

2-2023

February 2023

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

**Let the word come—  
but what does come after  
the dream, and who  
dares to listen?**

**The timid rabbit of the heart  
trembles in its cage  
of bone and memory,  
wants to hear, is afraid to hear  
what the red earth  
ll round him keeps repeating,  
  
alone, you're all alone in here.**

**1 February 2023**

**=====**

**A bright omen—  
black rooftop,  
the snow all gone.**

**1.II.23**

=====

**Shave before Shiva,  
let every gesture be  
an offering utterly  
to some god, or God,  
or who is that who guides  
your will, saves you  
from despair? The smallest  
deed is coin enough  
if you mind to mke it so.**

**1.II.23**

=====

**Open the window  
lock the door—  
what a nervous world.**

**1.II.23, *lune***

== == == == ==

**Don't get up too early—  
keep the day waiting  
till it makes up its mind,  
then you'll have some sense  
of what you're in for,  
the dream still stinging  
the mind's tender skin.**

**1 February 2023**

== == == == ==

**Breathless treescape  
sun skimming treetops  
sleeping beauty rouses,  
explains what is to come.**

**1.II.23**

== == == == ==

**Corner where the reeds grow tall  
find a name for yourself.**

**Touch tassels on ripening corn—  
we can make summer too  
or weather when we please  
as long as our mood matters.**

**Every field a battlefield, every  
home in the wall a true home.**

**Remember Maldon: our courage  
mounts as our might lessens.**

**Mood the sun up—  
it's all our sky.**

**1 February 2023**



== == == == ==

**I'm watching the sun in the trees  
or is the sun shyly watching me?  
Light is the politest wine of all,  
up to us to drink in moderation.  
And that golden light right now  
greening bare trees, the way gold  
enriches everything! Please,  
majesty, feel free to look at me.**

**1 February 2023**

== == == == ==

*to C.*

**Reading your tablet in bed  
beside me, your face issues  
the nobility of a calm profile  
seen by candlelight in that  
lovely old French painting.  
Sometimes time stumbles,  
forward, backward, always  
seeking beauty, and finding it.**

**1 February 2023**

== == == == ==

**Rosaceous? Not yet.  
Rosadas, those pink  
beans turn brown  
in the oniony cooking.  
Winter waders  
in the words, waiting.  
Today's bright sun  
a promissory note..  
True enough,we're  
always on the way.**

**2 February 2023**

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

**I watched your face  
as you slept beside me,  
there is a reverence  
native to such seeing.  
I thought of all the ways  
of saying You, and all  
that they can mean, and  
all of them are you.**

**2 February 20023**

**PLW**

**When we first met  
we were both wearing  
safari jackets.**

**We were in Colorado.  
I don't know what he  
was hunting. I was just  
trying to get out of town.**

**2.11.23**

== == == == ==

**Thigs to think about  
to keep from thinking.  
Orinoco. Esplanade.  
Divertimento. Crowd.  
Don't you feel better already?**

**2.II.23**

## **AN ORDINARY DAY**

**isn't that praise enough?  
I wait for the palmer  
to come with his tales  
of what he thought was  
Jerusalem when he finally  
got to the end of the road.  
He'll show me pictures,  
hand me a pebble from  
a hill outside of town.  
My heart will tremble  
at the look of reverent  
wonder in his eyes.  
I wonder where he's been.**

**2 February 2023**

=====

**The Queen's face  
is leaving Australian money.  
How many times  
does a great woman have to die?**

**2.11.23**



== == == == ==

**Forget the past?**

**Try**

**leaving your ass in the chair  
when you get up to go home.**

**2.II.23**

=====

**Waiting for something  
is maybe how music began,  
what to do with all these breaths  
going in and out of the lungs,  
not going anywhere, hmm,  
not going anywhere, mmm,  
mouth shaping, feel a new  
thrill on the roof of the mouth,  
a high sound squeals, hmm,  
lower, growl it, groan and grunt  
and before you know it,  
Monteverdi.**

**2.II.23**

== == == == ==

If I were a car  
what kind would I be?  
A 1935 Mercedes  
red touring car  
open to the air  
of Alsace,  
retired movie-star  
still blond in back set  
driven by somber  
Carinthian chauffeur.  
They'll get to Paris yet.

2.11.23

## **ELDERTS LANE**

**my first frontier  
walking that broad  
street into Queens  
where the library loomed  
over my empty head,  
a little storefront  
behind the bank.**

**2.**

**To read a book  
means crossing a border.  
Fact. That no-man's-land  
they always keep blank  
between the tough cover**

and where the words begi.  
Cross with care,  
this minefield of the mind.

3.

Because when you pass  
into someone else's words  
when you have few of your own  
you can't predict what possible  
states of being are waiting—  
belief, anxiety, terror, desire,  
tepid tea left from yesterday.

4.

I crossed the line  
as often as I could—

**a bit of a walk,  
half a mile maybe,  
some with the el  
overhead, and never  
remember the weather  
of those pilgrimages,  
just the sight of the doorway  
always in sunlight, bright  
mauve this time I'll find  
the distant friend I really need.**

**3 February 2023**

=====

**What kind of handle  
do you attach to belief?  
How to wield  
what you almost know  
in an actual world?  
Mind overt matter,  
yes indeed, but matter  
is easy to work with  
but where can I find  
a handle for the mind?**

**3 February 2023**

== == == == ==

**We buy tropic chocolate  
made in frozen Switzerland.  
Recall the world of commerce  
is one big joke. Try to smile  
as you open your next bill.**

**3 February 2023**



## **APOLLO**

**lets me say his name,  
reminded us  
to drive downhill  
to watch the river,  
and there on someone's  
private grass we saw  
three shrouded figures,  
statues likely, and likely  
of the deities to come.  
They come to bless the river  
or be blessed by it,  
I'd guess the latter  
but have no evidence for that.  
Seeing is believing,**

**they used to say  
in days before television  
took certainty away.  
So now we ask  
What gods are these,  
one more river miracle.**

**3 February 2023**

## IN THE MUSEUM

I declaimed the poem  
aloud in the museum,  
somebody had to,  
there it was in glass,  
the manuscript itself,  
In Xanadù, with an *accent*  
*grave* on the -du—  
I had to, it had waited  
who knows how long for  
someone to say it again,  
loud, s all the tourists  
from Japan could hear it.  
Nobody stopped me—such  
is the power of poetry.

*3 February 2023*

=====

**The gas station at the Corner  
looks more and more  
like an endangered species.  
Notice they all sell all  
sorts of things besides gas,  
I guess they're getting ready  
for when the pumps walk away  
and weird buzzing protocols  
take over, cars taking an hour  
to get a quick fix. Buy bread  
and Coke tere, take pity  
on the pitiless petroleum.**

**3 February 2023**

== == == == ==

**Speak Easter  
from your winter heart  
six a.m. minus five,  
the sky clear. It all is here  
already, all ready,,  
it's up to you, to me,  
snowbells an daffodils.  
Here comes the pilgrim  
with his song.**

**4 February 2023**

**= = = == =**

**The way beyond language  
runs through language.  
Sometimes between two words  
you can see an immense open  
meadow stretch to the horizon.**

**4 February 2023**

=====

**Water mattress  
soft as air  
keep you warm  
or cool depending.  
Fits in a metal bed  
with a runoff drain  
in case. Now what  
can I invent for you next?**

**4 February 2023**

== == == == ==

**Ten thirty and it's  
up to four degrees.  
~The numbers run us  
like colonels as we  
march or stand to salute  
the sun in a homeland sky.**

**4 February 2023**



## **IN THE PARKING LOT**

**I see how in brand-new cars  
the owner opens the tailgate  
well before he gets there, it rises  
to welcome his shopping in.**

**Open tdoors before ou're there!  
The magic mounts around us,  
I can turn my living room lights  
on from Portugal. but even now  
I still have to travel if I want  
to ride the subway in Uzbekistan.**

**4.II.23**

=====

*Then I was a river  
and I went*

she half-said half-sang  
as she looked up at me

rom under the linden tree  
because she thought me honest

and I tried to be, tried hard  
tp ;isyen and to stay.

4 January 2023  
(from note pf 3/II)

## PLENILUNE

*Full moon and empty arms*  
they used to sing, rip-off  
from Rachmaninoff I guess,  
so why does that come to mind  
like a dreamed pack of yellow  
cigarettes? Above freezing  
at last, first time in three days,  
sunshine, snow all gone, and so  
empty roads do all the white  
the landscape needs. I smoked  
two of them on an empty train  
on my way to waking  
up to tell you this.

**2.**

**Because it is, really is,  
all about you, really you,  
to whom I dare to bring  
forage from my jungle,  
beasts that follow me home.  
It is terrible to stumble  
out of night with empty hands.**

**3.**

**Do you recognize  
yourself now,  
you, precisely you,  
wherever you are  
holding me now in your hands  
as the great poet wrote,**

**you. The one that artists  
nowadays tend to forget  
and composers forgot long ago,  
th twelve steps to the inane.  
Making any kind of  
sense means talking to you.**

**4.**

**Ravished by hope  
that language will  
sing us awake  
I listen out loud.  
All I can do on this ong  
whiteroad to you. Yes, you.**

**5 February 2023**

=====

**I got a letter in Russian  
could read only the name  
of someone it mentioned.  
Names can flutter safe  
out of languages and be  
mysteries on their own.  
I don't know what or when  
or why but I do know who.**

**5 February 2023**

== == == == ==

**Edgewise, enterprise--  
a silver sailor  
guides the schooner—**

**then you wake up,  
the sea safe inside you.  
Elbow your way into the day.**

**5 February 2023  
(from 3.II.23)**

== == == == ==

**What you see  
when you don't look  
is what silence lets you hear  
if you listen clearly. But silence  
is very rare in this world, even  
alone in the middle of nowhere  
I hear myself thinking, hear body  
begging like a spoiled child for  
one of its usual experiences.  
Silence, where is it found?  
Silence is a diamond compressed  
out of sound—follow the gleam.**

**6 February 2023**



## **THEY**

**They have long hair  
and very dark eyes,  
they hold a pencil  
firmly in one hand.**

**I see the shadow only,  
can't tell right or left,  
I hear soft scratching,  
graphite on pulp paper**

**are there still pencils?  
Do hands still guide a few  
innocent words into  
dangerous declarations?**

**I don't know who they are  
and there is only one of them.**

**6 February 2023**

## **RECOVERY**

*for C.*

**A file went lost  
a wise woman  
led it back home.**

**When words get lost  
it is a severe reproach  
of their speaker, who still  
after the wise one recovers them**

**has to question carefully,  
politely, where they had been  
and what they learned there  
in the tumultuous silence**

**of the Memory, the landscape  
where everything says  
and nothing means. What did  
they learn, what can they tell me?**

**I thank her deeply, she smiles  
and goes back to her reading,  
the words chiseled in marble,  
soft pages of a printed book.**

**6 February 2023**

**= = = ==**

**When you live in a city  
you own the subway.  
Fact. Once you're through  
the turnstile you can go  
or linger, ride a train or warm a  
bench, use the bathroom, lean  
on a column, cool your skin against  
cold tile walls, read graffiti, add some  
of your own  
street art works a daring civic  
government trusts on walls,  
the art tells truth, the ads tell  
lies noble Byzantine tile panels  
proclaim station names, live  
guide dogs of the blind, rats**

**intermittent on the juicy tracks  
and o the trains, the trains, great  
roaring oblongs just for you  
and all the passengers, awake  
or dozing, stoned or sober, old,  
young, pretty, plain, all of them  
kopelessly just like you. Kings  
and Queens of underground, do  
pretty mch anything you like  
because you are deep in earth,  
well below what passes as reality  
out there in the neon sunshine.  
Believe me when I tell you this,  
I, Emperor of the A Line, ruled  
from the Cloisters to Rockaway.**

**6 February 2023**

=====

**By the broken opera  
he crouches  
to hear if he can  
any sound that may  
still come towards him.  
After a while he hears  
a soft voice whispering  
*I only mean  
if you remember me,  
my tune, the tune tells!***

**7 February 2023**

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

**They think of me  
when I am far away.  
Safer that way,  
think-time so much swifter  
than talk-time,  
let alone touch-time,  
that ogle thick with gravity  
and unexpected consequence.  
So think away,  
friends of far longitudes,  
and I will thik of ye,  
all of us scattered joyous  
through the maybe-sphere.**

***7 February 2023***



== == == == ==

**Walking to church  
on Sunday morning  
though it's Tuesday  
and I haven't left the house.  
I can't help the factual  
when I'm lost in the actual,  
the how-it-really-feels  
at this moment, this life.  
Blame it on the cold sunshine,  
the sense of getting there,  
mild effort, slowly, slowly  
the holiness ahead.**

**7 February 2023**

== == == == ==

**Where does shadow come from?**

**From the sun.**

**It is Her drk husband**

**She lets ride along with Her,  
knowing we can use him too,  
one more gift She gives us.**

**7 February 2023**

=====

**Orestes' armor  
would be ignorance  
of parentage.  
Find out who  
your mother is  
by what you do.  
Study your shadow.  
Throw your weapons down.**

**7 February 2023**

## **I HAD AN AVOCADO TREE**

**a while, it never ripened  
while I had it, it stayed  
stubborn and I left town.**

**I had a green Mercedes once,  
brought it home from California,  
drove it for years. My first  
car was a green Chevy, ancient  
already when I bought it.**

**There must be something  
about green going on here,  
my friend Kimberly may be  
able to explain it, something  
about money, about nostalgia.**

***7 February 2023***

== == == == ==

**From a few hundred feet away  
it looked like a pool of blood  
on the lawn in the little park,  
gone when I looked again. Shift  
of sun, shade, eye, mind, fear.  
The war has been here too—  
All over the world, the earth  
slowly recovering. And then  
the anger comes again. Maybe  
my eyes did not deceive me,  
maybe it's vast absence of mind,  
why don't we know the history  
of the ground beneath our feet?**

***7 February 2023***

=====

**How can I tell  
if I'm sick or well?**

**Isn't the sky th same?**

**Get it right:  
Day follows night.**

**7 February 202**

====

If I were closer  
I would be able to hear  
the rain spatter  
on your slippers  
and be able to watch the Sun rising  
from your left hip.  
I would be able to think  
clearly for once  
about the meaning  
of Latin verbs and Greek gods and  
the curious silences  
between Hebrew letters  
scribed over the threshold  
of a temple I will never enter  
and call my absence also a song.

And yet if I looked up  
quietly as if up the sleeve  
of the magician I will find no serpent  
of wisdom coiled smug around his  
elbow— I would sense a silent  
space, maybe  
hairs of his upper arm,  
maybe just the skin of a human body  
greatest of all oracles  
if only we knew how to listen and  
listening you learn how to go and by  
going learn how to stay  
and quietly do what it tells us to, to  
recognize at last whoever  
that is who pretends to be me.

*7 February 2023, v.v.*



== == == == ==

**The young woman perched  
on the big copper pipe  
carried she guessed oil  
from the harbor to the tanks  
in from the shore. Clean  
shiny surface, warm too  
on this chill morning  
as she sat and studied the map.  
The map was in another language  
but a familiar alphabet, so  
streets were still straight  
and parks still green. She smiled  
at the thought that foreigners  
would make the park pink,**

the river orange, the sea white.  
And it was a little white today,  
reflecting the low cloud cover.  
Back to the map. If this copper  
were gold she could be a queen—  
what is copper the ruler of?  
She thought of the copper wires  
inside frayed radio cables  
I am monarch of electricity!  
but I have to find Herring St.  
Could that really be the name?  
She had heard it on the phone,  
now find it on the map. Street  
by street her fingers traced  
avenues and boulevards, she  
squinted at tiny alleyways,

**looking for her street, her fish,  
house where her father waited.  
All the while the fuel flowed  
swift beneath her on its way.**

**8 February 2023**

== == == ==

**He resolved never  
to eat animals again.  
Nibble on a lover's  
finger, sure, but no  
more festing on  
anything that is or was  
alive. What would  
the world be like today  
if no creature ever ate  
anybody else? No war.  
But maybe a lot fewer  
of all of us? Can we live  
on green alone, and pale  
mushrooms carrying**

**the wisdom of the trees  
they root beneath? And cool  
water with all the wisdom  
of its springs, spoken up  
by the earth itself.? Try.  
Try, and if I die, at least  
the unconverted parasites  
will have a nutritious feast.**

**8 February 2023**

== == == == ==

**Where is the rose  
when I need one,  
not the one they claimed  
was one but was a bush  
of Japanese quince,  
acerbic, growing in shade.  
And not the one a florist  
sells me from god knows where,  
some immigrant redolence.  
No, not even the one that will  
come June adorn the seacoast  
of Cuttyhunk, *rugosa*, or the old  
red magnificently ordinary  
rose of Blithewood farden.**

**I want the rose, it could be white  
even, the color for once  
doesn't matter, just itself  
the rose that opens in the mind  
Where Rilke found it, this rose  
lures the bees of human thought  
hurrying to think and think again,  
and think anew. We all  
are alchemists and round  
that silent fragrance our song,  
healing chant, must grow from.  
When we hear the humming  
we know the rose is real.**

**8 February 2023**

## **AT THE WINDOW**

**The mail truck passes by.  
He smiles in relief.  
No bills, no billets-doux  
to dream up answers to.  
Now if the phone could  
learn how to behave  
it might be a good day after all.**

**8.11.23**



== == == == ==

The sugar pine across the road  
still full of conversation  
but I have to strain to hear—  
trees hard at work inside  
getting ready for the green time  
but tis one wakes and sleeps  
in a different dialect of now.  
At least that's what I think.  
Or what it makes me think.

8 February 2023

## **THINGS THAT MAKE YOU OLD:**

- 1. Suspenders.**
- 2. Mammalian pets, esp. canid.**
- 3. Dreaming of the Caribbean.**
- 4. Listening to jazz while seated**
- 5. Grouching about rain.**
- 6. Wearing white socks.**
- 7. Walking cautiously.**
- 8. Chatting on your landline.**
- 9. Watching the evening news.**

**9.11.23**

**= = = ==**

**Offertory.**

**People walking, why,  
to give their bodies  
to another place  
so mind can matter there  
and the diamond-keen  
atmosphere of There  
can penetrate their  
awareness of their feelings.  
They'll stop walking then  
and say We like it here.**

**9 February 2023**

== == == == ==

**Gospel.**

**The tree is always talking.**

**We take our places in the nave**

**and listen. The sugar pine**

**drowzes beside the tulip tree**

**while they hear linden read.**

**We listen too, the language**

**different from our usual own**

**but we get a sense of what**

**is being said, who is saying it**

**and it's always the middle**

**of the story, never c where**

**it began or headed now,**

**we just barely get a sense of  
what's happening now.**

**We ask each other whispering  
Are you hearing the same story  
I'm trying to follow?**

**But how can we know, how can  
we ever know,**

**we with a totally different  
language? Yet when**

**we leave the place of worship  
we have some truth to go on  
till we come to listen more.**

**9 February 2023**

=====

**Wombat sleeping in the sun  
right t our feet, one paw  
shoveling sleepily at this strange  
dirt beneath him,  
ancient Catskills, game farm,  
oldest hillsides in America.  
Such a tender memory  
I cherish mof that animal  
as he may have cherished  
shadow of eucalyptus leaves.**

**9 February 2023**

=====

**Fix it later—it's  
not broken  
enough for today.**

**9.11.23, *lune***

=====

**Tree Mass?  
Bless me, Father,  
I don't mean blasphemy,  
I just mean if God  
made the world the world  
must full of God,  
and each being  
and each thing is loud  
with sacred liturgy.**

**9 February 2023**



**= = = ==**

**Blue shoes Thursday  
walk on the sky  
where Jove paints the ceiling  
though it's grey today.  
Wear the color of the god,  
be part of who they are.**

**9 February 2023**

== == == == ==

**Presence is a power  
that can linger in absence.  
You took the roses  
into another room  
but not all of them left,  
only the shape and the color.  
What they meant is still here.**

**10 February 2023**

=====

Sky blue mild  
but loud astern  
sad school bus  
trundles up the hill.  
Where are they taking  
them today? No more  
history, no more penmanship,  
a haiku if they're lucky,  
and all kinds of things  
I know nothing about.  
Maybe next week I should  
try to get onto that bus.

10 February 2023

## THE ANTIQUARIAN

took down a book  
from the sky, tattered,  
dry,, and ruffled its pages  
at me, See, he said,  
some books you don't  
even have to read.

More pages fluttered  
past my eyes, fast.

I'll take it, I said, and he  
said I thought you would,  
here it is. And he ut it  
back on the sky, where even  
I can always find it.

10 February 2023

=====

**The murk of meaning  
lingers long after  
the clear voice stops.  
How long does a word  
last? Some words seem  
to have no silence.**

**10 February 2023**

== == == == ==

**Artichokes peel  
carefully, but the thing itself  
shows you how.  
Not so the avocado.  
Get a knife and fingernail,  
When I was young  
there was a aw:  
you had to plant  
the fat brown pit  
and grow a tiny tree  
in a flowerpot. Otherwise  
you'd just be a consumer,  
a fascist of ecology.  
Give me something simple,**

**a ripe tomato (love apple,  
remember?) and let the juice  
run down my chin. So now  
you know all about me.**

**10 February 2023**

== == == == ==

**I know a place you can live,  
other side of the river  
I mean the other other side  
the sky above it, nothing  
but the arching bridge  
to get in your way, along  
with some eagles, you know,  
those big American birds.  
But most of it for you—just  
rent a cloud—they're cheap  
this time of year—and wrap  
yourself in sunshine, float.  
Come down to see us often,  
drink tea, test common gravity**



**and then ascend to your home,  
noble, nimble, painting worlds  
from where you see us best.**

**10 February 2023**

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

**Let the bald eagle rule the river,  
he's come back to us these years  
soars along beside us as we  
drive across the Kingston bridge  
our few minutes living in the sky.  
That fierce wild predator, icon  
of national power, now seems  
companionable, close,  
neighborly even, afloat with  
gulls and hawks over woods  
along the river. Years ago  
I stood wirth Robert Duncan  
in a New York zoo, he gazed  
with his wlld eye at an eagle**

**perched close, it looked at him  
until the two of them seemed  
lovers in a tense moment so I  
felt like an intruder. Same day  
I saw two zebras mating. Maybe  
that was another year, another zoo,  
another kind of poetry.  
I think a local eagle will explain.**

**10 February 2023**

== == == == ==

**A word went away  
in the night  
so I can't find it now.  
It meant a small black thing  
with numbers on it,  
you hold it in your and  
and it tells you things,  
tells you in numbers.  
Not temperature, some  
other property of what  
is actually there, depth  
or distance or the sound  
a wreb naked in earliest**

**springtime, all in numbers,  
little red digits, not heavy,  
held once in my hand.**

**11 February 2023**

== == == ==

**Open the presents  
on the day itself  
elsewise when it  
does come they  
will all be old, old  
already, nothing  
new under the sun  
like the book says  
and you are back  
to none again.**

**11.II.23**

=====

**The police were summoned  
to the castle—cops of those days,  
nu guns, just truncheons—  
but found no intruders.**

**Nonetheless the countess  
insisted someone staggered  
noisy through her dreams,  
balling a foreign tongue.**

**The sergeant led his men all  
through the halls and cellars,  
nothing unusual, a cat or two,  
a crow at home in an attic.**

**But no weird language, no sound  
of footsteps but their own.**

**Later the doctor explained she had had a prophetic dream, the staggering intruders were the police she had summoned, their weird speech the sound of how men talk when they think they're all alone.**

**11 February 2023**



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

**After several mild days  
remnant chunks of river ice  
clustered s dozen yards  
still out from shore,  
shady cove, Germantown.  
The name the ice  
reminded me of the Baltic,  
a long time ago, a warmer day  
but thicker ice. But here  
the wind came in and kept me  
in the car. Charlotte ventured,  
stood on the wharf, took  
a few pictures and came back  
shivering. So many nations**

**within a few miles of home.  
All you have to do is look.  
Fifteen minutes later we drove  
through the Cotswolds  
on our way to a little prairie town  
and beyond the meadows  
ancient mountains rose.  
It's all a sermon, seems to say  
to be anywhere really  
is to be everywhere.**

**11 February 2023**

## **THE GATE**

**Every human being  
has somewhere in or on  
or nearby in the air  
round the body a gate,  
small usually, a gate  
that can open  
safely, painlessly,  
causing no harm.  
And through that gate  
not only can informing  
energies like love  
and fact enter the system  
but the system's own  
reckoning, its knowledge**

**and love and caution can  
come out and be out here,  
be of use to others.**

**The Gate swings in and out,  
silently, no pain, no pleasure,  
just a sudden pause of breath  
and then the truth, as we say,  
the truth is out. Find the gate.**

**11 February 2023**

# **SURVEILLANCE**

**Look out the window  
what you see  
looks right back at thee.**

**11.II.23, *lune***

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

**He didn't get out of bed  
right away that day  
though it was or because  
it was Sunday, who knows  
what candles flicker  
in the secret sanctuary  
of the human soul, especially  
a man's soul, waking slow,  
between the god his wife  
beside him and the god  
streaming through the window  
light, sun, the god of ordinary  
life, the one who needs  
no prayer bur practice.**

**Get the fuck up, the man  
says to himself, the light  
is waiting for me, I see  
the shadow of a crow  
soaring past the window,  
up, up, and he lies there  
dreamy, soaked on an island  
forty degrees of latitude  
south of where he stalls,  
this is the island of Caressia,  
once there one seldom leaves,  
they drink sea water there  
and never learn to cry,  
they speak good English  
but only to you, reach out,  
reach out. Then the phone rings**

**and Sunday comes back.  
He groans, I am a man,  
not an answering machine.  
The island drifts away  
down the hall into another room.**

**12 February 2023**



## **MY SECRET**

**Some people have a dog  
I have a secret,**

**it trots alongside me  
and cheers me up.**

**A secret is a wonder pet,  
no one sees it  
no one can bother it.**

**I've had it for years  
and it doesn't grow old,  
needs a brush-up sometimes,**

**half an hour will do  
of sitting quiet with only it,  
then it's full of life and tugs  
on my leash and we set off  
again, a man and his secret  
.I urge you to keep one too.**

**12 February2023**

=====

**I can only tell  
what I am told,  
just like Homer  
or the man next door.  
So much depends  
on who or what  
tells me what to tell  
but I'm the last to know,  
no chance to look around,  
I'm too busy listening.**

**12 February 2023**

**= = = = ==**

**1.**

**Monday on the Moon  
or so it seemed  
I woke so weird,  
sweltering,  
watching two screens  
called Conversations  
/ and // and I had lost  
my place in all of them  
blanket over my mouth.**

**2.**

**I tell you this for a reason  
but I forget the reason.**

**A word in a dream  
is a cavern station,  
a mind-stop on the tracks  
that run through us  
down below. Get off here,  
your day is waiting,  
get off here, before the doors  
of dark slide shut.**

**3.**

**Which is no clearer  
though quite an urban reading  
of what has been happening**

**to me since the Paleolithic,  
I mean to us of course,  
I always do.**

**4.**

**Maybe this is not a sonata  
for plough and virgin soil,  
maybe this is just the weather  
dithering in my vocabulary.  
But why is it so far to a flower?  
In D.C. they have daffodils,  
and we at least as light comes up  
have a pale blue sky blossoming  
where even we can't miss it.  
I mean I can't. I always do.**

5.

So that was the reason.  
Yesterday he broke  
the music down, small  
glittery fragments pried out,  
spotlighted from the normal  
rush of how and what  
the music says. Now  
the english horn, now  
the piccolo—that's what music  
really is about, the godlike  
moment that creates  
the next world. He showed  
the gaps, the music broke,  
I loved each fragment as I wept.

**6.**

**Now see how Monday means,  
who knows if we will ever have  
a sabbath come to meet us,  
what will befall us if the week  
should break, and days  
exasperate us with unending  
difference, no shape, no trim?  
Unlikely, now sun is in the trees  
even now. Let the light decide,  
it's or main music anyway.**

**7.**

**Let's make a deal:  
let me go back to bed  
and find a different song,**



**let me sing out to myself,  
I mean to you, until I wake  
natural, normal as any now,  
with the tune still in my head.**

**13 February 2023**

== == == == ==

**There's a little bit of Jerusalem  
in every town, just look  
around the corner  
where kids in summer  
lick ice cream cones in public  
and flaunt their bare knees  
waiting for a dog or cat  
to come along, or even a rat.**

**There's a little bit of Jerusalem  
on that dusty shelf  
in the public library,  
don't bother to look,  
it will find you soon enough,**

**Look in your great aunt's well  
down under the maple trees  
beside her eyebrow colonial,  
some people never move,**

**the holy city comes to them  
shadow by shadow, drop by drop  
until the fallen leaves  
spell scripture all over the lawn.**

**No wonder I'm cheerful—  
angels everywhere,  
golden spires in the clouds,  
pigeons murmuring vespers  
evenings in the little park,**

**And some towns even have  
that constant quiet revelation  
a river of their very own.**

**13 February 2023**

**== == ==**

**Sandwiches satisfy  
no natural demand.  
They are an upper class  
conspiracy that somehow  
got out of hand. It was  
to put the peasants  
in their palace, content  
with oats and rye  
instead of this piled-up  
monstrosity, mixtures  
to nullify the natural  
flavor of each thing,  
the old sliced salty beef,  
crisp fresh lettuce leaf**

**in the mute embrace of bread.  
Blame the Earl, who mocked  
his butler bringing him fanciness.**

**13 February 2023**

=====

**A word is a stone  
I stumble on,  
hoist it, carry it  
a few yards to  
the wall I'm building.  
Wall of what?  
I'm afraid to say  
but I;m trying to build  
a house, a house  
where you can live,**

**13 February 2023, Kingston**

== ==

## Handscapes

on the moon of the mind,  
gullies, arroyos  
Mt Venus and the four  
hills, the four gods  
ut most of all that lone  
broad flat level plain  
where nomads read  
tier tasks and destiny.

14 February 2023



== == == == ==

**In India right now  
they call this Cow Hug  
Day, no more pretty  
scarlet hearts, no more  
poor St. Valentine  
matured not even for love.  
Just hug the cow,  
the mother principle,  
the sacred fountain of all  
nourishment. Honorable  
and quite pragmatic.  
But where is the energy  
that leaps up in me  
when I see beside me**

**my wife, my beloved,  
you, only you, your  
skin smooth as cream,  
our hearts safe inside  
the living fact of us.**

**14 February2023**

== == == == ==

Creeley showed us  
sixty years ago  
how you don't write  
poems only with hands,  
you need legs too,  
to walk all the way  
to the end of even  
the shortest line  
and stand there  
on the cliff of silence  
waiting for the echo  
of what has been said  
to ring out transformed  
into what you, only you,

**must write down next.  
It all comes from  
the silence you carry  
in you, word womb, wise.**

**15 February 2023**

== == == == ==

**The whole machine  
is one holy paradox,  
the animal leaps up,  
the wisdom slips down.  
Our job to calibrate  
devious destinations.**

**15 February 2023**

=====

**On the same day we heard two friends who do not know each other talking to us, one from our dining room table, one by video from Vietnam each about a tropical island, Lamu off Africa, Phu Quoc off Asia, We marveled at what they told, the love, friendliness, energy of life, and at the time-twist that brought their news together to us. Silently we remembered**

**an island of our own.  
And just last night  
on one TV, one  
after another,  
Carole Lombard fainting  
comically in 1935  
and Natalie Dessay the like,  
Met stage 2008. Serendipity?  
Or something more?**

**15 February 2023**

=====

Make up new word  
every day—

*abruption*: angry good-bye  
with no farewell.

*Gondolize*: drift  
seemingly idly  
through a crowd  
but but with a destination..

*sparcash*: money stashed away  
somewhere in the house  
mishearing the Germ  
word for ‘savings bank’)

*Softitude*: the pleasant state  
into which you settle



**weary, armchair, evening.  
Make up a new word  
and then get scared.  
The rumble you hear  
might not be the A Train  
innocently underground  
but the Tower of Babel  
yet again, tottering,  
yet again not built to code.**

**15 February2023**

== == == == ==

**Make a mark  
on stone or wood  
or wave it in the air  
then study it.**

**The mark unfolds:  
letter of the alphabet,  
claw mark of a story  
tries to get told,  
a face sings. Who knows?  
The mark becomes a sign.  
The sign knows.**

**16 February 2023**

== == == == ==

**So many islands  
to choose from,  
which one will I be?**

**If they have ocean  
that should be enough.**

**But we are choosy,  
we upright animals,  
our favorite sport  
is deciding, choosing,  
belonging to what we  
have chosen, flag  
raised, anthem**

**of each preference  
sung. Let me stand  
up to my ankle bones  
in the Atlantic and see  
if any of it chooses me.**

**16 February 2023**

== == == == ==

**Some miracles  
are so obvious  
we don't even notice.  
Air turns into us,  
it's just there  
all the time, hence  
we can be too.  
Deep mystery,  
earth's atmosphere.**

**16.II.23**

## **CORREGIDOR**

**Not too many left  
of those GIs who stormed  
the fortress island,  
, the war grinding down  
one agony at a time.  
I was ten and read about it,  
no TV yet, radio too loud,  
newspapers soft enough  
to read and think and  
not get too scared.  
You learn early to look away.**

**16 February 2023**

== == == == ==

**Warm morning  
grey as rain.  
hey say the cold  
comes back later.  
And what if the world  
is really waiting,  
and this process we call  
being or life or history is  
only waiting for something else?  
No wonder cities in the desert  
build such high towers  
to get s\the first glimpse of  
all that is to come.**

**17 February 2023**

=====

A \_\_\_\_ came down he road.  
There's your story—  
just fill in the blank  
and you'll know all the rest.

17.II.23



== == == == ==

**I keep thinking of the wide  
stone plazas of some Italian  
city, on or near the Adriatic,  
city facing east, worried  
by the increments of light.,  
Gemistus Pletho and his  
devious invasion sly  
Greek speculations replacing  
decent Roman certainty.  
Philosophy indeed. I want  
to push the Greeks back  
across the sea. Give me  
the stones of Verona,  
the tourist traps of San Marco,**

**anything but Socrates.  
Renaissance indeed!  
Reason is the deepest sleep.**

**17 February 2023**

== == == == ==

**I love the way  
trees use me,  
midair messaging  
to spread the word.**

**17.II.23**

== == == == ==

**Is it time for time?  
Or is there  
ever time for time?**

**17.II.23, *lune***

== == == == ==

**The first thing to learn  
about life on earth is that  
light and dark alternate,  
never stop turning into each other.  
This binary energy  
pervades all our thinking,  
the way we word one another,  
the way we pray..  
I tell you this now clearly  
but when night comes I'm not so  
sure.**

**17.II.23**

== == == == ==

**I still flip over stones  
to retrieve the secret  
letter or just see  
a sleeping toad. Every  
single thing I see answers me.**

**17 February 2023**

**SD**

**This is a self-driving poem.  
You can sit back (even if  
a trifle previous) and let it  
take you where it speeds  
along the boulevards of your  
memories, the coastal  
highway of your hopes.  
Allons! The engine's running.**

**17 February 2023**

== == == == ==

**If I had to write a poen  
for a Hungarian musicologist  
I wouldn't presume to babble  
solemnly of Bartok or Kurtag.  
I think I would talk snapshots of  
Switzerland, all landscape and no  
country to bother it, mountains,  
lake, glaciers, wild goats, eagles,  
quick late lunch in a Zurich cafe.  
There, that's tone-poem enough.**

**17 February 2023**



## **RAINDROPS**

**Raindrops  
on the windowpane  
that altarpiece  
above all our fervent  
gospellings down here,  
in the church  
that every house is.**

**2.**

**You know how it is  
we ray best  
when we [ray out there  
in the wilderness inside,  
Christ told us that,**

**the inner room  
where all the secret  
trees and mountains rise.**

**3.**

**So don't blame me  
for believing  
what I'm told.**

**The words are always true  
even if the facts are wrong.**

**4.**

**And right as rain  
they say round here,  
agree, gree,**

**the song is what is said,  
living crystals  
swimming on the lucid glass.**

**17 February 2023**

## AMPERSAND

The knot between.  
Wake up and marry the day,  
the Sun is waiting,  
the guests arriving  
by subway under the sea.  
And now for and,  
the splice, the typing  
of the knot,  
no reverend needed,  
do it yourself,  
easy as a shadow  
under even a little tree.

18 February2023

## WHY IS A WOLF LIKE OXYGEN

–I don't know why?

Because it said so in my head.

–What did it say?

The wolf of oxygen it said, breathe in.

–And did you?

How could I not?--

–How did it feel?

You tell me—how do I seem?

–Same as always.

That's disappointing and a relief.

--Don't always listen to what people say.

18.II.23

== == == == ==

**In this desert  
the mind  
is an oasis  
big enough for one.  
Sometimes a caravan  
comes by and offers  
new foods  
to nourish you  
beside the fruits  
and cabbages that grow  
beside your little spring.  
Mostly they come  
and go, leave you  
alone with all**

**yu hve to do  
starting with discovering  
just what that us.  
You learn by doing it  
until it is.  
Don't waste thinking  
on the hope of hearing  
the tinkling of camel bells.**

**18 February 2023**

**= = = ==**

**Just today  
leave the lyric  
in the lyre.  
Be salty, urban,  
make a sound  
like the crowd  
crossing Wughth Avenue  
in a hurry at a rare  
green light. Stop  
watching out for traffic  
and become it,  
growl like a van,  
hiss like a Tesla  
but keep on**



**and on. The city  
stretches past horizons,  
you'll never reach the end of it.**

**18 February 2023**

=====

**Lengthy prelude to  
a hurried  
whispered I love you.**

**18.II.23, *lune***

=====

**Saturday satisfied  
Sunday sums it up  
Monday moans again again  
Tuesday's Do-Day  
Wednesday whines,  
Thursday thirsts for  
Friday freedom soon.  
Who said I couldn't count?**

**18.II.23**

== == == == ==

**Math bored me,  
numbers of all the things  
I wanted and couldn't have.  
But the shadow of a bare tree  
on the big classroom window—  
that was ecstasy.**

**18.II.23**

=====

**Say it before it  
goes away,  
no word like s to wait.**

**18.II.23, *lune***

=====

**A lune sounds like loon—  
crazy man,  
bird with diamond throat.**

**18.II.23, *lune***

## TATTOO

Inches of apparel  
crept up the knee.  
I saw a tree  
shadowed on skin.  
I looked away,  
I did not know  
howto pronounce  
the word I needed to say.

18 February 2023

=====

**Descent of Man?  
Slipping downhill  
from ape's aptitude?  
Mute mutterings  
of Shakespeare and Bach?  
What are you thinking,  
Charles, ride out to Winchester,  
study the cathedral  
and say we've come down  
or take a book off the table  
and see if it tells you  
even one little thing you didn't  
know before. Yes, I know  
you meant Man's family tree**



**but trees grow up,  
higher and higher.  
So watch your words,  
they can weigh us down  
but ome, grow up with us.**

**18.II.23**

**=====**

**I fear the world about to be  
the syllables of uncertainty  
spatter round me like Alienese,  
whatever idiom tomorrow speks.  
Take the music downstairs  
and listen to the pipes. Dreams  
are tolerated up atop  
the wooden hill to Bedfordshire,  
where my great-reat-grandsire  
said Morning Prayer and wrote.  
No, I mean this wooden house, this  
now, this upstairs bedroom  
this shrine, no way, no will  
to flee from here and now.**

**18.II.23**

## **PALEO-HAPTIC TECHNOLOGY**

**Wave a finger in the air  
hope someone will be there  
to read what you're thinking.**

**2.**

**A finger  
touches earth.  
Presses,  
makes a mark  
in dirt, a word.**

**Someone  
comes along  
and reads it.**

suddenly the mind  
full of images  
the word summons,  
and all the feelings  
those images excite.

All you need  
is a finger  
and the earth.

3.

Or a finger  
half-curved,  
relaxed, reaches  
out and lets  
its tip touch

a person there,  
gently, no  
force required,  
the urgency  
is all within  
the intensity  
of even  
the softest touch.  
Union, communion,  
communication,  
trust, terror, tryst.

4.

The skin  
that keyboard  
with a million keys

**waits for music,  
for information.  
a touch tells  
and it tells right back  
a story the toucher  
could never have guessed—  
but is hero of it  
like it or not.**

**. . .**

**18 February 2023**

## **A SHEPHERD'S TALE**

**The nymph who knew me  
took my hand  
and led me to her dell  
where dance was slow  
and silent so I could not  
tell at first what music  
these women moved to.  
But then I saw a crow  
flying low, wings seeming  
to keep time, his body  
dipping and rising and  
their eyes were on the bird.**

**19 February 2023**

=====

**Rather that fly to India  
(very expensive flight  
to a very poor country)  
open the door ad step  
outside your house or  
out the GLASS door of your  
apartment house and say,  
with solemn conviction,  
your tone a third down,  
Now I am here. Now here  
is there. I am where.  
The beggars in these parts  
are shy, may not even  
trouble you, and a third**



**of all the passers-by are gurus  
and each one who passes  
launches a glance at you  
you can spend a few months  
analyzing, embodying.  
Such pure wisdom costs  
nothing but your sadness  
and lasts your pilgrim life.**

**19 February 2023**

== == == == ==

**Ractrack on the moon.  
I can't help it,  
that's what it said.  
And when I protested  
you mean *to* the Moon,  
all that space race stuff  
it said mno, he racetrack  
on the moon. It's for you  
to find, compete there  
with all your words, hauling  
sense from one infertile  
crater to the next until  
something wonderful happens.  
Nobody knows what—**

**it's not a race, no one wins  
but everyone does. My guess  
is a new word gets spoken,  
one even the earth can hear.**

**19 February 2023**

== == == == ==

The rules change  
as the crows call.  
But I hear none now,  
I'm left alone  
with yesterday  
to go on through  
the woods of now.  
Warm coffee,  
something sweet,  
light in the window  
from palest blue  
beginnings. Who said  
this is a war? It is truce,  
uneasy but enduring.

**Where are the wings  
to tell me what to do?  
No man his own  
angel? Women know  
something about this  
but don;t tell me.  
So today I will listen  
harder to the light.**

**20 February 2023**

=====

**One came into the store  
with a book in hand,  
slapped in on the counter  
and said Read ne this.  
The cashier pocked it up  
opened it randomly  
and started to read,  
something about moonlight,  
oil slick on the harbor,  
shadow of a tree.  
Other people in the store  
stood and listened  
patiently,, some of them  
even seeming to enjoy.**

**Commerce brings strange  
comforts. The reading  
is still going on.**

**20 February 2023**

== == == == ==

**1.**

**I woke up too long  
after I woke,  
theday had already  
silenced me  
with all its voices.  
Time for the child  
in me to have its  
breakfast oatmeal  
after so many years,  
eight solid hours sleep.**



**2.**

**I thought of toasting  
barley flakes,  
I thought of a woman  
handing me a needle  
with a wooden handle,  
a very fine awl, a smile  
to puncture thinking with?  
I woke too late to catch my dream.**

**3.**

**All this ignorance of mine  
doesn't wash away  
when I confess it—  
buT saying so makes something else  
come swimming in.**

4.

So it's worth it, no?

I bet you stopped  
listening long ago.

But just in case

I sill go on and on.

And even though

it's winter still

I beg you to september me.

5.

That's when the Jews

began the year, before

the Romans chose to

crack open a chilly door,

**a gate they found in winter.  
But autumn means remember,  
gather in the harvest  
the sky has been pulling  
leaf by leaf, stem by stem,  
upfrom the generous earth.  
All we ave to do is do  
the same, word after word,  
do it, build, needle and thread.  
Forgive me for all my good will.**

**21 Fbruary 2023**

## **FAT TUESDAY**

**hey call I down there.  
last feasting before Lent,  
that Catholic misery,  
settles down around the town.  
Or that's how it began.  
Now it's just a holiday  
all ts own, with dress-up  
and parades and noise—  
not so much drink and oink  
now, more pride, more noise.  
Moi, I'm like that all the time.**

**21 February 2023**

=====

**A.**

**Did you ever notice  
how the first sip  
of day0old coffee often  
has a skunky scent,  
very faint, faint  
but pertinent, we belong  
to our senses still.**

**B.**

**Why are you telling me that?  
Have you no other friends  
to talk to? Why invade  
the inventory of my sensations**

**and mix things up? Things  
are hard enough. Why me?**

**A.**

**I have a million friends  
and so have you, many million  
to be accurate, all those  
who live in your language—  
it's not as if you speak Etruscan.  
What you say is understood  
all over the earth and who knows  
where else besides. So when I  
pick on yu to tell a tiny little  
precious percept I just had,  
I'm giving you the first fruits**

**of my morning harvest. Some people would be grateful...**

**B.**

**I'm sorry, no need to get teary,  
I actually like skunks, usually,  
but I cherish coffee young or old,  
I'll accept your observation  
as the gift you say it is, no sense  
in arguing with information.  
So thank you for a complication.**

**22 Februray 2023**

## **YEAR OF THE WATER RABBIT**

**So the Wet Rabbit comes only once in sixty years so some people never get to meet one, and very few indeed ever meet two.**

**But I want to know the true name of this very year, not just its label in a cycle, its own never-before never0agan name for what is happening only now. Tell me, O great Time, then I will tell you mine.**



**But Time answers brusquely  
that I don't really know  
my own true name  
and till I do, she sees  
no sense in sharing hers.**

**22 February 2023**

**=====**

**I have enjoyed my stay  
in this green geometry,  
many a gap And few  
straight lines but o  
the curves therein,  
the flagrant intersections!**

**2.**

**Why did we build  
houses with flat walls,  
to give us some relief  
from the intricate  
curvilinear of the real?**

**3.**

**Yes, I have enjoyed my sty  
I answered, speaking  
to someone who asked me  
in a dream how I had fared.  
Fare means travel but I  
stayed here, went to India,  
England, Oahu but always  
here. Hope to linger, longer.**

**23 February 2023**

== == == == ==

**Snow came snow went,  
brief smile on the lawns  
worried me, now gone.  
Morning knows  
some other colors,  
the footpath I shoveled  
last night needs no me.  
The passage of time  
has a few plusses  
amid all the minuses  
that mean us away.**

**23 February 2023**

== == == == ==

**P ry open a word,  
peer into the window  
of the mind. Who  
would say this word,  
what would it mean  
in there, that dark  
from which the speaker  
spoke it, with all  
the desperate urgency  
of quiet conversation.  
Peer into the word,  
listen for its echo in me.**

**23 February 2023**

== == == == ==

**The amazement continued  
after the bleeding stopped  
of crowd after crowd  
drsin.ing along the street**

**and it was silent, dry again,  
nobody but ordinary people  
checking the sky, a puff of smoke  
from someone's mouth,  
almost cold enough to be breath  
but probably tobacco.**

**They smoked in those days,  
it was a way of coping with war,**

**bring the conflict inside  
where you can handle it,  
the wounds came later maybe  
but at least you lasted.**

**Now there was only the wind  
and the protesters, activists,  
anarchists, partisans on parade,  
call them what you like,  
the angry regiments of opinion,  
identity, believers all, come  
loud along the street  
waving signs to spare shouts,**

**somehow I loved them all,  
no matter what they thought**

**or taught, loved them because  
they walked their minds  
in public on a leash of words  
as old men walk their aged dogs.**

**24 February 2023**



== == == == ==

**Mets' first spring training game today. I'm in a ballroom waiting for the music to begin, waiting for the glamorous dancers to sidle silky in. Or waiting in La Scala for the first notes of *Simone Boccanegra*. Or in the Louvre (den of the she-wolf) talking to marble Aphrodite. Her tender distant smile assures me spring's not far away.**

**24 February 2023**

== == == == ==

**Trump, Pence, Biden  
and classified documents.  
Forget it. Old men  
are careless,  
leave it at that.  
Now get on with  
the real work, ending  
poverty and slavery and war.**

**24.II.23**

== == == == ==

**Nouns and verbs  
are all that's needed,  
maybe every now and then  
stick a little word in  
to glue things together.  
But seldom use the slimmest  
word of all.**

**24.II.23**

== == == == ==

**Between the columns  
a person stands.  
Architecture ennobles  
us. The person  
is robed, a long dark  
overcoat. Stands  
still as the column,  
not even leaning on one,  
as if standing there  
were teaching the columns  
their job, upright,  
faintly mysterious,  
as temples and libraries**

**always are, shrines  
of hidden deities.  
I go on my way,  
chastened by that stability.**

**25 February2023**

== == == == ==

**Snow, unexpected,  
paradoxical The roads  
pure white, the lawns green.  
Let me stay home and dream  
my own chosen colors  
on ny necessary world.  
Color means the mood  
of seeing, color means  
the mother iof the moment,  
cowboys wear blue jeans  
to ride into the sky.**

**25 February 2023**

=====

**Glycine wisteria.**

**Hortensia hydrangea.**

**Lavender and blue.**

**Names in other tongues,**

**Seamus James**

**Giacomo James**

**o I said that already**

**forgive me,**

**rose rose.**

**25.II.23**

== == == == ==

**Wait for the mirror  
to show a new you.  
Prayer can help,  
and Windex, and watching  
through half-closed eyes  
the angel of vision  
touch the edge of things.**

**25 February 2023**



=====

**If I were interviewing a writer, my first question would be about place, places. What places have moved you most, being in them, thinking about them? What places have felt like suddenly being home? What places, if any, oddly repelled? And then—do you think place feeds your work? Are you likely to write ‘the same’ on the coast of Oregon as you would in Central Park? And, if you had to live somewhere other than where you have chosen or been fated to live,**

**where would that be? Answer slowly,  
but don't tell me.**

**25.II.23**

## **CORONATION DAY**

**The king enters the hall  
where the hawk is waiting,  
man and bird alone.**

**The hawk is green, voice  
remarkably gentle,  
more like creak than croak.  
It speaks for a few minutes  
quietly, the king listens  
almost reverently, midway  
he obeys the hawk and sits  
down on a block of stone.  
Stone is good because it came**

before us and is still on its way  
;png after us—do you understand?  
The king nodded his head,  
afraid of making an assertion  
out loud, though he knew Latin  
and had studied calculus.  
The hawk fluttered down  
from its perch, in its beak  
a crown of feathers, feathers  
from all sorts of birds,  
not just its own. And this  
he settled on the man's head  
and said Now you are the king.

26 February 2023

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**When virtue still meant  
something or someone's  
intrinsic power  
mothers took their children  
on their road to sacred places  
of which they'd only heard,  
far away, far away,  
distance makes them holy  
I too set out in a new body  
on a winter day for the shrine  
of Saint James because  
they made me bear his name.  
The sun came out and helped  
me on the way. I asked  
for directions but I got so many,**

**all of them different, arguing  
west, tangling south, that I soon  
(I had been to school)  
figured out another way,  
I sat down under a hazelnut tree  
and closed my eyes. Come  
to me in my confusion, I prayed.  
and when I woke, I understood,  
got up, shivered, hit the rod,  
hurried home and got to work.**

**26 February 2023**

## **FEBRUARY MORNING**

**Snow-scape  
an opera stage  
no music  
till the crows.**

**26.II.23**

== == == == ==

*The silent god speaks in your words.*

This house endures  
stands in light every night, thrilling  
glow of dwelling,  
see people emerge and kneel ,  
speaking  
in new ways you understand rightly,  
we only really deserve sincerity.

27 February 2023 *notariqon*

== == == == ==

Unwind the thread—



**what I say to you  
I say to everyone.  
No more secret messages,,  
no more submarines.  
I'm a New Yorker after all,  
the sun comes out of the sea—  
that's enough for me.**

**27 February 2023=**

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**I want to know what they did  
and how they lived  
mostly what they thought about  
here, before anybody got here  
of the people we call 'we,'  
and I have only the trees  
to tell me, my 500 year old  
hybrid maple on at Blithewood,  
it remembers them, I ask  
tell me what yu told them,  
tell me how they heard or didn't  
and how they prayed  
and how they handled  
all their cuts and bruises,**

**and why were they gone  
even before 'we' came blustering in  
barking Dutch and angry deity.  
And on their stream  
'we' built a mill, they were gone,  
a factory even, and a hotel.  
They were gone and it all  
looks sort of like nature now  
but even 'we' know better,  
what is buried in the daylight  
all around us, in our water?  
Even the youngest trees  
know more than 'we.'**

**27 February 2023**

## THE BEAD

My left hand found it, tiny compartment in a red wooden tray on a table outdoors in the marketplace of Dsrjeeling, *rdo-rje ling* in Tibetan, garden of the Vajra. High in hre Himalayas, Kanchenjunga right over there, and the amber bead looked sweet, amber, butterscotch I love thought I hate butter. Amber bead. I bought it for a few rupees. And I have held it in my mouth too, tasting butterscotch and India, the Raj stil palpable up there, old government buildings when this was

**the summer capital of Bengal and the whole government moved up here on from sweltering Calcutta on the narrow-gauge railway, still runs, don't look too loosely at the tracks, just go and have a slice of pound cake at the old restaurant left from those days. It was the Queen's birthday too, the bead between finger and thumb, rolling, warmth, eternal warmth of amber that never forgets its tree, sunshine in it too, I love the way things remember. Bead in my mouth just but I can taste it still. All Asia in the lips.**

**27 February 2023**

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**Shrill striving  
tinnitus aloft  
wind in the rigging  
those sails are  
saying something,  
mister, you are not  
alone on this sea,  
we words are with you,  
hear them in the hush,  
the swirl, the rise and fall,  
solve for what sound says.**

**27 February 2023**

== == == == ==

**Sometimes a door  
needs a wolf to be at it  
so the occupant of the house  
stays home and works  
to rescue now from memory  
and rescue love from now,  
make it last, keep it in the air,  
tomorrow's breath to shape  
your love song from wolf howl  
before he loses interest, wanders off  
to bless some other door.**

**27 February 2023**

== == == == ==



**New levels of anxiety  
spread open on the ocean floor  
where vivid invertebrates  
invent themselves day by day.  
Living with less oxygen  
and dream-soaked sleep is only  
an armed truce. Up here  
miracles are underfoot  
at every turn, but down there  
I don't know. Squirm of squid,  
silver fins flashing away  
from a predator I see too late.**

**28 February 2023**

**= = = = =**

**Learning the left**

**the other side  
unknown landscape  
where the left hand moves.**

**Yes, I know the heart  
lives there, and sends  
messages I often  
understand.**

**But that  
dark countryside,  
awkward roads and  
doors that don't open,  
,rocks and rills,, yes,**

**I need to know them.  
It all feels different  
when I hold it in my left and.**

**28 February 2023**

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

**Inspiration the same  
the music different.  
Which side of the bed  
did Bach sleep on?  
An Berlioz? Maybe mind  
feeds on a mattress.**

**28.II.23**

== == == == ==

**Well spent, money of your night  
if you woke up with two words  
to rub together and make magic,  
at least a little spark or tow,  
a haiku with one syllable too few  
but love is like that too, sincerity  
makes up for too few roses,  
too many words on the note  
that came from the lover's hand  
often hard to read but I love you.**

**28 February 2023**

## THE MOVING STAIRS

*for Seán Ó Fláithimh*

They say the deepest  
subway station in the world  
is underneath Jerusalem.  
Wouldn't you know it.  
And to get from the tracks  
out again into the bright air  
you ride your feet up and up  
on an escalator. A very long  
escalator. And then another  
escalator. And then one more.  
Trinity of ladders up to earth.  
And only then can your start

**trudging up to heaven. Not even one escalator. Or is there in that same bright air above the city a hidden staircase on which the soul or mind or some such thing can ride footless, by word or song alone?**

**38 February 2023**

