you?

3.

Grey but no rain
here today
and mild enough
to coax the forsythia
I need for Friday,
my mother's birthday.

**Venice is just a beautiful
excuse for talking
about marriage,
talking always about love.
It is, I suddenly remember,
the city solemnly married the sea
in the days of the Doges.
And now it's for us to do it,
hand in hand on the marble prow
we do what we can,
the purest way we can, heal
the world by being in it together.**

5 April 2023

====

**If I were a mail truck
I would bring you a box
biggish but not too heavy
and in it would be some leaves
of various intellectual trees—
maple and linden and ash—
but mostly carefully packaged
envelopes of atmosphere,
air of Florence, air of Alps,
air of Oahu const looking east,
dozens of envelopes, enough
so you'd breathe all the world in
and smile when I drive by again**

5 April 2023

== == == == ==

Now when words
decide to fall
like this
few by few
or even one
from wherever
or forever,
leaving silences
to trip or stumble
or just pause,
breathe in
among the trees,
try

to go on,
the gaps, the gaps!
make music,
the silences make sense
of a sort
sound can't help
but blurring
so it stands
to reason
if all these words
are falling
apart they must
and must have
long ago
been all together,
long ago,

**yesterday
before music
brought them to you.**

6 April2023 *dance party*

ANTIMONY

**A metal a poison
used to kill monks?
Or a Latin/Greek hybrid,
a weapon against the law?**

**You can never be sure
what a word might
be or might once
have been saying,
the win in wind
turned past tense
to loss, and that's us
in the bushes
where our journey started,**

and weather?
We at her command
dance or dive
deeper under cover
till she's over
her hissy fit
or it is his.
I ate water
and turned it into me,
at least my arteries
thought so, and from
them art rises.

6.IV.23

=====

**So it's a day of divisions
long and short,
words and weather,
breath and song.
What does that mean?**

**Christ knelt down
and washed the feet
of those who listened,
To speak the utmost truth
humility is needed.
He sat at table and gave
them bread. Somehow
it lasted two thousand years—**

but what are years?

**Just more fractions
of an unknown whole,
taught to puzzle
children in school,
wash their brains
with freshets of number,
healing waters
of remember this?**

**Yes, yes, I will be silent,
the sun is out
that's song enough.**

6 April 2023

== == == == ==

**If the whole pencil
were made of rubber,
not just the butt of it
we could write by wiping out,
so all the old letters
would spell new words
fresh from their journey here
from nobody knows where.**

6.IV.23

GOOD FRIDAY

**the great and terrifying
Why Day,**

**the story we te;; over and over
and never understand,
wydid iy happen,
why dis it hve to happen,
the pieces are all there,
fierce clergy, compliant tyrants,
a man tortured to death, why,**

**why if it's true did he have to die
why if it's just a story
why do we believe it so deeply,**

so long, so central
to our sense of who
the dead man was, or is,
or why,

or why

the *Tre Ore* of the churches,
three hours we try
to be with him in his suffering,
console him, rescue him,
be rescued by him, are we
in the passion too,
how many of us at the cross,
on the cross, and why, and why,

and he on the cross,
he too cries out Why.

**And still, the poet says,
“we call this Friday good.”**

**Go to church to share the pain,
lose your confusion in song,
hymns esse our doubts.**

**But once again the woods
are my nave, the trees
don't bother singing, they
are rational and speak.**

**I hope they'll help me know why.
I hear something that sounds like
They made his cross
from none of me,
I tried to ease his agony
whispering the little**

**truth I know before
they tore him away
and left me standing there
on the hill of grief.
And nobody knows why.**

7 April 2023

=====

**how old do you have to be
to be now?**

**Is there a timeclock
built into the sky—greyish
today, not very warm,
adequate for April I guess—
that tells us OK, now
is the moment?**

**Look up
and tell me what you see.
But who am I to ask such things,
am I even now enough to be?**

7 April 2023

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**Warmth of the animal
waits inside.**

**he preacher calls it
from his apple tree,
the old one, bears
no fruit, but still
the voices of its leaves
alert him again and again
to what he means to say.**

**Aay to the animal,
the one in us that worries him
so uch, the things
we like to fo, poor man,
but sometimes the leaves**

**console him, make him
understand, we all
are animals, we mean
as well as we can.
And sometime we bear fruit.**

7 April 2023

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We see and then again
as if (as though?)
a walker moved there
genderless among trees
I know too little botany
to name, shadows
among shadows
seen clear. As if
the heartpump had
something else in mind
I breathe excitement.
Why? As though the figure
had gone from the woods
but still the breath,

**I thought it was my breath,
hurries after it.**

Everything else calm.

Everything gone.

What does it really mean, to see?

8 April 2023

CAMINO

**Travling from nowhere
to nowhere
by the longest route,
the pilgrimage.
The goal is in the going.
And the the sacred
footstep when you come to now.**

8 April 2023

ROOT

**Ago was a-gone
once, agony
of all-gone.**

8.IV.23

=====

**My fingertips
on your wrist
sense soft
an infinite
tiny bliss,
I don't know
what it is,
only how it feels,
one bliss,
the touch.**

8.IV.23

=====

**I want the same thing
every day,
the day to be different.
All that has to be is now,
a time that never was before.
Don't bother answering the phone—
someone is calling from
what by now has to be
many seconds back in the past.**

8.IV.23

=====

The page remembered
for him the scent
of lavender, the blue
of Alpine squills.

What else could he do
but trust the aage
when it is his turn to forget?

9 April 2023

=====

**Siren woke at eight
on Easter, why?**

**Who is happening out there
we need to be wary of,
aware of,
````at least.**

**``````````At first**

**I thought it was a factory  
summoning workers  
but on Sunday? And no  
factory for miles around.**



**And so it was that I  
and no doubt dozens of others  
stumbled into unexplained  
silence, bright sun, no wind,  
too scary to go back to sleep.**

**9 April 2023**

**= = = ==**

**if you think  
a stone is silent  
think again.  
Or listen harder.**

**They remember  
every sound they heard  
and build sound on sound  
into the firmness  
firmness of their statement,  
whatever it is that comes  
to your mind near them.**

**9 April 2023**

== ==

**Easter morning.  
After the Tree  
had doen its work  
and the Man rested,  
the Stone did its part  
and rolled away  
loud and let the sun in  
so the Man came out  
into this life again.  
Where had He been?  
Where are we now?**

**9 April 2023**

## **WEEK**

**Start work on Monday  
get slowly into gear,  
do most of the whole job  
on Tuesday just hard work,  
write the epic, build the tower,  
Then think about it Wednesday  
to understand what you've done,  
publish it on Thursday  
or make it the law,  
bring it to your love  
on Friday, then sleep  
deep on Saturday.  
Who knows what Sunday's for?**

***9.IV.23***

=====

**A park bench quoting  
Tennyson faces across  
thecountry road to view  
a huge solitary oak tree  
in a wide wet meadow.  
How kind some people were  
to set the bench there,  
the solitary walker can sit  
and rest and watch hundreds  
of years standing there.**

**9 April 2023**

=====

**Tiny silver bells I ween  
some old song said  
and hooded pilgrims  
souffle up the garden path  
hungry for the healing scent  
of flowers they can't name  
but only know enough  
to bless them as they pass  
and be blessed in turn.  
And you can hear the bells.**

**0 April 2023**

=====

*for Giordano*

**My favorite epic  
is two lines long:  
Love forbids you  
to not love me.  
Call it an opera  
if you like, I go  
on singing it silently.**

**9.IV.23**

## THE TIGHTROPE WALKER

smokes a cigarette,  
part showoff, part  
to calm his nerves.  
The ashes sift down  
to the stream below.  
The smoke goes up  
of course. One wonders  
why any of us would  
not rather live up there  
on the none too rigid rope,  
ever alert, ever ready to fall,  
just the way we always are.

9 April 2023



=====

**Coney Island  
Sheepshead Bay  
Old Mill marshes  
on Jamaica Bay  
and broad channels  
all the way to Rockaway—  
this was the sea  
allotted to me, and now  
I have been permitted  
to bring the sheen and steep  
and truth of it up here with me,  
sacred North River estuary  
so deep inland the tide flows.**

***9 April 2023***

=====

**Who are the chains for?  
The bucket in the well.  
Are we still in New Hampshire?  
Taste it and see.**

**9.IV.23**

=====

**When the light  
gets in our eyes  
it stays there for a while.  
You can close your eyes  
and still the light goes  
probing around inside.  
Say your prayers for what it sees.**

**9.IV.23**

=====

**Easter Monday.  
Kindness mostly  
matters now.  
Our personal grief  
becomes a lubricant  
to ease the frictions  
of other people. All  
of them, birds even  
and beasts our brothers.  
Read the label on your thought:  
Oil of sorrow eases others' pain.**

**10 April 2023**

=====

Then it began again,  
the truth comes by weeks,  
that's what work is for,  
the numbers press  
Our tender skin.

2.

But who is talking,  
who dares to have  
opinions about seven  
or thirteen or nine  
or even one? Is one  
even a number or just  
what is? We used to love

**cowboy music, 'cause cowboys  
have no weeks or weekdays,  
they just have cows, cowday  
every day keeps numbers at bay  
till a solitary horseman  
herds them home.**

**3**

**I think us what such music said,  
but I haven't heard it for years  
and I haven'teven seen a cow  
since two days ago, soft brown  
Jersey, in the Churchtown barn,**

4

In fact you saw the cow, whole  
barn full of them, you told me, I took  
your word for it.

O Monday is a prairie spread  
deep into a shimmering horizon  
and I woke with no numbers  
in my head at all but only  
now they come toppling in,  
bales of hay, tumbleweed.

10 April 2023

=====

**Break it like a matzo  
you remember those  
a box of Manischewitz  
on ech table in the huge  
dining room at Grossinger's  
though I prefer the ones  
made by Aaron Streit, lightly  
salted, but that's another story,  
crack it on the cracks,  
take the long sentence,  
make it even longer till  
you can't see the end of it,  
then reel it in from the text  
surrounding it, that sea**



**of who knows what that  
someone in you thought  
you meant to say—  
and here it is, a new thing, new  
declaration, new ambiguation,  
is that word? new confusion  
you have to live up to, through,  
till an end of the sentence comes  
with a dot like a sleeping beetle  
after what it makes a last word.**

**10 April 2023**

## **SQUILLS**

**Most every word  
can have an S after it  
to make it more,  
make it them  
and them can be millions  
or just two lonely  
trees on that bleak meadow  
or a lawn flush with blue stars..**

**10.IV.23**

=====

**The loveliest thing about writing  
i ou can't tell where its going.  
Even iif you have your last line  
firmly in mind, you can't control  
what the words get up to  
along the way. Something always  
comes to mind between one word  
and the next, and after  
every word a gap like a river—  
who knows what they speak  
over there, with that weird  
flag flapping on a mound  
you have no binoculars to help.**

**No, you have to cross the gap  
all by yourself, bark out a word  
and hold till it carries you over  
and dumps you in silence  
halfway there so you have to  
Flounder out and come ashore,  
the mighty river was a trickle,  
that flag a flutter in magnolia.**

**You've found the new word mow  
and weary though you may be  
it will carry you to the next,  
the next, the next. That's all  
I know about getting there.**

**10 April 2023**

=====

**Watch from the stern  
the sea you've passed through—  
different from what's to come?  
You've left a wake, of course, and  
you watch it spreading out  
its sinister vee towards shore—  
everything in its angle will be  
at least for a moment changed.,  
turbulence bothering fish,  
a little, current and infusion,  
little waves tumbling from big.  
What have you done to the sea?**

**Now make your way to the prow,  
stand there and apologize  
for what you're in the very act  
of doing, the cut waves already  
sliced on either side.**

**You know how you are,  
prone to guilt and often wrong—  
is it a sin to sail the sea,  
or river or lake? Is it a sin  
to go anywhere at all?**

**10 April 2023**

**=====**

**The man who went ro India  
the man who strolled in Vienna  
taught in California  
dozed with his love  
on the Hill of Tara–  
they must have been  
some other me.  
Where have I ever been but here?**

**10 April 2023**

=====

**Not the one from yesterday,  
wild turkey all by himself,  
herself, on that wide empty field  
over Ulster Landing, she or he  
was yesterday. Who  
is my animate today?  
Broken letters of an ancient alphabet  
drag the poet from her sleep  
but I wake from no visual field  
into the calm morning.  
No beast, no alphabet, nothing  
but the gnawing need  
of being me—you know it too,  
it puts on your clothes**



**and signs your mail.**

**Wolf fox turkey blackbird**

**they do it too, they all take part**

**and I am the part that's left.**

**That's a question, by the way,**

**but the alphabet I'm written in**

**doesn't have a curly Q to say so.**

**11 April 2023**

**=====**

**Seated on ponies  
once or twice  
as a child,  
I never really  
rode a horse.  
That tells you something  
and not just about me.**

**11 April 2023**

=====

**All the little countries  
left over from the flood,  
guess they'll all be  
swept up together  
when Natoland and Putinslavia  
decide to duke it out  
and China holds their coats.  
Go see Moldova while we can,  
and spend a week in Kirghizstan.**

**11.IV.23**

=====

Dawn song  
all day long  
that's what breath  
is singing, breathe  
in wake up  
breathe out.

The engine's running,  
the tree is waiting,  
remember eating?  
wake up and do.

But you know better,  
breathe in deep, deep  
and let it sleep.

*11 April 2023*

=====

Sometimes as soft  
low as one  
thrum of a lute,  
you see a string  
quivering  
all the way to silence—  
that sort of song.

11.IV.23

== ==

**Ulterior music  
moseying from car to car  
in tthe Walmart parking lot,  
loud country and shrill pop  
roll up my window and wait.**

**Ulterior is uglier  
than they know.  
the innocent guilty  
ones who blare it out,**

**and yet it has magic,  
the mystery of sound  
you have not chosen**

**to hear but it comes  
at you all itself  
to be heard.**

**Try  
to make sense of it  
till it rolls away.**

**11.IV.23**

## IN SOJOURNER TRUTH PARK

The Hudson quiet tonight,  
so smooth. You'd never  
think it was a rolling river  
but less an estuary, arm  
of the sea. Lake-like calm.  
We sit and stare across it  
to the shore where we live.  
You see an eagle, follow it  
with binoculars, watch it  
find a sturdy branch, over there,  
a branch with a mate on it,  
two eagles well before twilight.

11 April 2023



## **SPLENDORE**

**Splendor says  
Dante says Williams  
says Duncan is  
reflected light—  
we do not see the original,  
we see the sheen on the ever-  
moving surface of the sea.  
It seems in the human house  
the sun is the primal,  
the single radiant,  
and everything else splendor.  
We speak from experience  
but can we trust what we  
have made of what we see?**

**O monotheist light  
we so believe in,  
me too, I live here too,  
but sometimes I wonder  
if the sea has a primal light  
of its own, and that rock  
we drove past yesterday  
where road cuts through hill,  
maybe at midnight  
that shows something too.  
Heresy probably, but heresy  
is good for us sometimes,  
like the first taste of food  
after long fasting.**

**12 April 2023**

=====

I think of a woman I know  
their arms usually bare  
holding right now  
in southern sunshine  
an armful of flowers,  
not sentimentally  
but with skeptic grace,  
analyzing color and scent,  
choosing, saying  
hello to a daffodil  
and why not,  
a little yellow  
needed in this blue world  
to make the green stuff green.

**They put the flowers down  
on a freestone wall  
and brush their hands clean  
while a cat looks on.  
That's as far as I'm able to see.  
I think they go inside now  
and write some words  
I would rather like to read.**

**12 April2023**

**=====**

**Or heresy is just hearsay—  
words that spell together  
sleep together and from  
their casual liaisons  
strange half-truths are born.  
We build whole dictionaries  
to keep such words apart.  
Take care of what you write  
when you're only half asleep.**

**12 April 2023**

=====

**I think I wanted a book  
I could float on,  
just Jamaica Bay at first,  
maybe big rivers, maybe  
even the sea on my way  
to India,**

**I wanted a book  
that would feed me  
as I sailed, no need  
to kill the poor fish,  
I don't like to hurt things,  
I wanted a book that would  
sing to me as we floated,  
tell stories, give me advice**

**on how to behave if ever  
I came to some mainland again,  
I wanted a book that would  
smile and stamp my passport,  
a book that would slip  
a few gold coins in my pocket,  
a book that would kiss me  
chastely and rock me to sleep.**

**12 April 2023**

## **TO A YOUNG POET**

**Hard work, little praise.  
But why choose Olympus  
if you don't like climbing?**

**12.IV.23**



====

The complex color  
of the setting sun  
reminds me of my relatives,  
uncles and aunts  
by blood not marriage,  
wistful, ruddy cheeks  
and half-closed eyes.  
What family must I come from?  
Then the cold moon rises.  
reminds me of my heart.

12.IV.23

=====

**Impact of anything  
stretch marks in the sand  
cloud drifts away, steel stays,  
it could be a girl at the counter  
choosing her lunch,  
clock on the wall  
as if evry moment counts,  
ball bounces, catch it  
or it rolls away,  
both are legal, legitimate,  
musical, apostolic,  
close my eyes in acquiescence.**

**13 April 2023**

**=====**

**Roma means Gypsy  
means roamer,  
Rome stands still.  
The child shuts the dictionary  
cries a little on the way to sleep.**

**13.IV.23**

=====

**Wild island woman  
with still black hair  
shouts her way  
through deep woods,  
no one to lead her  
but he trees–this  
is any young poet  
now in this busy world.**

**13 April 2023**

=====

Long stretches of amiable time  
grown men skating by IJsselmeer,  
that was then and this is April  
teetering in treetops  
tentative as kindergarten.  
Gears of time. Weather  
in your pocket. Every  
meeting is virtual, kid,  
don't ever forget it.

2.

Stevedores unload avocados  
at the dock in Hammerfest.  
Why are we doing this,

**why do we insist on eating  
somewhere else? Orange juice  
in Montreal, kiwis in Queens.  
I believe we mean to swallow  
distances themselves  
and make them free inside us,  
I ate chocolate, I must be Africa.**

**13.IV.23**

=====

**Photos in a book for children,  
love letters from the Louvre.  
Great art is wasted on adults—  
those magical things that hang  
so energetic on museum walls  
are at their best a gift  
to children, all children  
who look up or over and feel  
suddenly full of something  
waiting always inside them.  
Leave the parents in the lobby—  
they stopped seeing long ago.**

**13 April 2023**

***WAHLVERWANDSCHAFT***  
**or, AGAINST BLOOD TIES**

**'S a fre world,  
choose your cousins,  
choose your niece,  
handpick new siblings—  
don;t waste love on history,  
DNA's OK in its place  
but leave room in your heart  
for immiigrants from Otherness.**

**13.IV.23**



== == == == ==

No legitimate time  
but the flower;  
Roses brought  
black and scarlet  
a closed parliament  
on the pale table.  
Talk to me it said  
but all I could do  
was listen. Is listen.

2.

I'm trying to unwrap  
yesterday from my mind  
and the dream isn't helping,

pages in tiny print of text  
supposedly by me, about  
two ancient Greeks—gods  
or eroes, they knew  
the difference but also  
how close they are—  
visualized but not seen.

Unwrap the hour  
mind kneels down to pray,  
unwrap the hour,,  
let it be now.

3.

O the troubles we get into  
just by waking up!  
I was a swallow asleep

om currents of air  
above Lacoste, now look at  
sitting at the window  
trying to figure out which  
religion to pray in today,  
if this is really today.

4.  
I'm sharing my confusions,  
delusions, in hopes  
they'll be on benefit  
to those who behold them,  
knowing it all happens  
again, and later slips away,  
and roses are just colors

**and smells again,  
no more messages,  
the sky just the sky.**

**14 April 2023**

=====

**When you stir things  
together in a pan  
expect them to change,  
heat or friction chemical  
reaction, mix mix mix.  
So there is danger in bringing  
people together in a room  
unless you keep from mixing  
by playing a music or showing  
them something on a big screen.  
Otherwise they mix, mix  
and go home changed,  
and nobody can tell  
who they'll be then.     *14.IV.23***

=====

**A few years of leave  
still left,  
then back to heaven  
and hard work.**

**14.IV.23**

***[LNR: Devachen is not always easy]***

**=====**

**The small can enter spaces  
denied to the great.  
Reflect on this come summer  
and the sun beats down.**

**14.IV.23**

## **SANTA MARIA DELLA SALUTE**

**1.**

**White church  
I need you now,  
dome noble  
on the sea edge,  
pale edifice  
of understanding.**

**2.**

**Why don't I call it ocean?  
Because the ocean is out eere,  
beyond the islands, beyond  
our limits, our harbors.**



**Remember childhood:  
ocean out where  
but sea comes to me.**

**3.**

**So that white temple  
I have never entered  
haunts my waking  
so many awnings.**

**A temple is not  
for going into anyway,  
a temple stands there  
and makes the landscape  
rise up in worship, and offer  
its own image to the sea.**

**4.**

**Because it is on the very  
edge of city and sea  
it seems to me to be  
where the empire ends  
this thing we call Europe  
and something else begins,  
no name for it yet except  
the other side of the sea.  
Now for the ancients  
Ocean was a river,  
a continuous circulation  
from which the meaning  
of which place describes.  
So here by the Hudson**

**I am not far from Venice—  
the image brings me home.  
Or is our home.**

**14 April 2023**

## **CHURCHTOWN ROAD**

**Hello holy farmer  
we have come  
not for the cheese  
or even milk  
but for the cows,  
to learn their generosity  
and share their prayers.**

**14.IV.23**

=====

**What should I be thinking  
instead of this?**

**The lost thought,  
the old coat way back  
in the closet,  
the longitude of empathy.**

**14.IV.23**

## THE WALK TO THE POND

remembers  
s many people,  
I see their faces  
swimming at me even  
before I stepnup on the ledge  
above the actual water.  
Water of the actual!  
Music you can actually hear!  
Frogs, butterflies, swifts  
to catch unwary  
denizens of atmosphere.  
I stand on the dam  
so many times  
without actually

going or being there—  
o actual, what a cruel  
religion you are,  
bt often merciful too,  
every day a new chapter  
in a very old book.

And yet I dare to stand there  
in the presence of water,  
beavers, nutrias,  
in the distant reeds,  
you see them by their traces,  
ripples where there is no current,  
the script of hidden movement  
and I don't move at all.

15 April 2023

## **PARONOMASIA**

**Call language  
a long-range missal  
for a Mass that never ends,  
but be respectful  
as you say so,  
the words are listening  
in the heaven of your head.**

**15.IV.23**



=====

**What are the limits  
of what we cannot behold?  
I want to take the measure  
of invisibility. What else  
is poetry for, strange affection  
for words hidden in crannies  
of a free-stone wall,  
between petals of the rose,  
trash between old wooden  
ties on the railroad track**

**15 April 2023**

## TO A YOUNG POET

Here is the problem.  
Or now. Your grandfather  
is younger than I am,  
y grandfather was born  
before the Civil War.  
How can we call this  
the same world we live in?  
Yes, we can hug hello  
in the doorway, write  
emails through the void,  
and shout words to each other  
that seem the same to a listener  
but obviously mean entirely  
different things ro each.

**What does dance mean to me, what is  
a rite to you?**

**And still we shout and why not,  
love makes people do even strange  
things than poetry.**

**15.IV.23**

=====

Let the road rest a little,  
it's the weekend,  
it's a hard climb all these years  
up Cedar Hill, let the road dream  
of other destinations,  
the beaches of Thailand,  
or maybe even remember  
the road it thinks it was  
in another lifetime, roads  
have lives, that it led  
along the river all way to Spain.

15 April 2023

## **IN THE TEMPLE**

**I think the Holy of Holies  
was an empty space,  
eternal purity of mind.**

**15.IV.23**

=====

Consider the calf of a moderate  
dancer  
muscular yet tender still  
resting now after a few hours  
of playful or dutiful practice,  
ballet or barn dance,  
now at peace on the sofa  
how soft to your gentle fingertips  
if by choice or chance you  
were to touch  
the skillful skin of another.

16 April 2023 (*waking*)

IN RAIN LIGHT

**you led me out  
to see the first  
leaves on the little  
linden by the door,  
just tis hour opening  
in soft rain after  
a summer-hot dry week.  
Tiny new leaves  
spoken by the drizzle  
after thunderstorms,  
everything alive.  
You gave me this.**

**16 April 2023**

**= = = = =**

**Opening packages  
birthday every day,  
the wind comes with them,  
or brings them, some  
people call it weather  
or the mail or messages  
on cell phones or waves  
of the sea washing in  
over the slim peninsula  
of ordinary time  
or angel voices in the choir  
like brown paper ripping  
off cardboard cartons or  
plastic, o plastic how you  
rustle and squeal and pop**



o music in a distant room,  
naked faces on the zoom,  
packages everywhere,  
drag in from the porch or  
sometime puff out the candle,  
switch off the tube  
let the wrapping paper fall  
and stand in the dark, wait,  
wait in silence while  
the real messages come.

16 April 2023

= = = = =

**Memory, be generous.  
Let the lesions heal,  
the scabs fall away.  
Remember the smile  
of all flesh, the tune  
of every city, picture  
the kind landlord,  
the grateful child.  
Be unto yourself  
a museum of the good,  
the beautiful, safe  
on your clean walls  
in the vening light.**

***16 April 2023***

=====

**Wait for the wool  
on the naked sheep,  
the minister is humming  
in the sacristy,  
must be Sunday,  
leaves are promising,  
Easter's past and so far  
so good, we used to say that  
when it was true, or seemed so,  
or who knows now?  
Any moment now the chapel  
will fill up with clean  
Americans waiting for hymns.  
And him too, of course, to say**

**those comforting words  
that only preachers know.  
Sometimes even I would like  
to go sundaying to church  
and drowse in such beatitude.**

**16.IV.23**

=====

**Ladder of light  
to climb  
out of wherever you are,  
scale the mountain,  
roll out of the subway  
on the long escalator—  
move in what way seems best,  
your choice, monsieur madame,  
I know it's hard to be easy  
but here it is, a ladder of light  
lets you rise. no matter  
How far you're going today.**

**16.IV.23**

=====

**Gurnemanz said to Parsifal  
Walk with me  
its the only way to get there.  
What place is that?  
the young man asked.  
It is where we are all together.  
Otherwise you'll always be alone,  
a blue heron searching blank sky.**

**17 April 2023**

=====

It's a day for it  
certainly  
after a long  
night of not.

But am I ready  
for it,  
                  at times  
even the sight  
is harsher  
than the taste.

Pretend it's cool  
water. It's a

**mystery—every  
now and then  
a car comes driving  
out of the woods.**

**17 April 2023**



=====

**The things you see  
on television.  
Terrorvision.  
A psychiatrist explaining  
Schumann's madness  
with his fingers on the keys,  
playing those beautiful doubts.  
I listen long enough to guess  
his doctors did this to him,  
noisily attacking his  
luminous silence inside.**

**17.IV.23**

=====

**When the altar was a table  
it rested on a stone.  
I remember my lessons  
and set out before you  
all the tasty distortions  
of memory. Short of breath  
I use saucers not platters,  
always important to remember  
nothing's bigger than a rose.**

**17 April 2023**

=====

**Lie down in likeness,  
wake up in Singapore,  
city of the lion, all th bells  
of Belfast ringing in your head.**

**Place is the only reality  
and it changes in the night.**

**My face in the mirror  
a challenge to decipher—  
that mouth doesn't look at all  
like the words coming out of it.**

**But that same voice inside  
tells I don't have to decide.**

**Go to the window and look out,  
rainy roof, shiny road,  
learn who I really am.**

**17 April 2023**

== == == == ==

*for Lila*

**Your *Girl in the oyster shell*  
must be very small—  
oyster are slim and shallow.  
I had a giant clam shell once,  
used it as a birdbath, backyard,  
you could easily seat a virgin in it  
but mean people stole it while I  
vacationed on an island where  
they grew both oysters and clams  
but only one girl-- I married her.**

**17 April 2023**

## **TRACT**

**Here's a new religion  
in case yor old runs out.  
It's called the Invisible Temple.  
And it's ahard to become  
an orthodox Ins]visibler  
as we 're called.**

**But here's how:  
event house must have  
an absolutely empty room,  
only one window, only one door.  
And nothing in it, no closet,  
no carpet, no chair.**

**The sacred service starts**

**when you walk reverently in  
and shut the door behind you.  
Do not lie down, sit or kneel.  
Stand there as long as you can  
or as long as you feel like—  
so much of life is up to you.  
Move as little as you can.  
Listen to and through silence—  
any noises from outside  
are part of the liturgy. Listen.  
So much depends on where  
in the room you stand—  
over the years you will learn  
where you hear best, think best,  
and what you learn there.  
Takes time, and time is the gift**

**this religion brings—  
after even a few weeks  
of even a few minutes a day  
in the Holy Room, already  
you'll have a new feeling for time  
and space and everything else, slow,  
the world is busy. slow,  
the world blossoms in the room.  
It takes a while to find the mind**

**17 April 2023**



**== == == == ==**

**We wield our faces  
while the body dreams.  
Check it out whenever  
people crowd together.  
Can't younger the band already?**

**18.IV.23**

=====

**I don't want to think  
about what I'm thinking  
so I'll think about you  
instead. The problem comes  
that I don't know who you are,  
I see a blue shirt in the dark hall,  
can't hear your accent, grammar  
peculiar to you in our  
shared language. If it is.  
I you're even here, there,  
in the shadows, the sound  
of a rain-dove cooing outside.**

**18 April 2023**

=====

**How can we mean  
the same thing when we talk?  
And when we walk together  
how can it take each of us  
to the same place?**

**18.IV.23**

=====

**The leaves come back  
and love you now,  
they know how long  
you have been waiting,  
walking in the naked woods,  
shivering in shadow scribbled  
by their bare branches.**

**But now a few warm days,  
a might or two of rain  
and here they come!**

**The leaves come out,  
your coat comes off and now**

**you stroll in new magic  
down to the river, slow,  
maybe come home with  
a flower found along the way.**

**18 April 2023**

== = ==

**In the rigorous latitudes  
we wait for spring,  
impatient for suntanned ease  
by meadow-mild or ocean keen.  
We linger in doorways,  
liminal to the last, seldom  
content with the now at hand.  
Yet in this now a power stirs  
and if we listen careful tells us  
This is where you mean to be.**

**18 April 2023**

=====

**Desert oil  
was free  
We saw.**

**\***

**Awed, we wed  
as we see.**

**18.IV.23**

== ==

**If you were dark water  
as I have seen it quiet  
in flooded mines in Rosendale  
what language would you speak?**

**If you were the one tree  
left in the parking lot  
could you forgive?**

**Learning is tricky, this word  
has other words in it,  
what can I do but hope  
the right one comes out  
and tells you. Tells what?**



**I have no message to deliver,  
just the here-I-am of any  
spoiled child wanting attention.**

**But why would I even want that?  
Haven't I been hiding all my life?  
The sword knows., A good word  
speaks, and answers itself.**

**18 April 2023**

=====

**Are you old yet  
or is it only me ?  
Did I take delivery  
of the years for you  
and sow them in me,  
fading eyesight,  
rumpled skin?  
Sometimes I think  
it all stands stil  
while I slip faster  
and faster through  
this forest of motionless trees.**

**18 April 2023**

## **STRUCTURE**

**1.**

**Structure of the rose,  
that persian passion  
we give to loves  
on special days, I wonder  
what's inside it  
if we could explore it  
without disturbing its array  
of leaf and pollen,  
spike and scent.**

**2.**

**I am asking what it would be like  
to walk inside the flower  
and be so small in doing so  
not even the foraging bee  
would notice, and no petal stir.**

**3.**

**Go ahead, ask me  
why I'm thinking of such things.  
I'd tell you if I knew for sure,  
but I think it's because I sense  
or feel or fear we all  
are moving all the time inside  
a structure that contains us,**

**constrains us, maintains us,  
and every now and then  
we catch the scent of it  
and that's what we call time.**

**19 April 2023**

**= = = = =**

**Stubble on the chin  
stiff when small  
soft when grown.  
What else is like this?**

**19.IV.23**

## **INCENDIARY**

**kisses of the imagination.**

**We heard the word  
on television, didn't  
know where yo put it  
or why whoever said it  
said it. Use the word  
in a pleasant sense,  
no brush fire or siren.**

**Use it to mean  
something that warms,  
makes passionate.**

**Are we allowed to  
play with what we hear?**

***19.IV.23***

=====

**Delicatessen.  
Steamy window  
man beyond it  
slicing purple beef.  
Meant delicate  
eating once but now  
something more.  
The words led us here  
and sometimes we followed,  
the more we read  
the less we know where here is.**

**19.IV.2023**



== == == == ==

Almost dark  
moon in Aries,  
tj stories  
tke sky keeps  
telling us.  
On this planet  
a shy white  
car parked in trees.  
We live in symmetries.

19.IV.23

## TILES

**Cost of mirrors  
lost in looking.**

**I look away  
when I pass by,  
in fear to see  
blueglass mirror  
of a '40s cafe.**

**When small road  
meets the wider,  
it gets the STOP sign.  
Will we ever grow up?**

**The nandygirl she said  
she was, she lifted  
the ceiling into place.**

**Little marvels  
swim around us  
so deep we are  
in oceans of air.**

**Lift up your hearts  
the Mas Book says  
though the Latin says  
it a different way.**

**I stood on the corner  
when there were buses.  
It all comes back to me now,  
the Packard rolling by.**

**The phone rings  
telle me stop  
remembering.**

**But still, all the tiles  
on the subway wall,  
each needs a letter  
or a whole word.  
then the city will  
finally be complete.**

**Cold sunlight  
warm fingers—  
who is this place?**

**20 April 2023**

=====

If I miss you  
in French  
it's your fault.  
Doesn't seem fair  
but it so seldom is.

A word is one  
insight  
in a dark room.

20.IV.23

== == == == ==

*for C*

**Iridescent animal  
at least your eyes  
are sunrise for me  
all day long, and when  
the yawning comes  
their glint still smiles.  
I love you for your light.**

**20 April 2023**

=====

Scabbard of light  
taut i the sky,  
the blade slips back in  
and the trees grw dim.  
Morning by the Metambesen,  
I hear the maple tree telling me  
We remember the future,  
the stream is you in your time,  
the rock beneath, well,  
I suppose you would call it  
the past. But right now it's  
holding us allin its hands.

20 April 2023



=====

**Can I still go to Europe on a boat?  
i can't swim or even float  
yet the next time I see London  
I want to get there on a ship,  
the way it used to be, water,  
the words remember,  
remember all our goings, our  
coming ashore, Tower Bridge  
and Eiffel Tower, not just Venice,  
close my eyes and drift,  
not just Vienna, that lonely swan  
that looked up at me in Berlin.**

**20 April 2023**

=====

**Come sit on my lap  
and tell me a flower,  
no hurry, no hurry,  
I'm only a mountain,  
I've been here a long time**

**waiting, waiting for what  
only you can tell me,  
the flower that blossoms  
from your lips when you speak  
even if you don't speak to me.**

**20 April 2023**

=====

**We try to say everything,  
bird on a rock  
where the stream bends,  
mallard maybe,  
we try to get everything right.  
So when the trees  
are greener than yesterday  
we sing a newish song  
that sounds still a little  
familiar far away.  
Or when the bus pulls up  
we watch alertly  
to see how they step down,  
awkward or graceful,**

**young or old, and we go home  
telling ourselves alone  
what we have seen.**

**We try to say everything  
but don't always use words,  
consider tossing  
crumbs to the pigeons.**

**Consider patting the smooth  
wet black iron railing  
when you walk by the park.**

**21 April 2023**

## **HISTORY IS WAITING FOR ME**

**You too, over by the checkout  
wondering why I'm taking  
so long looking at all  
the bottles of olive oil—  
why so many brands, why  
[pretend they come from Italy?  
Don't people know  
that Palestine is best, then  
California, then old Greece?  
I can see why you're impatient,  
I'm coming, I'm coming  
but everything has a label  
and everything has to be read.**

***21 April 2023***

=====

**I swallow my pills  
and walk away.  
The sink says Wait!  
Have you praised  
the water that runs  
from heaven and all  
over the earth  
through me, me,  
o your plastic cup?  
Dn;'t praise me,  
I am inonstant as you,  
now on, mostly off,  
but I drip. Not me,  
me, to praise but that**

**essence of life and  
sentience that flows  
through me to you,  
you? Now wipe your chin.**

**21 April 2023**

**= = = = =**

**Over the scary gap  
low in the rock cliff  
LAST CHANCE MINE  
If you can't find it here  
it's nowhere at all.  
And where are you?**

**21.IV.23**



=====

Assortments of the obvious,  
Venice, rowboats, zeppelins,  
flower pots, you know, all  
the stuff memory crams  
into the mind, it's a wonder  
we can think at all beyond  
the tumult of remembering,  
oysters in Baltimore, Fischer-  
Dieskau sings *ewig, ewig...*  
my kite swoops over a vacant lot.

21 April 2023

**=====**

**I need a shave.  
I mean a shove.  
I mean a shiv  
to cut the cord  
holds me to my past  
so I can hurry  
innocent onward,  
newborn of the next hour.**

**21.IV.23**

## **GLASTONBURY**

**Come there in winter  
on a sry cold day  
not too many trippers  
idling around.**

**Take the spiral pathway  
up round the Tor  
and as you climb,  
unwind your self  
and win it round the hill.**

**When you get tp the top  
and stand in Michael's Tower  
set your self free  
and watch it soar  
up through that great**

**roofless shaft into the sky  
at the precise point  
where a star is waiting,  
your special star, come there  
for your rendezvous.**

**Now you are free to go,  
your self safe and secure  
up there, the star  
will follow you and you  
will follow it, all round  
the town, the world,  
you will be free to wander  
and testify and love.**

**21 April 2023**

=====

**Taffrail  
and efar of falling,  
love of sea  
and fear of falling  
into what I came from  
and the spray still comes  
leaping at my feet,  
terrifying kiss of origin.**

**2.**

**I need something  
but is it me.**

**3.**

**People who come from islands  
are always a little magic,  
a little crazy.**

**They grow up surrounded  
on all sides by their beginning.**

**Fear of the sea.**

**Fear of it being away from me.**

**4.**

**So that's why we have work,  
something to keep our eyes  
ad hands and thoughts on,  
building a table, growing roses,  
counting things, writing words,**

**and all the while it's around us,  
notice that it's always coming in,  
flows away only to come  
back in again to jpin us.**

**22 April 2023**

=====

**Is there hope in the having?  
What if it lingers  
long after satisfy?  
Will I still want to go to Vienna  
after U finally come home?  
Satisfaction means in Latin  
Enough already, you got your wish  
but what if wishes never fade?  
A late quartet of Haydn,  
ripe cherries on Fulton street.**

**22 April 2023**

=====



**Liminal, yes.**

**But there's a room  
in there out there.**

**Some rooms have  
invisible walls.**

**Some rooms have chairs,  
some rooms have seacoasts,  
monorails, pagodas, cows.**

**Some rooms hold you close  
and wipe away your tears.**

**22.IV.2023**

=====

**I knew who you are  
before I knew who you were.  
One look was enough—  
all the footnotes came later.  
Interesting, enlightening even,  
but nothing as lucid,  
luminous, authentic,  
as the first sight.  
You probably think I'm  
making this up. I'm not  
but you're right to be careful,  
skeptical with people like me.**

**22.IV.23**

=====

**Do the earth's speeds  
around its axis  
and around the sun  
ever change?**

**Do we slow down,  
speed up, reach April  
faster one year than before?  
And how would we know,  
What time is it really, really?  
Why do I lie here, worried,  
counting my breaths?**

**22.IV.23**

=====

**A man walks on tightrope  
over Niagara Falls.  
Brave and skillful.  
Women walk a tightrope  
all day long  
over a mad male world.**

**22.IV.23**

== ==

**This must be the place  
the authorities had in mind,  
the power plant, a burning bush,  
the sense of here I am  
supposed to be.**

**The ridge to the mainland,  
such a simple arc  
across a simple sky,  
so easy to strive easy  
upward east and roll  
easy down, over there  
must be why I am here.**

**23 April 2023**

=====

**Eighty eight  
come September  
then I finally  
get to reach  
the last key  
on the piano,  
instrument complete!  
now the whirl begins, wild  
music of the silent soul  
through all the melodies of mind.  
I suspect I begin to hear  
the orchestra tuning up inside,  
yes, the poet told us no man**

**is an island, no,  
one is a concerto,  
the soul's solo  
struggling against  
all the noisy beauty of the mind.  
Concerto meant battle once,  
the struggle lasts.  
At times I think anything we hear  
should be like a child tasting  
raspberry jam for the first time.**

**23 April 2023**

## **ARENA**

**Enter cheering,  
the calm comes later.**

**Games take away  
your excitement  
and spill it, gush it  
up to the sky.**

**Colosseum. Stadium.**

**Wotds with ancient  
agonies built in.**

**Exit humbled  
or with false pride  
rouging your cheeks.**

**The game is over,  
the energy won't come back.**



**Go sit on the beach  
and recover. Watch  
the eternal battle of  
the sea against the sky.  
They both win all the time.  
Little by little you can breathe again.**

**23 April 2023**

=====

**I didn't know it'd be like this,  
rain on roof, Haydn late quartet,  
did you?**

**Sunday takes us  
by surprise, last night's storm,  
dreams of inaccurate hotels.  
Shake my fur, get the sleep off,  
try to be now.**

**The majesty  
of silence all round the house,  
we are servants of that simplicity  
so hard to win. Thunder close**

at midnight, reminded us.  
*Serve silence and it will speak—*  
a bird said that back of my mind.  
Fuzzy-witted still, I fumble  
and try to pick the lock  
of the day and sneak in.

**23 April 2023**

## **AT CHARLES RIDER PARK**

**Take a close-up of the rock.  
lines and color must mean,  
something, and the feel  
if you dare reach out and touch.**

**Things that have been here  
a million years must have something  
I need to hear.**

**Or is hearing the wrong sense? Do  
we even heave, we  
brieflings, any sense that can  
truly understand this shale  
or slate or gneiss or whatever**

**smug men in glasses call it?**

**They now what to call it  
but do they hear its answer?**

**23 April 2023**

**=====**

**Imagine it  
tidy balcony  
over cit center,  
tenant on it  
sipping lemonade.  
How much more  
do we need to know?  
Knowledge pervades—  
I give you a branch  
you know the whole tree.  
You know how to make  
the lemon sweet.**

**24 April 2023**

=====

**Words on the blackboard  
are hard to read,,  
vague pale lines  
on a mushy greyish zone  
and soon wiped away,  
turn into dust, mush,  
memory. Think  
of the words you saw there  
for the first time.  
saints and emperors,  
places you will never visit,  
chemicals hidden deep  
in the wordless clumsiness  
of things, things, things.**

**Word on blackboard  
sing tome,  
make me understand  
where you  
and all your kin are  
coming from,  
who made you,  
who made you able to speak,  
now make me know something,  
anything, I did not knw bef/ore.  
The dust on the eraser  
holds ten thousand years.**

**24.IV.23**



=====

*Only shallow people don't believe  
what they see.*

—O.W.

[

That car is in the rees again,  
shiny white, a little up the hill  
so it seems to be gowing there,  
fruit on amazing branch. See it,  
and see what comes of trusting  
what you see. I may be shallow,  
Oscar, but cars don't grow on  
trees.

24.IV.23

=====

**The cello has a way  
of slipping along the arteries  
adding its message  
to the busy traffic of the heart  
Hours after I t lingers in us,  
never flows back, no veins  
for its profound vibrations.  
We live with it, a little slower,  
deeper than we were before.**

**24 April 2023**

== == == == ==

**Walk there.  
Assume the stone  
path leads the way.**

**So much  
we have to trust  
of what we see.  
We know deeply  
stone doesn't lie  
but we don't know  
who laid it there,  
old flags of bluestone  
from the hills over there.**

**Provenance and permission,  
I'm grateful that my feet  
don't actually think.  
Or do they? Am I only  
a traveler in their long  
conversation with the ground?**

**25 April 2023**

=====

**Now they've all been born,  
all the little Emmas and Liams and the  
census books are closed.  
these are the chosen ones,  
and the Olivias and Benjamins,  
they are who we'll be  
for the next century or so,  
live long, mes enfants!  
Find in your new-fangled names  
an ancient power of kindness,  
discovery and song. Promise  
you'll get us all to heaven yet.**

**25 April 2023**

=====

Explanations ary.  
I say the rose is red  
to remind us all things  
have bood too, color  
is a current, a trick  
the light plays on the mind  
to help us read meaning  
in what we say.

Color  
identifies. Color reminds.  
The colors of ou skins  
testify our homelands—  
glaciers, mountains,  
deserts, forests, pale

**shores of the sea. Time  
to get dressed. Put on a shirt  
the color of your secret name.**

**25 April 2023**

=====

The girl in the helicopter  
scatters leaflets through the air  
but all the sheets are blank  
or no, it's snowing, no, too  
warm for that, it must be April,  
I must be dreaming. I hear it  
though, and as I close my eyes  
the leaflets grow words  
on them I can almost read.

25 April 2023



== == == == ==

**Give the little kid  
a pastrami sandwich,  
give grandfather  
a lollypop. Our work  
is slowly, slowly, turning  
the world inside out.  
Look at enough pictures,  
read enough words, get  
a sense of what we're like  
in there, the lost temple,  
neighborly suburbs of heaven.**

**25 April 2023**

## THE RHINECLIFF BRIDGE

looks best from down below  
on the Kingston side,  
a sleek slim arc in heaven  
just like a rainbow  
but the colors are the angels  
in their SUVs and pickups driving  
a little too fast across the sky.  
But down here the blessed earth  
drowns by thrice-blessed sea  
that comes up here as wide river.  
But we know water, and the seals  
and surgeons are not fooled—  
this bridge leaps over the sea.

*25 April 2023*

=====

The rock at Rider  
wants to be slept on,  
looks wet in driest weather,  
wants to write its memories  
and where else but us  
for its long inscription.  
I am caught in intersection,  
all the genders of silence  
start whispering together.  
Something must be done  
it says. I'm standing here  
so you will do it. Do it.

26 April 2023

=====

**They gather ramps  
up on the mountain.  
Some take bulbs and leaves,  
some just the leaves.  
Hard to find them, I'm told,  
plentiful when found.  
Not for me to say. We live  
I suspect in random access,  
fingers always trying  
to learn the feel of things  
without hurting or getting hurt.  
So many things, and hard  
as with these wild onions,  
even where one thing ends.**

**Where is the furthest edge  
of me—that's what things say.  
I stay home and think  
about the mountain.**

**26 April 2023**

=====

**Is a mountain  
for climbing up  
or going down?  
You can't have latter  
without former—  
so who is my elder brother?**

**26.IV.23**

=====

**Watch the cardinal  
on the deck rail,  
the redwing blackbird  
on the branch, the red  
not all there yet, yellow  
growing towards it,  
or watch the tiny slip  
of blood squeezed  
out of a papercut, poor  
finger, soon healed,  
not everything is,  
decide what red means.**

**26.IV.23**

=====

**Down along the river  
you can hear eagles scream.  
What a thin sharp voice  
for such a big bird.  
Or maybe we don't know  
how to hear the deep  
end of it, just as all  
we see this bright day  
in the gleaming  
surface of the river.**

**26.IV.23**



== == == == ==

**Resist the obvious  
at your peril.  
The girl is standing there  
holding her little  
brother by the hand.  
We know the picture.  
She leads, he wonders.  
We slip into our roles  
and the ancient script  
speaks its way through  
our obedient lips.  
We look away to collect  
what passes as thoughts,  
we watch the trees**

**shiver in the wind.  
Leaves. Loves. What  
are we doing here?  
Who are those kids?  
Who is that I see in the mirror?**

**26.IV.23**

=====

**A slim breeze  
through the bedroom window  
chilled her bare thigh  
so that suddenly  
she was out walking  
naked at last in the forest  
or was it Eden, a shy God  
watching her through the trees?**

**2 April 2023**

=====

**Can of this, jar of that,  
three half-empty  
bottles of ginger ale.  
It is the way we have to live  
who have no cave  
to shelter in, no coral  
reef to call our own.  
Just home. Heaps of cloth  
to sleep in, or wrap  
around us when we go  
out into that strange world,  
no dinosaurs, no dragons**

**27 April 2023**

## DWELLERS

—people  
for whom the main  
matter is inside  
or outside, recognize,  
choose. Find one worm  
in the attic and all  
the categories crumble.  
German has two words  
for live: *leben*, to be alive,  
*wohnen*, to live somewhere,  
reside. We have to know  
which one we do. Every morning  
must be spent deciding.

27 April 2023

=====

**On the tracks in Barrytown  
where we watch the river  
the Albany Express slips past  
very fast, with much less noise  
than I expect, its silvery  
demure passage surprises me  
every time with how quiet  
a train can be twenty feet away,  
the silence of speed, more purr  
than roar. Then the river  
blinks back at us again. Close  
to sunset, but not yet.**

**27 April 2023**

=====

**Sunday morning  
just west of New England.  
Sit on the porch,  
pretend to be a native.  
Spread the *Times* wide  
and seem to read the paper  
but hold it upside down  
so angels see the difference,  
maybe even know who you are.**

**27 April 2023**

=====

**Wait for the wanderer  
to walk back in again,  
those woods and meadows  
dust all over his cloak.**

**2.**

**I know we don't  
wear clocks anymore  
mostly but then  
there are exceptions  
to every forest,  
a glacial boulder,  
a house cat running would.**



**3.**

**So what's he wearing  
and where has he been?  
It he even he? She  
know how to walk there too,  
the other side of inside,  
quiet stream cooling her feet.**

**4.**

**Or am I presuming?  
I walk faithful  
from the desk to the fridge  
and count myself a pilgrim,  
all the going going in my head.**

**5.**

**So when I see her  
actually come home  
from a stroll to the river  
I celebrate anew  
the infolding of the world,  
that things come round,  
songs end and begin again.  
So we sit close and listen to  
a violin concerto by Jose White  
and wonder what history means.**

**27 April 2023**

== == == == ==

Was grey  
now blue.  
Let this  
happen to you.  
Me I mean  
but I  
don't rhyme.

27,IV.23

=====

**They like the word  
iconic these days  
and abuse it all the time  
in ads mostly  
and reviews of shows.  
Iteration is another  
show-off they use, maybe  
because both begin  
with the letter I –  
it lets their little  
self sneak in.**

**27.IV.23**

=====

**The cloud above the linden  
is gone now, but the whole sky  
is paler blue than before.**

**I suppose that means when we  
expire whatever we were  
spreads out over the world.**

**27.IV.23**

=====

**If weather were an alphabet  
what would the day have spelled,  
month, chapters in book of year?  
These are silly questions,  
we know yhe answer,  
a day said what happened to us,  
the year is a closed book.  
But o ye angels of human reason,  
let me read raindrops on my roof.**

**28 April 2023**

=====

**Softly, softly,  
something's speaking.  
Whisk out your telescope  
and inspect the darkness—  
the less the better, clearer  
the sound you almost hear.**

**28 April 2023**

=====

**Remember the last  
thought you thought  
before your friends came  
knocking on the door.  
Cherish it, it is the seed  
they come to fertilize  
without knowing it.  
Or maybe they do but that  
is not up to you. Cherish,  
cherish, and let it grow  
and when hours of talk and  
nibbles later they  
finally take their vocabularies  
and depart, you alone**



**are left to water it, nurture it  
and slowly learn a little more about  
what friends are for.**

**28 April 2023**

=====

The last leaf  
of the ramps  
Keith gave us  
I chewed raw  
yesterday morning  
instead of breakfast,  
the delicate chivey  
lyric on the tongue,  
the lead grind small.  
I taste the ttee iy grew  
beneath and the mountain  
it stood on, Itaste west  
where the hills mount up  
on the sun's way to sleep.

**Then a sip of water  
brings me back to earth,  
coffee welcomes me home  
but with a soft green  
light at the back of the throat.**

**28 April 2023**

## JERSHEY'S

Little strip of paper  
they wrap arund each  
chocolate Kiss between  
candy and the tinfoil sheath—  
I try each time to read it  
bUt no news there, no new word  
to warn ,e or entice, pale  
identity, letter from an old friend  
wth no words in the envelope,.  
Foil, paper, chocolate. Just one  
forget trying to interpret—  
yet what else are things for?

**2.**

**Add more. Explain how urgent it is to read every word, and not just that, but to interpret every space where a word could be.**

**Every sheet of paper clogged with unread masterpieces, letters from the ancestors, where to walk this afternoon.**

**3.**

**So it's not just an annoying strip of logo-like tradition, it is a caution –don't let it by instake into your mouth–**

**but a flimsy conundrum set  
up in the classroom in my skull.**

**4.**

**I know what it says  
but what does it mean?  
Pale words on it say  
Kisses Kisses Kisses,  
but no lips but your own.**

**28 April 2023**

=====

**On trial for treason  
to the rule of reason  
poets throw themselves  
on the mercy of the thought  
from which all the flowers,  
tigers, gods and maidens mild  
arise and speak their piece.  
Why blame us for what words say?**

**28.IV.23**

**SIN**

**Sin is isn't  
sin is isn't  
isn't is  
what isn't  
there or  
here is isn't  
sin is isn't,  
sin is here  
is isn't,  
one part  
of the mouth  
is in the isn't,  
is in the fingers  
where sin is  
trying to touch**



what isn't  
isn't isn't always  
trying to take  
what isn't is  
enough to be.

29.IV.23 [*dremt*]

== == == == ==

**Ever wonder  
where the weather  
went when  
you are sleeping?**

**Weather waits  
on awareness—  
snow melts  
obedient as ever  
to the temperature.  
But sleep is a car,  
we run away,  
we travel far  
into the world**

**of ads on TV  
we try to buy  
by waking.  
And there  
weather waits,  
loud as a cardinal  
at the window.**

**29 April 2023**

## THE WELL

So if the well in New Hampshire  
lingers cool and dark in mind  
for eighty years, what am I to make  
of the Narrows cleaving my Brooklyn  
from America so tht it becomes the  
very essence of America, the  
mountains of Fort Greeme Park and  
Arlington Avenue, the deserts of East  
New York where I learned to ride the  
camels of the imagination. If a little  
well outside an old woman's house  
can hold its own, what can we say of  
the sea, yes, the immense  
immortality that washes upthe sands

of Rockaway and the beach at Coney Island where bathers frolic safe from the sharks that breed half a league away. Is everything the sea? Is everything really a memory? To his day I long to tug the rope that sends the pail down the well shaft where the dark water waits, sometimes with my own face booking you ar me. Wait a minute...a cormorant over the Old Mill marshes? Drinking the water of memory, the arcane distillery bottles in the brain. And still I wake thirsty. I have brought my island with me—here, have a sip.

**29 April 2023**

== ==

**Say a stainless  
steel table knife  
held by its blade  
and tapped loud  
on the radiator,  
the clank we hear  
with a deep undertone  
of down there.  
Say the tip of a shoe  
kicks against the plinth  
that holds up the table.  
Diners uneasy, impolite?  
Or earthquake? Say  
everything is an accident**

**careful caused in this  
interdependent world.  
Everything makes everything  
else. Now bang the knife  
again. What do you hear?  
Don't tell me. Make me guess.  
Now scrape your spinach  
off the plate. Now you begin  
to guess what childhood's for.**

**29 April 2023**



## **FUND YOUR FORTUNE**

**the ad fibbed  
but what if it  
were truer than they knew  
or even wanted to believe?  
What if the little paper  
inside the twisted cookie  
knew more thn they did  
and certainly more than I?  
It is not wise utterly  
to dismiss the written word  
when you find it printed  
before you in the crumbs.**

**30 April 2023**

=====

**Find the right number,  
hum it, show tune or cavatina,  
hum it high, hum it low  
until all the grave or silly  
words fall away and all you hear  
is your own breath trying hard  
to tell you something. Listen.  
Humans hum. Do it on the street  
when you're waking all alone.**

**30 April 2023**

=====

**Banks in trouble  
trains derailed  
tornados persist  
the rivers flood.  
What book re  
we reding now?  
Put it down  
and read no more.  
Put down the gun.**

**30 April 2023**

**=====**

**If space is something  
it must have an end  
or an edge at least  
so what comes then?  
Or does logic dissolve in air?**

**30 April 2023**

=====

1.

Watercress that edgy green  
be careful where to pick  
and eat, not all green things  
are good for us they say–  
I used to suc milkweed they said  
was poisonous. Don't tell me  
now that they were right.  
I know it. feel jolyous  
nd no different, but logically  
I will never be the same.

**2.**

**Seriously, I'm trying  
to figure it out.**

**Onions and avocados  
are poisonous for skunks.  
Caution in the garbage can.**

**What do we devour  
we shouldn't but never know?  
Would we live a thousand  
years if we swore off cabbage?**

**3.**

**Diet is the mystery  
in history.**

**What precisely  
did Caesar have for breakfast**

**or Plato for his midnight snack?  
Aren't we animate? Doesn't  
what we take in make us  
some of what we are?**

**4.**

**This shouldn't be a poem,  
sorry, it should have been  
a long stupid essay proving  
what we already know.  
But who has time for that?  
Still, as we Irish would say,  
What is time to a cabbage?**

**30 April 2023**

## **IN QUA REGIONE**

**Look at the map,  
wonderful intention,  
all the streets of the city  
spread out on your table  
and there is the house  
where you were born  
and there's the corner  
your cat got into a fight on  
and lost but survived  
and you loved him even more  
and there is the store  
where the man chipped away  
at a cheese to give you a taste**



**but where are you?**

**What path reveals your presence?**

**In what region will I find you**

**as Dedalus cried to Icarus.**

**I fold up the map and try to pray.**

**30 April 2023**

== == == == ==

**The bill came from the plumber and I thought about pipes, long, long slender cold metal uncorroded, hurrying water everywhere. Pipes, and then the thicker ones for steam and radiators feeding the house with heat. But in my hands I felt the water pipe, cold feel the water rushing through it or hoding its breath in there. How can cold metal be so good to drink? The plumber's bill was ful of unusual vocabulary**

**of what had been done or left  
for some other time, what came  
and what went away. But all  
I could think about was water,  
riveting silently through my life.**

**30 April 2023**

=====

I have come  
for the music  
the old man said,  
scared me to bits  
but I pulled out a pen.  
He was gone  
when I was done  
and looked up  
but the poem was there.  
What a strange  
religion language is.

30 April 2023

=====

**Time to go back to school  
and study geology.  
I'm tired of not knowing  
what I'm standing on.  
And who are those rock cliffs  
that rush past our car.  
And why is a hill?  
They'll tell me of the granite  
and gneiss of Stissing Mountain  
but will my heart believe them?**

**30 April 2023**



