9-2023

September 2023

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NEW WORD

1. Not whiffletree, not coffer. Something broken, fixed again, Made new? No. Something new, something new. Who am I? Who are you?

2. The word slipped out of the tree when I was young. I leaned against the birch, looking hard at the white skin
Trying to read the words they told me I would find there.  
The Indians had left them there,  
The Indians I did not know,  
Ones I thought about,  
The ones I feared,  
The ones who came before me,  
The ones who knew.

3.  
Leaning against the tree, though, I’ve learned a lot of things.  
Not words, not language,  
But something else.  
A feel for being there,
for being aware an action goes on, and on,
Without me,
But lets me sometimes stand and watch it happen.
Yes, there are days like that.
There are trees like that.

4.
So I went down to the stream
Like any child
And sat on the rock
And watched a blue bird.
What was its name?
Kingfisher, they said. Kingfisher.
A name I would later associate
With the grail legend,
Fisherking, Eliot,
All those things that children
Trying to grow into manhood,
Womanhood,
Bookhood,
Wordhood
Grow slowly, slowly,
Through.
But the bird dived
And splashed through the water
Seizing a fish.
The water spat him with ease? [2:20]
Or I thought it did.
Or something did.
I got up and ran home. 
Only it wasn’t home, 
It was where we ever were, 
Somewhere in the country. 
What do I know about that?
A city child, lost in the trees.

5.
But I am here, and it’s here, 
And the trees still dance around me. 
And I still pretend to know what I mean when I speak. 
That’s all you can ask of a man, 
That he pretend to mean what he says.
Pretend to say what he means,
And hope for the best,
Hope for the best.
The bird comes back to its nest.

1 September 2023
After all the differences
the gup passes from mouth to mouth
those who had followed
the Mass faithfully
word by word, missal in hand,
those who daydresmed,
studying the hair-do
on the oman inn front,
all the same now,
past pours into present,
differences pour into this
taste of the white wafer
softened bt what had once been
wine.
1 September 2023
ATHENAZE

used mean Athens-ward
and there are teachers who still
know this, vaguely, maybe,
we don’t go there anymore
except in books, mostly,
wildfires around the Parthenon,
we hear about that.
But what goes on
inside that temple where
once the wisdom woke
until we (whowere we then?)
put it back to sleep,
about that orthem or those
we do not hear.
We need that old word
to show we’re still on our way.

1 September 2023
They’re coming, we know that, they always are, who they are depends on the Gate that slice of time swings to its own wind.

2.
Abd then they’re here, hug them, be sue the sine is there, upright presences smiling while you scream inside.
3.
Don’t be so dramatic.
otherness is good for you.

2 September 2023
A word waits back
wheee U have been,
it says another name,
it sings but I don’t
know the tune and so
the word reminds me
this this this, mind
the beat, ictus, playground
with themonkey bars,
mothers call, herring gulls
swoop down, so big
heir wings unfurled,
so big the word.

3 September 2023
Algebra is I think away of photogra[hing the ruins of a city that has notyet been built. Geology is the science of knowing why we feel so uneasy here or there. Little by little we are beginning to understand.

3.IX.23
I am a small man
almost as small
as the words
I try to slip in
your ears. I may
seem large because
of all the words
storwd inside
but don’t be fooled–
I am little, the way
you need me to be.

3.IX.23
Now we measure
the distances by trees,
the motorcycles are too loud,
girls’ voices too close.
go in the closet
and you’ll see what I mean,
not a tree in sight
and nowhere in the world but here.

4.IX.23
I danced one midnight with a psychiatrist, don’t ask me how it happened and I don’t even dance but there we were and others like us in a huse in the hills and then we all sat down and everything normal again. But there was a dance, held in each other’s arms each thinking of something else, midnight of the mind.

4 September 2023
Something worth watching
the sand on the beach,
more tiny grains of it
than people in his country.
Each crystal an incident,
a memory, primal
population of this planet.

2.
IQw sat there once
wuth the wisest man I knew
and I learned from him
what the sand was saying.
3.
It’s the dafter Labor Day now, 
ri[tides off the Jersey shore, 
dollar ip in the islands.
Talk to the island. Above all 
listen to what it says.
Notice the breeze along 
your arms and hands 
skin is still the best translator.

5 September 2023
Walking the table
the eyes’ legs cautious
in the clutter, books,
boxes, scattered mil
cups and one red flower
almost dry now
among the lamps.

2.
But this is what it is,
the godly clutter of the ordinary,
steamboat, gold mine, factory
chimney.
Because all we are
is what we make.
Or is that just more mind clutter too?

3.
Rise up, then, and realize.
Fondle the waves as you drown.

6 September 2023
= = = = =

He wants to say it but to whom? 
Go to college to find out—
it takes a while but eventually 
the features come clear, the eyes of the intended one 
o please don’t look away.

6.IX.23
The day of two noons was coming soon,
they told about it in the ancient books
and here it was,
no Himalayas needed,
just this sandy beach.
We lie on our backs blinking at the bright.
Gulls fly over—they too are excited by this sudden mystery to come.
Blink and here it is.
Blink again and here
it is again. We have come through, we survive, we thrive.

6 September 2023
Asking is answer enough. I learned that from a stone.

6.IX.23, lune
Because you feel its breeze, the sound of the fan disappears into sensation. Cool after thought answering summer. Two negatives make one positive—but where is the ship headed?

6.IX.23
It could say so as I listen, you saw lions up there in the hills, and giraffes, but most of all the stars thigh they are everywhere they were special here. There. Places I listened to from far away. As once on wedding fay at the St-Moritz I heard the lions roaring from the zoo a few blocks norh, north, where I always knew
dreams are stored. Among the Masai you told stories of fire and fierce sunshine, seated on the ground under thee inscribed sky. So now you too have to get married—that happens when you hear the ions roar. Or a dog barking, or chasing a woodchuck. The stars speak a different language here but say the same.

6.IX. 2023
Did you ever hear
the song of a garage?
Cough in the morning
echoing in cinderblock
oil slick at midnight,
gleam on cement,
starlight caught

6.IX.23
Judging by the neighborhood, eternity. Tall maples, taller tulips. The sky. How can I bare to live here and not try to do work equivalent to theirs. Rhetorical question. I must, and that’s the end of it, where I begin, each day, one more word in the mouth.

7 September 2023
Crows calling,  
get to work.  
I’m no Lutheran  
but know a morning  
anthem when I hear one.  
We’re here to make it better.  
Follow the instructions  
they cry from the sky.

7.IX.23
Waiting for the tiger
one more subway
escapade, the roar
comes out of the tunnel,
you call it a train,
I call it a brain
I’m caught in, neural
network of a city.
No teeth,. Quiet hour,
everyone polite.
Stripes flicker in my eyes.

7.IX.23
Anticipate investigate participate there must be a better way of using languages.

8.IX.23
Brindisi
they sang it
even in the streets
when opera
was popera
and we were all Italians
mostly,
and we all sang in the streets
where now nobody
even whistles.
Or is it my hearing?
Time plays odd tricks.

8.IX.23
Am I ready for the revolution?
Just look at my choice of books,
my comfy chair upholstered
with languid hours, a sparrow
call at the window startling
as a saber rattles,
or as my dragon once remarked,
soft basso, let me sleeeeeep...

8.IX.23
The minute labors of the lapidary mind me of conversation, a tiny twist, a rub and something’s clear. A fact to cherish, a guess to tease your thoughts with, an unexpected word to haunt your dream.

8 September 2023
Aristophanes—it wasn’t my idea, I never felt we needed to laugh, laughter mocks the soul. And so many love to listen to the lewd liberties the stage allows. Whereas I go down into the cellar and nail two words together and call myself a man of mind.

8.IX.23
The languor grew longer,
I laughed at myself
lying there, so much truth
embedded in that word.
Drowsy day. Get up
and tell the actual, do it
If you have to lie,’
do it standing up.

8.IX.23
THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

It’s where we meet him
time after time,
always leaving,
leaving a place
makes the place more real,
we watch him far ahead,
we live in his shadow.

9 September 2023
The evident answer loomed. Take everything for granted, why not. No way of telling, foretelling. Leave the future alone.

9.IX.23
I wait for them sometimes beside the broken bridge, maidens of the woods, sweaty in their leafy clothes. They come and sit beside me, breathing a little heavily from their maple jogging, say a word or two in Old High Forest, then run on. I never know what to say, happy as the visit makes me. I don’t think they need an answer.

9 September 2023

STIMULUS AMORIS
the Goad of Love
where did that come from,
that old book
lurking in the brain
in all the dust of gradyar school,
we belong to what they told us,
tell us, instruction never stops,
once school starts it never stops,
A word comes out of the closet,
a wolf comes out of the woods.
You don’t have to read a book
to belong to what it says.

9.IX.23

= = = = =
Something seeded deep in seeming—what will come, a May morning, a field of snow?

2.
I’m trying to find the gate, at least a latch to lean on and hope something opens somewhere and I get to see.

3.
Softly blow them apart and see between.
We call them blades of grass
Whitman called them leaves, weary of war. But still out of the broken wall
wasps come cruising,
o let the mind make peace.

4.
We need the little things after all, ants and irritants, prickles on the artichoke, who am I fooling now?

5.
Hope at least.
But how to do it,
earthquake in Marrakech
three thousand dead,
how can we sleep?
They’re on the sidewalks,
we in our beds,
the earth moving under us
its unfinished story.

6.
So like any Irish simpleton
I juxtapose therewith
yesterday’s sight of a humminbird
supping on our rose of Sharon,
blue-violet, late-blossoming,
to help us heal the end of summer.

10 September 2023
Is it cold I am
or something else?
I could hold a blanket
up to my chin
and see what happens then.
Grey day, Saturn’s,
Loki’s in Iceland,
the weather always wins,
maybe that’s it. Chill
is not just Fahrenheit.
I’m afraid we have fear built in.

10.IX.23
Mes arbres,
leur homme.
Some
truths must be told.

Back at my desk, my window, for the first time in weeks. So deeply we belong to what we see.

11.IX.23
Sunny Monday
when they said rain.
Woman rescued from mountain,
Horse rescued from deep mud.
A truck goes by, headed south.
What more do we need to know?
Clouds coming in over the trees.

11.IX.23
To be here again, 
the built-in miracle of place. 
A chair at the window, 
precious shapes of otherness outside
What
is your favorite shape
the woman asked. I know
the answer: the shape
pf what is there.

11.IX.23
NOW THE MUSIC BEGINS

it could be opera,
the velocity is right,
moving so fast’
to sing the slowest
thing of all, this love
of mine that will not
go away. But no voices yet,
a string sextet maybe
tuning up, playing our moods
to makwe a little fun of us?
Then the voice begins–
aman’s voice, could it be me?
Music is such a secret mirror.

11 September 2023
= = = = = =

Holding to the bar
watch rain road glisten.
Wet iron under hand
stands one upright.
Iron fence around the park
perimeter of Eden.
Here we are again again.

12.IX.23
We have our moths from Rome, our days from Rome and Norse. Tell that to Greek philosophs and praise our ancient names.

12.IX.23
What is te news?
Voices in aoohter room.

12.IX.23
I never knew grandparents so books were the oldest voices I heard, so I came early to revere them, mauve too much, I write them now myself so like old country song I’m my own grandpa. I look it too.

12.IX.23
Cool breeze in the window comes all the way from Canada where they speak a language I heard the schoolgirls speak, lipstick on their cigarettes, friends of the girl who took care of me, giggles in the kitchen. There is so much to learn! Wind explains almost everything.

12 September 2023
When you come into a house or office for the first time pay attention to the furniture, feel of chairs when you sit own, the rug under your feet, movement of air on your neck. If you’re not overwhelmed by now, then can pay attention to what people say though it’s hard for people to be truthful as a piece of wood.

12.IX.23
These *moralia*
I keep muttering—
what gives me the right
to keep talking?
The silence,
always the silence.

12.IX.23
Too many things
and not nearly enough.
American life in our day,
Sometimes I wish Santa
Claus had a hidden brother
who comes at midnight
and carries things away.

12.IX.23
The pitcher in the sky begins to pour.
If the world were a business, how much would we have to pay for rain?
Five minutes of drizzle, an hour of downpour?
Or would we pay by the inch, the way the weather bureau reckons?
Maybe they take it out of our taxes—you never know.

13 September 2023
A human alone in the world needs a dog, a human alone in the world needs a dog or two and a spouse and a house and a road to escape on and a good car to get back. A human alone in the world needs a stream in the trees to listen to at midnight, something finally to trust.

13 September 2023
In two minutes it will be exact moment of my birth but on another day in a far-away year. But still the numbers stand bold as Napoleon and lead me on.

13.IX.23
There’s a woman who wants only hand written letters—her heart tells her fingers can’t lie the way email can or type or pay some guy to carve in marble. No, write with the hand, the lies will all leach out by the end of the letter. She’ll hold it at arm's length and know who you are.

13 September 2023
I’m an environmental passivist–I listen to the trees and write down what they say. I watch the river, listen to the stone and pray.

13.IX.23
One bight i walked
on the river
over to Lambeth,
I don’t know why,
you tell me why,
walked quickly,
never sank in,
then I was there
but why? Clambering
ashore was a bit
of a struggle
but there I was.
And as far as I can tell
I still am. One dream
must release another—
some me is still
waiting by the Thames.

13.IX.23
The children play
by the statue
of man evidently
from the beard weird clothes holding
a book gust
like a school teacher
so the kids get even
by shouting and spilling
Pepsi on his big feet
snug inside buckle shoes.

Who is he, who is this man?
They look up and don't care. adults
deserve obedience but not
much respect, sprinkle crumbs to lure pigeons
to bother him, toss pretzels, mostly
spray Pepsi on his feet.

(12.IX.23)
14.IX.23
Watching water
in a soup bowl or a river
whispers heard the same,
the element discourses
constantly alive.

2.
But down by the landing
next to the sycamore
next to the cottonwood
watch the river
rather, lieutenant
cormorants skimming over,
the little gulls quiet
till they thank you for seeds. The river watches you now. a river is pure reciprocity.

3.
Now the river watches you go trying to get all the names right of what you see, too far to be sure, too quick, bird, fish, tree. Take as long as you like —-this exam really matters.

14.IX.23
Dissolve the chord into its three tones. Choose one and move right in. Now you know how migrants feel. Keep breathing—that’s all that counts.

14.IX.23
I find your shadow all through my house. It is a bright thing, serious but smiling, this shade of yours you leave behind you when you go. The room you slept in stirs still with dreams.

14.IX.23
How could I look at the sea
and forger you? i learned
all about you in Latin class
so whenever I see water moving
I remember you. Your name
keeps changing but you
never change, you stand
at the ocean’s edge
motionless in all that surf.

14.IX.23
After enormous sleep
breathe out
a thousand flowers,
bright sea mists
of understanding,
or they’re white caps
on open sea or
children dancing
don the shores of Crete.

2.
Now you have to find
your arms, your fingers
find your face, you let
your eyes open at last
and behold the space
into which you, yes, you
must rise and occupy.
Now the dream wants
to leave you and find its way,
but first you have to move.
Now you too can be a flower.

15 September 2023
= = = = =

Numbers are lovely when they stand alone, ploughshare wedge of 7 to cultivate the sky with, ripe amplitude of 3, never-ending whirl of 8. But digits terrify me when they stand together, misering hours and days, measuring me.

15.IX.23
Listen to the pattern on the wood floor. Straight ahead until a wall. Look up, most likely there’;ll be a window. Now listen to that.

15.IX.23
Blue plastic box
white mushrooms
came in now holds
stubs of white candles
just in case. Try
to be true to what
things think they are.
I am pleased to notice
for the first time
my accidental reverence.

15.IX.23
Hip-hop music on the lawn—sounds so old-fashioned already. These days now doesn’t last very long.

15.IX.23
Has it always been this way, Cathay was always the Red Guard and Augustus was Mussolini and Aaron Burr is Donald Trump? History washes so many dirty faces 15.IX.23

ROSH HA-SHANA
I know the answer not the number. There is a religion where every morning begins a new year and the year has no number but all the past years are put away and cherished the way we hoist marble gods into the dark of museums. And everything that happens is a sacrament, and all language is an urgent prayer.

16.IX.23

= = = = = =
Logic sleeps late now,
  furry mind
too tangled to wake.

16.IX,23 lune
The children
tumble into teenhood,
hormones tingle,
the alien other
fascinates,
they can hardly sleep.

2.
It happened to me it must have happened to you.
I was a bona fide child
and then. That ancient Roman disease puberty
pimpled my cheeks
and did far worse unseen.
Just try to go back to sleep.

16.IX.23
Waiting by the river is good for the soul, there are some Latin texts that prove it but just do it and it all becomes clear.
Just remember you’re not waiting for anything, just waiting: eager, alert, grateful for the smallest sign. Gradually the long sentence uncoils from the hidden mind and you begin to understand what the river is saying—
not saying in general but 
exactly saying just to you. 
I hope I haven’t revealed too much.

16 September 2023
You stood facing the sea, you were naked, but your body you had made transparent so I could see your skeleton gesturing and beyond that the surf, really high, coming in five or six foot waves, they shimmer as they rose through the shimmering contour of your transparency. I never saw the sea like that, never knew who made it
rise and rush towards us
as if we were still its children
as we once were,
as now we are yours.

16 September 2023
Walking the log,
feeding the word,
create a new world
by sitting still.

16.IX.23
Squeeze this in your cheeks as you head down Broadway, suck the sweet while it lasts the darker streets come soon but you’ll always be able to see snd be seen. Take a bus and see it faster, or the subway and not bother seeing it at all. This is your city, do with it exactly what you want. Every New Yorker knows that, remember chewing gum, or whistling on the street.

17.IX.23
Whenever I want to reach out 

ify isover the Adriatic, 
not across i, just over the pure 

complexity of its flow. 

Whenever I need to draw back 

into a calmer self, I see 

the red sands of Flagler Beach 
stretching south for miles. 

And when I try to start again 

I see the Atlantic rushing 
slow into the Vineyard Sound. 

I am made of what I see.

17.IX.23
Thinking Keats
in sunshine,
a pot of basil,
he made glory
I make pesto.
At least we can all
have supper together.

17.IX.23
The rain falls upward from the mind and cleans the world. We see the shine of it on everything, the sheen, the luminous seeming.

2. Today is Monday and ut too rains, tells us what rain is for, cornfields and mushrooms, yes, and the glint in her eye who stands at the window
vexed at sports lost, rapt
with joy at how close, close
everything becomes.

3.
Because rain is water
and water rajes no interest
in distance. Even light
travels, but water is always
here, each raindrop
an Atlantic, touches and tells.

18 September 2023
Hybrid politics
of waking in the morning,
so many parties
vie for my attention,
pasts and terrors and hopes
and liturgies recalled,
Vote by opening my eyes.
Try to live through
this new regime. Or close
them again and hope
the dream makes better sense.

18.IX.23
Yesterday afternoon
I sat at the table
with plates of cookies
and a platter of cheese.
Two men and a woman
read poems aloud to me,
slowly, carefully.
After all these years
I was finally a happy child.

18.IX.23
Script to begin with meant scratch, scratch a line in wood, line in the sad, add another, read the sign and so on till the line stretches around the world. Script, schreef, ceruth, serif, tiny lines that hold our letters upright as hey go by. But back to the line, the glorious sense of continuous and line induced, scribble with Scripto, gouge with blade,
run your finger
down the wet windpane.
Lay the line out or down
then follow it with all your ight–
and so the pilgrims finally
reached Canterbury, Coleridge
blinked his eyes in Xanadù.

18 September 2023
On the island of time
we take our pleasure
from watching the sea
flowing in from all sides
all the past and all the future
are both right there in the sea all round us where we hide
on our Island, take pleasure from
the warm stones of noon time
pressing against cool skin dark
pleasure from hiding in the dark
gullies of midnight humid with
moonlight. we take pleasure most of all in touching each other — touch is the most powerful form of now, the gift now possesses, now is when we only are.

18 September 2023
The sun was shining. They moved their pebbles on the stone chessboard in the corner of the park. Their game had no rules, every pebble was different, no rules, no more than sunshine had, they thought, and so their fingers played, plied, on the mosaic squares, pale, drk, pebbles tumbling from lone to another, slow. And gradually their game made something happen
in the world around them, shush of breze in the leaves, shadow of a passing dog, the game was doing its work but they were the last to notice, so caught up were they in the doing—no rules at all so every single moment has to be full consciousness. That’s why no two moments are never exactly the same.

19 September 2023
Autumn tomorrow.  
How the reen gets greener 
when the trees just 
begin to think about fading.  
Such good sun now, 
such rich greens. That’s all 
I see from my favorite window, 
deep trees, the sky. The whole 
explanation right in front of me. 

19.IX.23
From under the shell
a paw peers out,
turtle testing
the world outside.
When it feels safe
a beak peehs out
and then the whole
perceiving head appears.
Study this animal
but not too well.
I had to do it myself.
Each of us has to do it,
fashion our own shell,
mottled or patterned
or shiny or dim, shell
we have to shelter in–
words are the way they are
to help us on the way.

19.IX.23
ERIN

I went back home
to a place I never was.
I could understand
foxes in the hedgerows
better than the people.
My human wife did
all the talking, left me
to measure the slope
of the mountain, try hard
to memorize the eyes
of the seal in the harbor.
People looked at me
and smiled, they knew who
I was better than I do.19.IX.23
STATUE

Slide step then
look back over the shoulder
the words written down the back

manifesto in the museum
I am made of things
our words last longer
than sand or sea shells

listen to us as the words
course down the back
pass along the arms, the legs
read the words the feet leave behind them in the ground
read the ground and do not weep

or weep so little that your eyes with the tears shimmer between you and the insistent world.

19 September 2023
BACK TO NEW HAMPSHIRE

Go to the well once more, it’s only eighty years away study that pale face down there in all the dark water. A mountain crumbled, your face is still there.

20 September 2023
LOVESONG

How come all
the energy I need
to be me
comes from you?

Is that fair?
Or do you catch
something
who knows what
from me?

20.IX.23
Closer to the ramparts
the city seems taller.
I could lie down on my back
and make it look taller still.
But you odn’t lie down
near cities, not even ancient
ones in books and monuments.
Imagine what dreams
would be like if you slept
on the porch of the Parthenon?
Never! Stand up, citizen self,
and measure the actual height
of the building in front of you,
use meters or inches or some
suave measure e of your own but get it right. Upon your math the stability of the tower stands. Now lean on the wall. Is that brck you feel, or stone? Or is it something really else?

20.IX.23
The white wall
knows all.

Jerusalem
is made of this,

the space
where real turns real.

20.IX.23, Rnk
Copious indigence asks for replete.

What we fill it with, that's my middle name.

_Anthropos_ to one of us
I hear the sunlight say

everything needs everything that's how we know.

30.IX.23, Rbk
HOMO LUDENS

1.
Shuttlecock
flying over the net,
grown men
with fishnet racquets
flipping the un-bird
back and forth.

2.
Games.
I have to sit down
and think about games,
what do they mean,
nudging dominoes together, hurling a shotput forty yards. Where do they come from?

3. Or are there others over us and we are pawns in their $n$-dimensional chess, and they give us toys to remind us of what we are?

4. But every, any, game is answering the other.
5. Other team, other city, other child, or just the otherness of gravity as you toss your horseshoe towards the sleeping spike.

6. Suddenly it’s easy to see the big maple in wind as leaves playing with one another. Seeing them so takes my fear away, we are all just siblings
in the sun after all, tossing a shiny pebble from hand to hand.

21 September 2023
The piece of bread heel of a soft white loaf chews down soon to a subtle paste, pleasing, teasing, no hint of rugged rye. The mystery of eating slow. The deeper mystery of one thing at a time.

21.IX.23
If this were Byzantium
the doves in the peach trees
would sing a little differently.
The moon would still listen
the way it always does.
Yong wives would talk
friendly as can be
in the market. The market
has been here all along
all the peaches have been plucked.

21.IX.23
Across the mild desert
a change to stagger.
sand and sun streaks,
rock with old names,
hear a bird song, follow,
it came from Egypt.

21.IX.23
FLORIDA

is all well and good
north coasts especially,
waves on empty beaches, yes,
but I prefer the palm tree
that’s growing in thought,
the mangroves of the mind.
There, that’s insolence enough
before breakfast. Leave intact
for other people that fantasy
called geography, that illusion
called going somewhere new.
We dwell in neurons. Any hope
has to start right there. Maybe
it will end there too.

22 September 2023
O sweet pale green
my park my paradise
we age together,
birthday by birthday,
more leaves for you
more time for me
to know you better
while we live time.

22.IX.23
How weak-kneed French can often seem, even when it’s saying sturdy things. You make it strong, make it stand upright and stride so we feel the words are all our own now, and we are free to feel what we seem to say.

22.IX,23
Laconic. Spartan?
It takes strength
to keep the mouth shut.

22.IX.23, lune
The cable that hunts the house is the only man-made thing you see at first glance from my morning window. Slowly notice road hidden in trees then a car goes by. But still the green Entirety holds firm. It heals the heart, it talks, it weaves its words through every language, leaves it up to us to say it in our own. Us, own? I am a palyty druid murmuring my tree.

22.IX.23
We say we come, we came. But when we go, we went.
Why the new word? Does the past tense of go need to be softened, take some of our grief away?

22.IX.23
Open notebook wide as the world.
That’s what we live in.

22.IX.23, lune
Hurry and catch up.
The dog chases the ball
and they both disappear.
Not all the lions are in the zoo.
One thing at a time, a foot,
a miracle. The sun moves
all the shadows around,
leave it to a woman to make
the darker places testify too.

Hurry. The answer keeps changing.
The one you need is yet to come.
Or maybe long gone but one
day will come again. Left, right,
straight ahead—leave it to the world to curve for you. Fast or slow, really you decide. The slightest motion rushes on.

22.IX.23
NUMBERS

Where did they all come from?
Twenty-second day of ninth month in two thousand twenty third year by the count in our neighborhood.
Why do we need them?
Why do we need to know how many days since yesterday?
Sometimes I wish we were all somehow infants again–byt even then we’d all too soon start counting our fingers.
Maybe I’m wrong. Maybe that’s what fingers are for.

22.IX.23
If the woodcock
we saw coming out
from under the hedge
on the slope of the road
was the first I had ever seen
outside of a book,
long-beaked, full-bodied,
is it surprising that
I trust literature?

23.IX.23
SUN IN LIBRA

just now, today,
makes me
who I am, plus one.
Mild rain here,
stormy on the coast
where I first arrived.
Balance, balance,
Saint-Saens and silence.

23 September 2023
Picturesque doorknob, no, that’s a wasp on brass, summer’s end, last hate mail from the insect world. Your poor finger!

23.IX.23
The scavengers left Eden bare, even names of things were gone and the bare sand stretched far.

So all the things and beings and rocks and trees all had to get new names wherever they landed when the scouring pirates weary of shlepping them around tossed them so they fell or flew to where we try so hard ro speak their names now.
At night in these northern woods
as you walk cautious of roots
wary of branches, you can hear
if you listen the quiet voices
all round you busy wondering
who was I before I was me?

23 September 2023
The opera is ready to begin. Sing. But don’t sing yet. Let the dumb plot line bore you till you can’t stand it any more then open the lips and let what passes for your soul shout what passes for song. Music answers tedium just as much as it does tragedy. But instead of comic opera, give a kid a drum.

23.IX.23
THE DAY

The bird said day
the night flew away
left me to be
what could only be me,
my wife asleep beside me.

2.
O let me be
a new kind of me!
that silly song
we used to sing,
we called it education.
3. But here I was, right here again, all the seas washed up in me.

4. Me, me, me— you get the picture. Write the Ten Commandments with lipstick on your mirror but do not look therein.

5. So it was my birthday.-- why doesn’t it mean
get born again? Or does it?
It rained at dawn,
the road is wet,
the midwife crows
are chatting on the lawn.

6.
All this is just speculation
and speculation means
looking in the mirror—
no more of that, please,
(See above.)
7.
But I want a better me
to give to you.
The want is not up to the deed
but sometimes the want
grows wings of its own,
fledgling feeble but
hurries to you murmuring
what it hopes are words.

24 September 2023
Spelling lesson.
Listen.
Get it right—
then cast it.
The white stag
comes out
of the woods,
nods his head.
His antlers sparkle.
You are safe now.
The rest is sleep.

24 September 2023
I strike a match
on the matchbook,
wave the little flame
gently, gently.
No cigarette, no cigar,
no candle even.
Just the pure meaning.

24.IX.23
The river holds us together, a swift mirror we watch and learn that we are one. Not one person exactly, but one of a kind, blue eyes, green eyes, brown eyes the smile is the same.

25.IX.23
I dreamt they built
a new church
right near the big old one
but I couldn’t see it,
couldn’t guess why
they felt they needed a new one,
every saint his or her own house?
But why couldn’t I see it?
I looked everywhere.
Then a passing man in robes said
Don’t fret. Our church is the air.

25 September 2023
Stormy coast
but quet here.
The beauty
of nothing
going on,
a little song.

25.IX.23
They said it was a spring
I saw a wet rock
with water slipping down
a smooth brown face.
Spring. I tight that was a time,
things turned green
but here it was a rock
or maybe something underneath
from which the water came?
I was beginning to work it out,
children have short legs,
meant to go slow.
Fifty years later
I stood in the Black Forest
as I watched with reverence
water ooze out of the ricks
beyond a sign that said This
is the Source of the Danube.
So a river too was living
down inside the ground—
what else might be
waiting for us down there?

25.IX.23
=

Motherwise because
it can be,
so gently holds you.

26.IX.23, lune
What wakes is wonder too, rocks off Oregon, mudstone of mind a fingernail can gouge a word in,. Write mens scratch. scholars say. Fingers say same.

2.
Assume every word spoken does its job. Assume the word knows what that is, just say it, just write it down.
3.
The mocking bird outside the retreat sand fourteen different persons, voices we call them songs, you recorded them all, we listen sometimes years later, patient, waiting for the word to end.

4.
No wind in the trees, still, I’m worried. Still reading last night,
the cold that came
to bed with us,
no wonder they wrote
on parchment first,
they know how well
skin knows how to read.

5.
Now the wind does
stir a little in the birch,
a brach playing frisbee
with itself. A word is always
what comes to mind.
6.
But whose mind?
the ancients asked,
their answers
feed us still. Autumn.
What does at-one-ment
really mean?

7.
So I’m still walking
in this shabby Eden of old books.
Reaf the shadows, shadows
are good for you—
don’t walk too long in the sun.
8.
But what if you write
with your chubby baby finger
some word you can barely spell
and write it in the sand?
Doesn’t thre sea come in
and the et tide and swallow it?
Exactly. The sea understands.

26 September 2023
It helps to have the harmony meadow-wide around your house but even snuggled in the trees the language gradually learns. Moses had a whole mountain to listen to, so he learned to shout louder than Abraham—always makes me sad, that story, but I love mountains too. I remember once at Yosemite—but that’s another story, safe between me and the rock.

26.IX.23
Science of September
the only thing we need to know
is now and what happens then.

27.IX.23
BUCHA

Suburban streets littered with mangled corpses. It comes down to this, nationhood, identity, tools to line someone’s pockets. No flag is worth a human life.

27.IX.23
Close up your telescope
don the ruler back in the desk.

You’ll never know how big
or how far anything is
because it’s all right here
happening in you. Sleep

snores like quiet surf off Malibu,
your eyes gleam with the actual
light of Aldebaran.

27.IX.23
LEARNING TO READ

1. Not exactly geography more like an alphabet, letters scattered here and mosty three, hard to read, ocean of silence between them.

2. It was a letter, it said love. What else could it say, coming from so far away?
3.
O envelope
pretty white cloud
shielding
for a moment
the glorious sun inside you!
And so he prayed
as his fingers
clawed along the seal
and he thought
Her tongue licked this.

4.
That was the whole movie,
kid with a letter in his hand,
hope in his eyes.
It seemed to last for hours but then images do.

5.
Think of it this way: from the words she or he has placed so neatly on the page, margins and lines and meaningful spaces, you and only you can compose what you really wanted him or her to have said, to say to you now and ever after, the little *xo* at the base an ox standing backwards, *aleph* pf a new alphabet.
6.
Make it up for yourself,
this sea is green.
Islands many, words
immeasurably many.
Make up for yourself
what you want her to say
and there it will be,
radiant with meaning
spread out before you.
Use only the words you want.
Leave the others in the box.
say your prayers and go to sleep

27 September 2023
Was there a wait at the door?

No, the hinge worked, old oil sometimes better than new.

But did you go in?

A door is a meaning all by itself—no need to push it.

But why were you there at all, standing by the entrance?

Or exit—can’t be so sure which.
But why?

I was there, I always am.
Nowhere else for any of us to be.

28 September 2023
Thursday, in God’s kingdom.
Sunlight fat on the grass
as if waiting for someone.
To live on earth is to be
married to so very many,
betrothed to everything we see.

28.IX.23
Get up a little later then decide. Meanwhile say the prayer of closing your eyes.

28.IX.23
28.IX.23

If you could switch
those digits around
I’d be alive five years from now.
Clouds just beginning
to take shape
over the maples.

28.IX.23, lune
Ask moore from me than this, help me find the words that say the you in me.

28.IX.23
ST.TROPEZ

I forgot the name but saw the sand, scarlet bikinis flashing in the surf. What is any name really about? The sea is never that far away.

28.IX.23
1.
Deer in the driveway ambles away as we come in,
wild turkey on the lawn holds her ground,
a crow flies down.
We are minor characters in this immense film,
don’t look for our names in the credits.
2. Or so it seems as autumn begins, everybody getting ready so we must too. But what to do? What language does weather understand, where will our warmth come from? Fifty degrees when I got up. shivered while I shave.

3. So this turns out to be one of those songs of complaint rhe Middle Ages loved so well
before Renaissance got around,
to doing something about
whatever it was that grieved us then.
What grieves us now? Why does the crow call sound
sp like a reproach?
What have I left undone?

28 September 2023
Every poet should carry
a spare tire, ode
in the back pocket
for when the day around
gets too busy to think.

28.IX.23
Say to the stone
Teach me to sing

the stone will say
first learn to listen

then what do I do?

Listen hard, after a while
you’ll learn to listen out loud.
This is called song.

28.IX.23 Kinston
Tell the mother
I am your child

How hard she’ll find it
to contradict.

28.IX.23 Kingston
Something is moving
something stays still.
Trees point to the sky.

28.IX.23 Kingston
When half the light is gone by the time you wake you know that winter keeps anything but an urban schedule. Yet we do our best deeds in the dark, or some of them, or some of us do, and who on earth am I talking to now? Shivery end of September.

29 September 2023
The insurrection insures nothing but one more government that must be overthrown in its turn, until some day we stagger through wild surf up onto the quiet sands of Anarchy Island.

29.IX.23
I can see by your outfit that you are no cowboy though I know who you are mostly from Westerns: four legs, fierce breath, hooves snatching through the air.

And you are the very color my hair used to be, so long ago, but never once did I dare climb on your crested back and sink my hungry fingers into the tumult of your mane.
I’ve known you so many years and still don’t know your real name.

29.IX.23
BARRYTOWN

The old house by the tracks
went for three million.
Something very odd about now.
I’m looking around
for someone t blame
but the river just laughs at me.

29.IX.23
Remember listening to an oyster shell? Not as loud as a nautilus but still the soft waft of sound. Today the trees curled around the house sound that way too, quieter even, so you can’t really call t sound. But you can hear. Jear you they are, and hear the life they pour into us, sea, tree, you, me, the share.

29.IX.23
VEHICULAR

1.
Wise heart. iron key, snapshots of dead friends tucked into a prayer book of someone else’s religion. The car goes by—that’s all they tell us we need to know.

2.
Year make and model lease or purchase hybrid or better which way was it going
why were you looking
dog in the window
why why why
everything gone.

3.
For instance. Or Heraclitus
nibbles of wisdom.
Why do wise remarks
make us smile sadly?
I went to school
but who did I fool?
There has to be some
sympathy for things,
call it song in the branches,
tuba in the subway,
toothless oldster chewing gum.

4.
You can gett there fromanywhete if you truly believe.
Amundsen, Pizarro, our guy on the moon,
get there and come home and make music of it all
to lull us and ruse us by turn or did I only dream that glacier at the foot of France?
5. Home. Such an easy word, rhymes with earth and ancient city and the blue sky overhead, home, as if it can be found in space or time but not so fast, citizen of anxiety, does it feel like itself when you get there or did you change along the way?

6. The inference is all we can do is watch things pass, claim one or two as they go by and hope your meaning lasts.
If it's there at breakfast
it usually lasts or the whole day.

7.
“I have won
my dirk for the day,
now cork the tip
and set it harmless
in an empty drawer.”

What are you
talking about?

“I’m talking About!”
8.
Which shows you just how far the notes of a pennywhistle carry. Charlotte playing the *Lament for Limerick*, tears in my eyes, and nothing needed to be understood.

9.
A car goes by, we say. Or I said. It could be’ any of a thousand kinds but it was here a moment then was gone. Gone
is the point here. 
The statue of Our Lady is missing from the grotto, no road to the river, we live meadow to meadow, when you live that way China doesn’t seem so far away.

10.
They go to the movies to see goddesses abd gods, home Tv too tiny for their giant forms. Color and noise and everybody all together worshipping
what they see, without the inconvenience of a prayer book. Who cares about the plot? There she is, all ten feet of her!

11.
Or maybe the car was foing somewhere else. Else is a girl’s name too—could that be relevant to our inquiry? Because all this while no actual car went by. Or did it? I’m not the one to ask.

11.
So ut all comes closer and closer to being here, as if we really will be home for Christmas safe as any river.

12.
I fill a cup with now and offer it to then. Love has no limits. Any decent cup overflows.

30 September 2023
Do we thank him for his gift? 
Not enough. We don’t even know who he is. 
There is some music still buried in the walls as once I heard Back in Leipzig playing in the stone. And now I hear her sining in the trees.

30.IX.23
Have I heard enough
to answer the clock?

Wild turkeys on the back lawn
surely are enough for me.

But only Virgil knows
what Time truly wants
and he gives hints aplenty
but no schoolchild explanation.

The kind I need. Do this.
Avoid that. Confess your sins
if you can find a priest.
But what if the reverend won’t
listen, walks away muttering
I have heard all that stuff before?

30.IX.23
You can trust a guy
a little more when you know
he’s read Vergil.
Not sure why that is,
but Homer doesn’t work
the same way, not even Milton.
Something to do I think
with conscious acceptance
of all instincts and desires
but keeping them funder control.
Or maybe it’s just beauty after all.

30/OX/23