

5-2024

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Robert Kelly
Robert Kelly

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MAY DAY

**There was another name for it
nut the flowers on the doorstep
said enough. Roses
and a cherry blossom
and a woodchuck
fossicking beneath the porch.**

2.

**Threshold she said
but I heard lintel.
How could that be?
How could down be up
so quick and no one moved.**

3.

**A day to be Irish,
feast of Beltane
fire flower flourish
but day to be calm,
bow before the teacher
a little sadly to be leaving,
Christ, we're always leaving.**

4.

**Leaving where?
Every road leads to Santiago,
some are quicker,
some take forever.
It all starts with getting up,
furthest destination of all.**

5.

**Flowers welcome good
and banish bad. Fact.
Irish fact, like the stone
you stood beside in Tara
and it was spring.**

6.

**Things to hope for,
wings to fly.
Why go far
when heart is here?**

7.

**The softest
magic spell:
hello.**

8.

**Now that that's
out of the way,
we can see the steeples
in the distance.
We're getting there,
one blunder at a time.
The one you meet
along the way,
angels on furlough,**

**and maybe what those
noisy kids scribble
on the road with chalk.**

9.

**It is in a strange,
fin-de-siècle way,
almost Dostoevsky way
comforting to feel
there is always a mistake
waiting to be made.
The sun has not set yet.**

10.

Call the farmer

borrow a beast.

Coach a smart child

to ride the moo-cow,

walk beside them proud

in the spring parade.

Keep going till you reach the sky.

11.

Groundwork he called it

to begin again.

Learn piano, slip

on a new religion,

decide that Emerson

is not boring at all

**despite being taught in school.
Groundwork starts late in life
when you have achieved
your full potential
and it's time for something else.
Stick this in the drawer
and check it out in thirty years.**

12.

**Sorry, that's gnomonic,
that's preachy.
Got to say though
what comes to mind.
But sometimes
also apologize.**

13.

**The flowers spoke English,
they murmured to the light wind
all night long,
fell asleep at dawn,
were silent when I saw them
dozing at the door.**

14.

**Can we go for a ride today,
can we look at the river?
Can we listen to Mahler
and have cappuccino
up in the hills. Can we
have salmon for supper?
Does childhood ever end?**

15.

**Wait for the wizard,
waltz with his wife—
we've been playing it by ear
long before the printing
press spilled all our secrets.
Wait and waltz,
it will all come true.**

16.

**Walked west through the park
to the Asian museum
but didn't go in. Kept
walking to the sea.
Didn't go in there either.**

**Sometimes refusing
is choosing, and choosing
is sacrament enough.**

17.

**On the other hand
we choose each other
every minute of the day
and sometimes I know
you wonder why.
There is a mystery here
that only trees and bushes
understand. Which is why
lovers give each other roses.**

1 May 2024

=====

**On the edge of the obvious.
Stand there and look over,
down, but also up.
Rub your hands together,
mutter a charm
in Hebrew or Greek,
here's a good one:
*If you really love your mother
the world is yours.*
I forget the Greek.**

1 May 2024

=t = = = =

**Generosity
is the main thing.**

**Give, give, give.
And take too—**

taking enables giving.

1.V.24

BELTANE

**Ball he now
lets fall,
picks up another,
hoists it to the sky
and leaves it there.
Summer starts,**

**2,
Dogwood
and Christ's wood,
crucifix in calyx,**

**and wood of cross
horizontal ordinary**

**pierced by vertical,
where does that come from
if not from above?
Truth slips down
to seem a flower.**

**3,
And all the while
just waiting
for the lilacs.
Look, the deep
theology of a child's smile.**

1 May 2024

= = = = =

**Hurry to the racetrack,
pretend there's a horse,
watch him wobble
out onto the track,
stall at the starting gate,
jump forward at a signal
only he can hear, leap
into clatter, soon a smooth
gallop, three times round
the oval, cross
finish line, slow down,
stand still. All round
the silence of the empty
grandstand thrills**

**with his praise. Your
own horse! And now
your work is done.**

2 May 2024

=====

``` *for C*

**When you went out  
to feed the birds  
the sun got brighter.  
You can't blame me  
for noticing these things.**

**2 May 2024**

=====

**Local airport  
noisy hornets' nest  
yet they thrill  
a kid in a cockpit  
up for a birthday treat  
seeing his town  
down there,  
his own house, his own  
father waving from tarmac.  
He sees as angels see  
and folds the whole world  
safe under his wing  
never forgetting.**

**`` 2.V.24**

== = = = =

**Sometimes it's the other  
way round. Waiting  
for the first shoe to fall,  
snowing in the living room.  
No wonder we wobble.  
And never mind who we are.**

**2 May 2024**

**= = = = =**

**He looked up shyly  
and asked me why  
we put pictures all over  
our walls. Don't windows  
give enough to see?  
And things out there  
know how to move.**

**2.V.24**

**====**

**Lump them all together,  
sun, mon and a handful  
oof stars. Carry them  
downstairs into the cellar  
and set them free.**

**Listen close to what they say.  
Well done. Finally  
you're getting the idea.**

**2.V.24**

**=====**

**Come home and be  
Mississippi.  
let your shadow  
rest on this rock.**

**2.V.24**

**=====**

**The formality of desire  
affronts the wise.**

**They know precisely  
how far Tuesday is  
from Sunday while lovers  
with all their huff and puff  
lose track.**

**Because that  
kind of love follows rules  
strict as a sonnet  
or even a pantoum.**

**The wise frown, then  
take pity on them because**



**lovers, for all their busy  
work forget to listen  
to what Love itself  
is telling them.**

**2 May 2024**

## **WEEKEND SHOPPERS**

**Some dressed for summer  
some dressed for cold.**

**Admiring the opposites  
that faint smell of truth.**

**(24.4.24)**

**Kingston**

**2 May 2024**

**=====**

**Greener than yesterday—  
who could ask more than that?  
Spring teaches humility  
as we watch everything round us  
doing it all by itself.**

**2.**

**Then across the narrow sea  
near Diocletian's palace  
a farmer with his donkey  
found an old book on the road.**

**He knew how to read  
but not tits language  
and it had no pictures in it  
to guide his guesses.**

**He took it with him anyhow  
and gave it to me  
because he knew I made  
translations of this and that—  
word gets around.**

**3.**

**To be honest I didn't  
read most of it, but did**

**find a little poem  
in ancient Illyrian,  
a little like Albanian.  
I put it up there  
at the start of this text.**

**3 May 2024**

**== ==**

**Easy to love someone  
who isn't near,  
her No never gets in the way.**

**3.V.24**

**= = = = =**

**Time for me to carve  
a sailboat from a walnut shell  
and climb aboard  
and sail therein  
to where ideas originate,  
there, just above the tree.  
Once there, I'll turn  
my vessel upside down  
and make a house of it,  
a yurt of sorts for [ilgrim me  
and there I'll sit all day**

**thinking to my heart's content  
safe from rain and wind  
and all those other  
salesmen of reality.  
And thought alone  
will be my bone!  
Want to come along  
in case I get lonely?**

**3.V.24**



**= = = =**

**House creak**

**mouse squeak**

**thank god for morning.**

**Who? The one**

**who made you you.**

**3.V.24**

## **OP.111**

**What more  
could anybody  
ever do? Slow  
slow until you go  
so fast you hurtle  
past the end and still  
keep going, until  
there is nothing  
but t the deep slowness  
of sheer being.**

**3.V.24**

**=====**

**It is a virtuous deed  
to plant a tree.  
I will plant a palm tree  
in my bedroom and  
sleep every night in Jerusalem.**

**3.V.24**

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

**Man with fishing rod  
standing on a boulder  
by river. Rod  
arches up, swings round,  
a fish tossed on the grass.  
Murder scene, I guess,  
can't tell what the victim was,  
alewife, trout? But his  
precarious perch,  
he's risking punishment  
for what he does**

**not know is crime.  
I worry about him,  
I grieve for the fish.**

**3.V.24**

**=====**

**Something like mystery  
something like cloth,  
it takes the shape  
of what it touches.  
Things do that to the mind,  
the shape keeps changing.  
Which is the emperor,  
which is the dairymaid?  
Nobody knows, nobody  
should know. Free  
of definitions, the leaves**

**so new on the linden  
shiver with pleasure  
in a wind even younger.  
And older too—we have  
been here forever.  
Wipe your face gently  
with this soft cotton.**

**3.V.24**

**=====**

**Is it a crime  
to be somebody else?  
Let's go to Samarkand—  
read a book on how  
to be there, read a book  
on how to read your way  
out of identity—  
any child can teach you that.  
Remember when you could  
remember?**

**3.V.24**

**=====**



**Who was holding  
the other wing of the angel  
while I was holding his?**

**What could he do  
where could he hide  
caught without a message?**

**I know he has  
not much of a body  
to wrap himself in.  
Nothing to him  
except the immense**

**affluence of his being,  
an angel is all presence.  
But if he comes without a message,  
y0u know he;'s here  
but hearing nothing,  
just knowing there's an angel  
presence I feel it  
I feel it but I don't know  
what it is I feel  
or what you do with feeling.**

**3/4 May 2024**

**= = = = =**

**Put it in the weather bank  
and save it for tomorrow  
or whenever glum gets you  
and you need this s bright.**

**O morning sun the Romans knew,  
lovers dreaded and the poor  
wound up their hopes again,  
their harps of complaining  
then back to work,**

**o Sun**

**soothing and searing, to thee**

**I blink in homage**

**from the last remaining me.**

**4 May 2024**

**=====**

**Wakes up, scratches itch.**

**Why is that like wild turkey  
from the woods pecking lawn.**

**Washes face, avoiding mirror.**

**How like a blackbird  
flying away. Red-winged,  
back for the season.**

**Morning so full  
of circumlocution.**

**4.V.24**

**=====**

**Don't get me started  
but don't slow me down,  
an argument's a work of art  
and I need all the crayons  
I can get, right now I need  
a kind of sickly green,  
then an angry umber.  
Already I'm losing the point,  
I think you're going to win.**

**\*\*\*\***

**4.V.24**

**= = = =**

**The admirable anything  
that lets us begin.**

**Little cream spill  
on its way to coffee,  
no wonder I take black.**

**But there it is, a little pool  
of white, look close and see  
a maiden step out of it  
and all the shoddy breakfast**

**falls away and you're  
alone with her,  
part of the story at last.**

**4.V.24**



**= = = = =**

**Munch on Manchuria,  
swallow Swabia.  
nibble Naples,  
lunch on Leeds—  
the world is our to sample,  
start with the names,  
embrace the places,  
taste everything you can.  
The world yearns to be known.**

**4 May 2024**

**= = = = =**

**Heard the truck roar  
as it passed us by  
scattering the words  
in my head. Fear  
needs a huge vocabulary.**

**4.V.24**

**=====**

**Ancestor at Gettysburg,  
uncle at Verdun,  
I fight with shadows  
till my eyes fill with tears.  
Only one answer: No more war.**

**4.V.24**

**= = = =**

**Listen to density,  
listen to Dutch,  
language is science  
without the white coats,  
learn to speak—  
what comes next  
is everything else.**

**4 May 2024**

**====**

**Generate some difference  
down there in your canoe,  
boats row backwards  
you straight ahead**

**but there's more to distance  
than dance. More  
to getting there  
than goin, A canoe  
looks like a part of you,  
curves and lengths**

**and nothing flat. Already  
you're half a mile ahead.  
Sideswipe sideswipe  
you're walking on your arms!  
If only you could do it in the sky.**

**4.V.24**

**== ==**

**Can there be a poem  
like a rational explanation?  
Creeley and Blackburn  
came back from Majorca,  
Duncan from the mists  
of Inverness, Olson  
stubborn on stone,  
Zukofsky by his civil  
ashtray in Brooklyn Heights.  
They all lived for that,  
lived hard to give us**

**a song that solves the world,  
doesn't just put anxious  
children to some brief sleep.**

**4 May 2024**



**=====**

**Be marvelous with rain,  
let the cranium dance you  
know so well  
shiver all the rest  
of you with grace,  
yes, a shower, and yes,  
you're the only one up,  
the field is empty, t  
he field is you.**

**5 May 2024**

=====

*Woodpecker*  
*woodpecker*  
*woodpecker halt,*

**I feel like a wall  
wooden and a beak  
keeps knowing at me,**

**an idea. An idea  
is an annoyance  
from afar. Sometimes**

**it gets somewhere,  
something buried  
deep inside. Hard to know  
which one will fly.**

**5 May 2024**

**=====**

**The names they give  
to parts of boats  
make them go faster.  
Prow gets there sooner  
than front ever could,  
and there isn't even any  
word for what scupper means,  
whatever that is.**

**But oh  
the spinnaker, oh the jib,  
I'm a kid my first day in school.**

**Help me be brisk and smart,  
teach me a better name  
for what I am.**

**5 May 2024**

## **LOCAL PREJUDICE**

**When Latin crumbled  
the best went north  
the worst went west  
the weird went east  
and in the middle a word  
tended to lose its feathers  
but in little Sardinia  
*amicus* still meant friend.**

**5.V.24**

**= = = = =**

**Men are coming to mend  
the stairs and patch the wall,  
fix the gutters, reinforce  
the sagging deck.**

**And more little stuff  
with less easy names.**

**What do you do  
with a hole in the ground?  
Plant flowers you wonder  
but botany is such a drag,**

**all that work for a soft  
patch of color lasts a month  
if you're lucky. And lucky  
folk don't need fixing.**

**5 May 2024**



**== ==**

**Screw head with no slot,  
anybody smoking pot.**

**5.V.24**

**= = = = =**

**The main  
news is rain,  
didn't even  
have to open the paper.  
Not a lot yet  
just enough to keep us wet  
or damp in here where  
we read the soft pale light.**

**5.V.24**

**= = = = =**

**I see the shape of the words  
on the page but not the words,  
long lines of tumbling letters,  
and they go on and on,  
must be an epic poem—  
that's word words do,  
tell us explicitly or by  
poignant implication  
everything that has happened  
to bring us to where we are,  
the fallen tower, mothers**

**weeping, cars going fast  
over the hill. Just for once  
the weather doesn't matter.**

**5 May 2024**

**== ==**

**Dire urchins needing culture,  
I can help only by telling you  
how I forgot what it was  
to be me. Read books!**

**Read until you can't breathe  
before turning the page,  
read till you're an adjective  
coloring a noun you  
don't understand.**

**Believe everything you read**

**and bless the contradictions.  
You'll wind up becoming  
a human on earth,  
one step from heaven.**

**5 May 2024**

**= = = = =**

**Hide for a while  
just for fun  
but let it find you  
finally, you need  
each other even  
to begin. The work  
takes some time,  
the result will  
surprise you both,  
a grown-up like you,  
seemingly random  
word creeping out of the  
morass of your mind.**

**6 May 2024**

## **MISTAKES ALONG THE WAY**

**My hat, for instance,  
brim too brief, brown,  
all wrong. Left turn  
off 25th Street, miss lunch.  
Saying hello in ancient  
Greek instead of Demotiki,  
I wonder how she manages  
to put up with me.  
Fell asleep on the subway,  
woke up in Rockaway.  
But the sea forgave me—  
thank heaven it always does.**

**6 May 2024**



=====

*Palestrina* is an opera by Pfitzner, I listened to it day after day, not so much for the music (austere late Romantic, lyrical, dramatic) though I liked it well enough, certainly not for the story but for the magical way it chooses, use, the timbre of each character on stage to express, just by its tone of voice (as we used to say) the meaning

**of that person in his  
story, not by notes sung  
but how, the throat  
of meaningful song.**

**6 May 2024**

**====**

**Naive, or new-born  
a choice not easy,  
so much lingering  
to be done, so many laws**

**you wonder how  
anything can be new.  
Still new, like the Pyramids,  
not old like the Eiffel Tower.**

**`` 7 May 2024**

**=====**

**Birthday of Brahms,  
birthday of Tchaikovsky,  
all love's yearning  
trapped in sound.  
Music is contagious.**

**7 May 2024**

**== ==**

**White motorboat midstream  
zipping down the river.  
Ten minutes later back it comes,  
north this time. Must be  
thrilling to go nowhere so fast.**

**7.V.24**

**= = = = =**

**Play with me  
he or she said,**

**play with me  
a game with no rules,**

**nobody wins, nobody  
loses. Or everybody does,**

**come and find out.**

**2.**

**But where is the board  
pr field we play on?**

**Don't move,  
it's all round you,**

**no tools needed  
for this most ancient craft.**

**3.**

**So what can I trust  
but what the other says,**

**the other who sleeps  
inside me and sometimes**

**wakes and talks.  
And sometimes I listen.**

**7 May 2024**



**= = = = =**

**Birders count birds,  
worders spill  
words all over the page  
until they lose count.  
And they don't fly away.**

**7.V.24**

**= = = =**

**Sit in sunshine  
stand in shade.  
Your heart has to  
do the sun's work.  
Now bathe the world  
into being seen.**

**7.V.24**

**== ==**

**What the mirror said:**

**Look at me  
and learn to smile.**

**Then learn to love  
every single human  
who doesn't look  
exactly like me. Go  
take care of them all—  
I'm content, safe enough  
in my bright fragile house.**

**7.V.24**

**====**

**Trees talk more than men;  
we don't know  
enough to listen.**

***7.V.24 lune***

**== ==**

**Three months without my  
overcoat,  
June July August.**

**7.V.24, *lune***

=====

*for MLZ*

**You listened to the stone  
and became  
the word it said**

**You listened so well  
that the word you heard,  
your word, became thousands  
to tell us what we need to know:**

**The song the stone hums,  
the soft reluctance  
in a lover's mind  
when she rises up exhausted**

**and sees the door—  
you told her what a door is for**

**You spoke so well  
even we understood  
the stone you speak  
so we can understand  
I don't think you've ever  
told a lie and if you ever did  
it came out and changed,  
shrugged off its red cloak,  
walked our way  
and became the truth.**

**8 May 2024**

**= = = = =**

**Far onto the morning  
the grow spoke  
his authoritative word.  
So many wings, vast  
heterogeneity of birds—  
their gospel tells us  
to cherish difference.  
So why can't I have blue wings?**

**8 May 2024**



**= = = = =**

**And there he was  
up to his knees  
in the alphabet**

**just like you,  
no end to what  
can be done with them**

**and a few of them  
you hardly use at all  
unless you praise Quetzalcoatl**

**or obey the Pontifex.  
Dive down, grab a few  
with your teeth**

**spout them out  
and there's our new emperor  
never spoken before.**

**We must bow before him.**

**8 May 2024**

**=====**

**Best I've tasted in a week,  
furn but creamy  
sheep cheese from the Netherlands.  
Why does everything  
turn into history?**

**8.V.24**

**= = = = =**

**So far down the well  
it's still my own face  
looking up at me.  
I should be able to speak  
even from the abyss  
of damaged life.  
The word lifts me up.**

**9 May 2024**

**= = = = =**

**And sure enough  
the sun came out  
but the cloud said  
don't bet on it.**

**9.V.24**

**= = = = =**

**Most ideas  
have receptionists  
posted at the desk  
as you try to go thinking.  
Sometimes scholars,  
sometimes priests,  
they stop you in your tracks.  
Be ready to negotiate  
before you really start to think.**

**9.V.24**

=====

**Broiled porgy  
at the Original Spartakos,  
half a dozen magazines  
got started there,  
where Jimmy the Greek's  
pastitso sustained me  
all the way through  
the *Chelsea Review*  
out to *Trobar* and beyond.  
And that;s just me.  
I can still smell the crisp  
skin of the broiled fish.  
Literature comes from this.**

***9.V.24***

**== ==**

**Most stories tell about  
two people, a few  
about one. It would take  
a revelation to  
tell the tale of three.**

**9.V.24**



**= = = = =**

**It's smart to sit  
a little further  
away from yourself.**

**Don't crowd yourself in.  
Let people come  
between you, give them  
room to wave their arms**

**or even dance. Some  
people know how to dance.**

**9.V.24**

**= = = = =**

**Valley tune  
philosophy.  
I understand  
everybody says.  
Then the bull bellows  
in one of the few  
remaining farms  
we call them, not  
ranches, ranches  
are so wide and we  
never quite own horizons.  
That's where religion  
comes in, our best  
glorious guess.**

**2.**

**Brown cows of Churchtown  
have roles to play,  
not just milk, good  
as it is and in cheeses.  
Almost instantaneous,  
gift of being there  
when we look. Hard  
to think of anything else  
when you see a cow.**

**3.**

**So, in middle distance  
an animal. It's raining.  
I love the way beast**

**and water allow each other  
as if equally entitled  
to this place, this time.  
I have seen dark Duroc pigs  
smiling in a downpour.  
Sadly I fondle my umbrella.**

**4.**

**End of confession.  
This is not about me.  
This is not about me,  
you've heard too much about  
me already. This is about  
the cows up the valley,  
the car on its way to the city,  
the deep caverns**

**below the obvious,  
creak of the opening door.  
But I've said all that before.**

**10 May 2024**

**= = = = =**

**Squadron of blackbirds  
low over lawn, very fast.  
That's all I get to witness  
of the morning's conflict,  
bird cries, soft green in soft rain.  
Let us pray for peace.**

**10 May 2024**

**=====**

**When the question becomes  
which fish to send  
to the angler's lure  
a river god has to decide.  
Reasons known  
to gods alone  
or their emissary stones.  
He sends a rainstorm  
to drive fishermen away,  
send them home—  
humans, spare my flock.  
But danglers of danger  
usually come back  
and then the weeping**

**starts again,  
the flow of tears  
men call a stream.**

**10.V.24**



**=====**

**Aberrant populations  
headache throbbing.  
Go fix the map  
with erasers and crayons.  
Color it back to that moment  
of peace, “when the whole  
world was at peace”  
the book says about the day  
Jesus was born.  
May He be born to us again.**

**10.V.24**

**= = = = =**

**Walking. From.  
A gull on the riverbank.  
Ever toward and ever told.  
Beth the first nation  
to be without war  
he bellowed from the rock,  
no army no navy  
a fleet of merchant ships,  
kind-hearted fisherfolk  
if there could be.  
Blithered on, ;persuasive  
as sunrise, listen listen  
little ones, you are  
my sons, every girl of you,**

**We heard him easy,  
with the goony gladness  
of the unelect. Stone,  
yes, water, yes, oxygen  
spook green in the aurora.  
Still—be the first country  
brave enough not to kill.**

**11 May 2024**

**= = = = =**

**Alimentary  
Watson, I'm  
hungry. How 'bout you?**

**11.V.24 *lune***

**== == ==**

**Plant a house  
in the meadow.  
Apologize and hope.**

**Plant an aloe in the house  
and begin to feel  
a little forgiven.**

**After twenty years  
the house sinks an inch  
or two into the ground.**

**It is part of the field now,  
you're almost forgiven,**

**lilacs by the front door,**

**red roses out back.**

**Now you are almost at one  
with what is actually here.**

**11.V.24**

**= = = = =**

**The sidewise operation  
of a song. The geology  
of grief. My paltry  
preachments exhaust  
the mockingbird, who tells me  
in several languages  
to shut up. Grieve  
in silence, like your  
mother stone. Or sing  
if you must let something out  
to prove to yourself  
you're feeling it.**

**11.V.24**

**=====**

**Airplane overhead.  
Very 20th Century,  
suddenly it feels  
so very old-fashioned.  
Aren't we in another age  
when we go places still  
but go them different—  
not growling in the sky.  
Now we can just be there,  
same cell phone in same hand.**

**11.V.24**



**=====**

**Let the tiger rest—  
to bear the contradictions  
all day long and we  
see only colors, no  
wonder he's so strong.  
Then I remembered  
the smooth monochrome  
tan of the deer and knew  
this is the contradiction,  
the simple truth, there,  
in sunlight, on the meadow.**

**12 May 2024**

**=====**

**Here I am in the cave.  
The word led me here,  
the way in, introit, start  
of culture, safe haven  
for us to be ancestors in,, beware  
bears. Then soon cav  
will come, cavalier, chevalier,  
Cav & Pag, opera to this day.  
But mostly deeper in,  
Ave, hail to the Mother  
right where we are born.**

**12.V.24**

**=====**

**Slight waterfall  
trickling down the rock,  
sweat down someone's back,  
the world keeps reminding  
me of me. I'm sure  
you know the feeling too—  
will we ever reach  
our own frontiers?**

**12.V.24**

**=====**

**It's not there yet,  
the crystal  
you ordered from Jaipur,  
tourmaline on its way  
from India. Then I think  
of all the million things  
in the air or on the sea  
making their way  
all alone in their boxes  
envelopes and crates  
all the way from there  
to here and here to there,  
millions passing through  
the unsuspecting atmosphere.**

**We go places so we ourselves  
can get to be just things,  
just freight in passage.  
Ask any flight attendant,  
or that bus driver in Dakota.**

**12.V.24**

**=====**

**Northern lights  
we see far south  
this year and they  
are magical.  
I mean they do cast  
a spell on our eyes,  
eyes already teased  
by the sun's corona  
this very spring,  
eyes now teased anew  
ghost green of oxygen,  
fiery pink of nitrogen.  
All year the sun has been  
telling us something.**

**I think we look without  
listening, we tweet  
pretty pictures and  
the wars go on, the same  
sky rains bombs on Palestine.**

**12.V.24**

**= = = = =**

**This absolution  
comes before the sin.  
This bright solution  
in the sky, Sol, the sun  
herself, the cautious Romans  
shrouded with a male name.  
And here she is, lilac  
and dogwood and all  
the names I forget  
but still feel forgiven.**

**13 May 2024**



**====**

**The opposite  
is always true—  
think of Canberra  
where they walk  
upside down and still  
make laws that work.**

**But where is this taking me,  
this blatant trumpet call  
to no known war?**

**Leave out the pronouns  
and the dish gets richer,  
thick amalgams of**

**the not quite realized before.  
Upside down? Who's counting,  
we have a town to share,  
a hill where men once walked.  
Obey the hill.**

**13.V.24**

**=====**

**Years waiting  
for the truth to sink in  
only lately to realize  
the truth doesn't sink—  
the truth floats.**

**13.V.24**

=====

**Airplane over,  
that antique sound.  
I thought by now we'd  
gotten over going.**

**13.V.24**

***[Then I thought of Chaucer  
and remembered we're still  
on the road to Canterbury.]***

**== ==**

**Picaresque blue jeans,  
gash above knee  
from swordplay? Shrapnel?  
Naah, we wear  
the uniforms of dead wars.**

**13.V.24**

**== ==**

**Peacock riding the moon,  
I saw it with her own eyes.  
A camera is the biggest room.**

**13.V.24**

**=====**

**Really believe in  
heaven and  
hell will go away.**

**13.V.24, *lune***

**====**

**Think of weather  
as an alphabet,  
try to read the word  
each day spells,  
how morning verbs  
its way to night, a new  
word every day, and all of them  
for you, right where you are.  
No wonder we get scared.**

**13.V.24**



**= = = = =**

**O dear sweet mind,  
you flight attendant  
of our merest thought  
from here to anywhere,  
bless you for letting us  
on board, bless you  
for feeding us along the way.**

**14 May 2024**

**=====**

**When I rode the merry-go-round  
I usually preferred  
the lion or the dragon  
to a mere horse, or even  
sometimes slumped  
in the sleigh, but there  
no brass ring could be reached  
so back to the dragon.  
What does all this say  
about my character?  
Careful—I'm on the lion now.**

**14 May 2024**

**=====**

**Idioms forget us  
as we sleep, we wake  
to a new language  
especially when we wake  
late, weekend mid-morn,  
too late for church and,  
and, and we have to  
stand around the house  
trying to speak. What  
dialect is this with such  
bright sunlight? Outside,  
bird cries start to make sense.**

**14.V.24**

**= = = = =**

**Regions of resentment  
pigeons on the porch  
neighborhoods change  
punctuation follows breath  
never enough sleep  
but too many dreams  
there are connections between  
infant dithering keyboard  
sublime inadvertence, music.**

**15 May 2024**

**=====**

**Transplanted the irises  
the Japanese maples  
so much of whatever there is  
is on the move,  
Venus by night  
slipping out of the Louvre.**

**15.V.24**

**= = = = =**

**The bare branch  
an intimate reminder.**

**It moves both ways,  
this thing that wags us,  
waves us onward. Time**

**accumulates within,  
the more the new pours in  
the older we become.**

**The branch shows some  
signs of budding, soon  
it will be old enough**

**to sing in the green choir.**

**Reminded, I study my aria  
for when my turn comes to sing.**

**15.V.24**

=====

*for S.W.*

**She broke off  
a piece of space,  
colored it like a new  
fern still on its way to green  
then rammed it gently  
back near where it had been.  
But space is never the same.**

**2.**

**She sat down cross-legged  
in the corner of an empty room  
and thought how to be a wall,**



*become out* it said  
*from who you are*  
and suddenly she was there.

**3.**

Later she wrote in her diary  
*What I am is everybody*  
*and we all are wall,*  
*each one a wall*  
*in the immense building of lives.*

She closed the book  
not satisfied by  
what could be said, instead  
went back to be the empty room.  
It was full of light.

**4.**

**She remembered being  
even younger  
when colors  
took your breath away—  
be careful with colors,  
even yellow. And now  
she had grown up to know  
*A color is always watching you.***

**5.**

**A friend had told her once  
*the dogs in the street  
help poets write—***

*nobody is ever alone.*  
Suddenly the wind  
was in the room with her,  
whirling stuff around—  
*Thank God, she thought,*  
*for letting me see the air.*

**15 May 2024**

**= = = = =**

**Imagine it right.  
Untilt the tower,  
blue the sea.**

**Use nouns as verbs  
and get away with it.  
Just get the colors right,  
and always start from B flat.**

**16 May 2024**

**=====**

**Sometimes the sandman  
knocks at the door  
daytime and looks oddly  
at you—why aren't you  
in bed, your eyes closed  
against this overwhelming light?  
Then he tosses his famous  
glitter at my face and down  
I go, limping to the sofa.  
hours pass before I get  
my conscious back.**

**16.V.24**

**= = = == =**

**They closed the wolf den  
up the road a few years back,  
not much howling now,  
occasional coyote.**

**Now all the wolfish impulse  
rides in us, rules us  
unless we gaze in reverent  
prayer to the silent moon.**

**16.V.24**

## **ELEGY**

**Long words to wrap wolves in,  
wolves on my mind today,  
strange the first wild one  
I ever saw was In my driveway  
twenty years ago. They're all  
gone now, but the bears persist,  
foxes and bobcats and even  
a radiant fisher from streamside  
just over the ridge.**

**We mourn for what is gone,  
being gone is validity enough,  
te leper stumbling downhill  
blessed by Francesco's kiss,  
the stone wall fallen,**

**the doorway still standing  
from a vanished house.**

**Wolves. The faint nitrogen  
pink of the aurora, we're  
too far south to see.**

**though that night we saw stars.**

**I got excited, told people  
about that wolf in the back yard,  
and then the next one  
a year later that strolled  
neighborly down past as we  
strolled up Cedar Hill.**

**Two wolves, two sympathies.  
They say the last wolf in England  
was killed the same year**



**that Blake was born  
and all the lost had found  
their voice again.**

**We van hear the words  
pf a man we never met,  
see in mind the calm  
eyes of tjat passing wolf.**

**~~~~~16 May 2024**

**= = = = =**

**How are you, sir?  
the wind went on,  
left the empty page  
almost where it had been.  
Every word is an answer.**

**16/17.V/24**

**=====**

**The other always the other  
and no side of this  
dripping its fluid  
color over the edge  
of the edgeless and we  
multiply, accordingly.**

**2.**

**Here used to be here.  
Then it got lost  
the way children wake up  
sometimes from dream  
not knowing where they are  
or should be. Here**

**was not like itself.**

**Close my eyes  
to get it back.**

**3.**

**Peddlers in our neighborhood  
used to have donkey carts  
or horse wagons,  
but peace put an end to that  
and gasoline came back.**

**Sometimes even now  
I prt the hood of a car  
mew parked, warm  
enamel, and remember.**

**4.**

**Here tells you  
what to do  
and when here  
is missing  
the pages in the manual  
are blank. Wait  
for the other, the imaginary.**

**5.**

**Of course I rub my eyes,  
try to get back to sleep,  
that comfortable realm  
not without its dangers.  
Still, try. I  
don't want to be**

**where I am  
supposed to go.  
Fear is a fox  
yippping at the back of the mind.**

**6.  
There was a sleepopotamus  
half submerged in the Nile bed.  
The kettledrums of the ordinary  
woke him from the shore.  
He stumbled into the day,  
Virtue is its own reward  
was printed on his undershirt.**

**7.**

**He hasn't smoked in years.  
Sometimes he'll think about  
lighting up, a cheap  
quick trip back to youth.  
But then he'll remember  
here isn't een here.  
But here will come again!  
he cries, waving his hand  
as if his fingers held a cigarette.**

**8.**

**Time to stop  
complaining.  
Elsewhere is everywhere,  
get used to it.**

**You've used up  
all the same  
and now there's  
only other. Remember,  
you used to go there  
to look at the sea.**

**17 May 2024**



**= = = = =**

**Exuberant escalator  
animal youth sporting  
up by down.**

**Famous actress  
by the elevator door  
could be anyone.**

**Stairs slip smaller  
vanish and come again.**

**People resist disappearance.**

**Things slide  
open and close,  
things do most of our  
remembering for us.  
The steps go up and**

**youth moving with  
or opposite, they grow  
older with each step  
and do not know.  
I though move through  
the revolving door.  
Only the weather  
tells me where I am.  
But never who.  
But who needs to know?**

**17.V.24**

**= = = = =**

**The wedding comes back  
to haunt the priest—  
whom have I given  
to whom? I know the rule  
is that the couple  
confer the sacrament  
on each other. But I was there,  
I spoke out loud  
the words their meaning  
meant, I smiled,  
the organ played.  
But who were they who  
stood in cute embarrassment  
before me and then**

**marched away through music  
into showers of rice in sunshine.**

**Who are they now?**

**What have I done?**

**2.**

**You don't have to be a minister  
to worry like that.**

**We introduce A to B  
then go our way. What  
have we done?**

**What do we think  
of those we have brought  
together, even by accident.  
And what do they think of us?**

**3.**

**Devils were angels once,  
maybe sometimes slip  
back into the old religion,  
nostalgia is a common plight.  
Maybe A and B (and C and D)  
have forgiven me by now.  
Still sometimes I look at them  
and see something we all  
have seen, a birthday girl  
looking up from the wrong  
present I've just given her  
and saying It's the thought  
that counts, while her  
sad eyes say otherwise.**

***18 May 24***

**=====**

**More music more morality,  
they make each other  
and for heaven's sake  
don't sing the wrong song.**

**18.V.24**

**= = = =**

**In the half-light of oncoming  
night the parking lot  
looks like a cemetery of  
two thousand journeys.  
Dark cars everywhere,  
some of them still bleating  
corpse music on their radios.  
Where did I park the car?  
Under these few dismal  
lamp poles more moth than light  
all cars look the same.  
And mine is the color of  
twilight to begin with.  
I close my eyes and reread**

**the chapter of my getting here.  
Start at the end and work  
a few lines back. Or walk  
around reading license plates  
until. And if not, wait.  
Waiting always helps.**

**18.V.24**



**=====**

**But on the other hand  
a ruby ring. I held  
the bare one tenderly,  
a little leery of the gem,  
you know what stones are like,  
red ones, singing in the night.  
The hand I held, cool,  
seemed soft with permission  
to touch and let go.**

**2.**

**So many for instance  
encounters. To meet  
someone is a story.**

**Recount an encounter  
and the story tells itself,  
the weather, what  
you were wearing, who  
you thought they were  
at first, then what  
did their eyes say.**

**3.**

**It starts when we're children  
and we come home from school  
and parents or siblings  
ask What happened today?  
And as usual nothing happened  
but ever ything, what is there  
to say about everything?**

**So we try to think something,  
anything that can be said.**

**Fact and fiction come  
from the same root,  
a story is anything  
that you can tell.**

**I shook hands with a teacher  
today, he wore a big  
ruby ring on his other hand.**

**19 May 2024**

## **PENTECOST**

**After two thousand years  
the tongues of fire  
have turned into gentle  
white flowers, dogwood  
maybe, or a handkerchief tree.  
And we bring bouquets  
to make an altar right here  
in the dining room  
where we can sit and wait.  
Waiting is like praying  
when I forget what words to say.**

**19 May 2024**

**= = = = =**

**Let. Allow. Alone.  
The throne  
is vacant, choristers  
are busy on the beach  
learning sea lingo.  
Let them. Allow me  
to underhear  
what they mean to be music.**

**2.  
I am alone here.  
That is my foot you see  
half-sunk in sand.  
Warn good between toes.**

**Let. Every life  
has a throne in it,  
much depends upon  
who sits thereon.  
Allow the obvious  
but who sits there now?**

**20 May 2024**

**=====**

**All dream long read  
e-mail, hundreds,  
all from same sender  
almost all to be erased.  
But which to save?  
We stand powerless  
before the simple mail.**

**20.V.24**

== = = = =

**A dozen vultures  
over Lake Katrinae.  
Take comfort  
from the countable,  
the namable,  
make a song of it,  
the fat girl sings  
O I have O.B.C.T!  
And the stage is full of  
overweight dancers,  
all of them me.**

**20 May 2024**

== = = = =



**Got through that  
without a single  
flower to console  
me or offer you,  
dear love, nothing  
but the many-colored  
petals of my confusion.**

**20.V.24**

**= = = = =**

**Give fingers  
a box to tap on  
give feet a floor  
to stump. Genius  
does all the rest.  
Bach is just around  
the corner humming.**

**20.V.24**

## **DES ARTS**

**1.**

**She scratched emptiness  
and made it bleed.**

**Just a trickle, a line  
wavered down space  
till we could see.**

**2.**

**He painted a wall  
around a window.**

**For a century or more  
someone has been  
looking out at us  
and we still don't know who.**

**3.**

**She saw a heron  
far away ob the river  
brought home a picture of it  
big enough to see  
slim blue grace authority.**

**20.V.24**

**=====**

**You see the card  
and leave it there  
but take the image home.  
The cause is left,  
the effect carries you on.  
Now think of every single thing  
you see as a Tarot card—  
all we really need  
are things to think.**

**20.V.24**

**=====**

**What time is it  
or who? Answers  
fit many questions,  
Ireland is far  
but winter further.  
Tara is green  
is everywhere.**

**2.**

**Who tells the hour  
who to be?  
Who loaded the brain  
of a new-born child?  
No question so stupid**

**t fails to raise  
a Sahara sandstorm  
of meaningful answers.**

**3.**

**So asked again  
Who? Was it you?  
How could it  
not be? Who else  
is there? Here.**

**4.**

**I want to assert  
loud as I can  
every word  
is its own answer.**

**Search hungrily  
for the relevant question.  
Answers are wasted  
on children. Teach them only  
to go on asking.**

**20.V.24**



**= = = = =**

**Though I don't have one  
of my own I have for years  
been fascinated by parking lots. The  
bigger the better,  
the more crowded, yet  
one just north of Hudson  
a huge lot always has some  
empty space where a great flock of  
common white gulls  
idles around and clusters  
near closing time or Sunday morning  
all round your car  
while you toss popcorn**

**or Combos, pieces of cake kept from  
your birthday, bless you,  
all the white animals roll  
down around and thank you,  
thank me, yes, they are grateful  
but I am grateful too, they give  
by getting. I give them bread  
they give me the whole sky.**

**(19,V.24)**

**20.v.24**

**=====**

**So if I were walking  
down the street and saw  
a pigeon flying towards me  
with something in its beak  
would I run away  
or would I leap up and try  
to read the sky's inscription  
the bird had so cleverly  
kindly stolen for me?**

**20/21.V.24**

**=====**

**When I was young I  
thought the world  
was small enough  
for me to go wandering  
all available Himalayas,  
walk Florida to Peru  
and I was right—  
the world was small.  
but now that I'm older  
the world has grown  
strangely large so that  
to go from my house  
to the little town  
for milk and bread**

**seems sometimes a weary  
journey. in fact these days  
the world is too far.**

**20/21.V.24**

**= = = = =**

**I took the manuscript  
out of the old desk  
and spread it on the table,  
Tabula rasa it wasn't,  
no, it had words all over it  
and I began to read them  
Latin, it turned out,  
a language I've known  
from childhood but not well,  
still I was able to figure out  
it was a story about a tiger**

**or some such cat, a big one  
that roared in the night  
but went morning came  
he lay down and wept  
fearing he had set fire to the sky.**

**2021.V.24**

**=====**

**once upon a time I flew  
straight from the Himalayas  
to Paris, stopping off  
for a cup of coffee in Dubai  
and another cup rather better  
in Vienna. When I got to France  
I said to myself I've been here  
before, fifty years before—  
what am I doing here again,  
what is this strange again  
that happens to ordinary  
people now and again?**

**20/21.V.24**



**=====**

**Once we were on Cuttyhunk  
and walked down together  
to the fishing dock and walked out  
on a long narrow pier where  
fishing boats were moored  
At the end of the pier we stood  
looking at the low green shore across  
the channel, looked down and  
watched affections  
coil and simmer and spell  
shapes in the dark water  
and for one long moment  
I thought I had come home.**

***20-21.V.24***

**= = = = =**

**Amidst the answers  
an ornery flock,  
birds, flew up  
in colors I could not name.**

**2.**

**That was the stone's story.  
I wrote him a prescription  
in my own saliva  
right on his curbed chest.**

**3.**

**Vut I didn't see his birds  
so for all the colors  
in my arsenal I couldn't  
help him to a name.**

**4.**

**We do what we can  
for one another—  
that is der Din, the Law  
that speaks us every day.**

**5.**

**Poor stone.  
So I bright it home,  
set him on the mantelpiece**

**in the music room  
where he can listen and play—  
someday we'll hear his birds too.**

**21 May 2024**

**=====**

**Strolling by the Soree  
one day I saw a swan.  
Isn't that enough to tell?**

**21.V.24**

## **THE GIFT**

*for Esther Allen*

**Charlotte is bringing you  
a statue from India  
of the goddess Tara.  
I wondered why  
she had chosen that image  
for such a dear friend  
then I remembered language.  
Tara had originally been Astara  
then the Indic first syllable  
fell away but lingered for Her  
throughout the East—Ishtar,  
imperial Esther in Persia,**

**Ashera, Greek Astarte—  
the name radically means  
what its English cognate  
signifies: *a star*.**

**2.**

**Tibetans saw Her as the savior,  
youthful, all green and sheen  
in human form, determined  
to help us when we're in trouble.  
Buddhists tell the story of a girl fallen  
into the river  
suddenly caught in a rogue current  
that swept her  
closer and closer to a waterfall, she  
would be lost,**

**she couldn't swim  
when suddenly Tara  
appeared, turned  
herself into a tree  
stretched her branch  
out over the water,  
the girl reached up and caught  
hold of it, and swung  
to safety on the shore.**

**3.**

**So as I looked at this beautiful little  
image of Tara  
all over silver and gilt and copper,  
the compounds, metals**



**of which we too are somehow made  
but we have learned how to be soft  
and still**

**be hard enough,**

**I looked at this little image  
and thought what a fine gift**

**for a translator,**

**from one to another**

**because a translation is like that she  
stands firmly**

**on the shore of her own language  
and reaches**

**out and seizes the consciousness of  
people struggling to know where**

**another word is leading, another**

**world, another man another woman**

**and another story, another country  
another day another night,  
another Love flowed by.**

**She reaches out over  
the other language,  
reaches out and helps  
the readers back  
into their own country,  
the serenity security and power of  
their own language.**

**She brings them back home  
all the richer from the journey,  
and most of the time they don't even  
notice she was there,  
they think O that was handy,  
that tree by the river**

**that book from the library—  
I guess I was lucky to find it.  
Meanwhile far off in the sky  
a single powerful star.**

**22 May 2024**

**= = = =**

**Redaction of the transmission  
tmumble-jumble  
the pane never took off  
pilot asleep at the  
can't call it a wheel,  
  
tarmac flooded with light.  
I put the paper  
back in its packet,  
I knew enough from a casual  
study of history to guess  
what was coming next.**

**Voice on the intercom  
speaks sort of English.  
I can do better.  
I close my ears.**

**22.V.24**

**=====**

**I feel guilty  
whenever I  
look at a bee.  
Always busy  
but look at me.  
Count all the ways  
I could improve  
then wake me up.**

**22.V.24**

**= = = = =**

**Asparagus weather  
stay stuck in the sand  
if you can find a sea.  
Otherwise use long slow words  
sigh a lot and lie back  
imagining the sky.  
Even I can do that.**

**22.V.24**

**=====**

**And then I shook  
the robe off  
and the empire fell quiet—  
could they obey  
a man of no purple?  
Quick I swathed me  
in my vestments  
and spake in all the old  
hallowed habits  
of hauteur and formality  
and the whole realm  
soothed back to norm.**

**23 May 2024**



**= = = = =**

**The mower has come  
to maim the day  
as if that half-  
inch of this week's grass  
were more unfriendly than  
the dratted roar  
of his machine.  
It must be Thursday,  
the flowers  
tremble in the rain.**

**23.V.24**

**====**

**Contraband  
that's what to call it,  
a raging silence  
that sweeps bad usic away.**

**23.V.24**

**= = = = =**

**And now the silence has come.  
Rain and not, soft and roar,  
sometimes a day  
has all the formality  
of a solemn Mass.  
Have to make mood  
keep up with the moves,  
unfolding the natural liturgy.**

**23.V.24**

== == == == ==

**Can there be enough of me?  
I asked the mirror.  
*Another me, is that  
what you asked?* it said.  
Never mind, I said,  
I wish you'd learn to lie.**

**23.V.24**

**= = = = =**

**The dynasties of springtime  
crumble one by one  
into the long democracy  
of summer soon.  
When nothing seems to change  
but temperature  
and everyone you know  
is out of town. Still,  
the fields are full of protests,  
corn and rye nearby,  
every green citizen  
demanding the sky.**

**23.V.24**

**= = = = =**

**Listen to the rain  
tapping at the door,  
listen to the flowers  
trying to say even more  
than color lets them say,  
listen to the sky  
softly dropping the pale  
milk it finds somehow  
up there to send down to us,  
a miracle when you think  
about it but then everything is,  
so we don't think about it  
or if we do, we don't very long.**

***23/24 May 2024***

**=====**

**She made an island  
from pieces of glass  
making sure each fragment  
came from the sea.  
And when it was finished  
it was green. Winter  
will not come there  
ever, it is the gift,  
the generosity, summer.**

**24 May 2024**

**= = = = =**

**Near enough to quibble  
like old men at a bar  
about whether and when  
which of them saw  
Joe DiMaggio. Years  
have names but also  
fur and feelings. Get it  
right, for nothing depends  
on your answer. Time  
hardly notices you  
as she hurries past.**

**24.V.24**



**= = = = =**

**On the coat-of-arms  
a penguin  
bearing sword and shield.**

**Behind him white vast  
emptiness—  
can't be too careful.**

**24.V.24, *lune***

**=====**

**When you look at a manuscript  
–not from a monastery,  
just a letter or a page  
of story–you’ll notice  
some words stressed, stretched,  
darker, quicker, half-  
hidden in scribble.**

**All those once meaningful  
variations are lost  
in transcriptions  
and lost forever for us  
who write with a keyboard,  
on thumb on a mobile.  
Now all the words**

**are properly dressed,  
none drunk or disheveled,  
none whispering.**

**We ask a lot of a word,  
making it stand there  
naked, all by itself,  
without our trembling veils.**

**24.V.24**

=====

**There is some part of me  
that is still standing  
on the Adriatic coast  
staring out to sea.**

**Clear day, gulls, a small  
fishing boat headed  
north on the lagoon.**

**When the boat is gone,  
hidden by an island,  
I'm still there, still there  
with the birds and breezes  
and I don't know.**

**And I'm not waiting,  
I'm just being there—**

**let me be clear about that.  
Vague memories stir  
from time to time  
about what's on the  
unseen far-off coast,  
but it's not thinking.  
I'm not thinking, not  
waiting, just being.  
Sometimes you're at my side.**

**24.V.24**

# **QUICK RENDITION OF OLD IRISH TUNE**

**The rose of Tralee  
must be thee.  
Who else could it be?**

***24.V.24, lune***

**=====**

**Measure me lightly  
a song to sing,  
they will hear it  
like it or not,  
let hearing be enough  
to style it music.  
I'll find the words  
but for God's sake  
make me a tune.**

**24.V.24**

**= = = = =**

**Am I allowed not to know  
these things not to sing  
these songs**

**not to know whose faces they are  
that gawk out at me  
with would be a smile  
always with white teeth**

**broke at me from the TV  
from posters  
am I allowed not to know  
who any of them are?**

**24.V.24**



**= = = = =**

**Is it inclined to wait  
for me at the river's edge,  
does it suppose I'm brave enough to  
go somewhere,  
other side of here and now?  
It must know me better  
than to think that.  
Rivers know almost everything.**

**24 May 2024**

**= = = ==**

**I know a girl from Montana  
who with naked thighs  
rides wapitis on the prairie**

**I knew her long ago,  
first saw her when she looked down  
at me from above  
the gates of Troy, glared at me one  
more fucking Foreigners  
come through all her whole city.  
Later she was nicer to me,  
forgave my differences  
as I tried to forgive her;**

**we even got to spend time  
together—she let me write  
poems about her, describe  
over and over the luminous intensity  
of her green eyes.**

**But one day her abandoned  
husband showed up, took her,  
I never knew if she wanted that,  
him carrying her away back  
north where they had come from  
those weird cruel people.  
their gods with names  
like snow cones like flower beds  
stricken with sudden frost.**

**25 May 2024**

**=====**

**1.**

**Open the curtain.**

**Aha! The tree's  
still there, still asleep.**

**Or is it me?**

**2.**

**The continuous interfusion  
of perceived with perceiver  
drives language,  
drives it into myth and music.  
No wonder children  
get so frightened.**

**I hope I never quite  
overcome that fear.**

**3.**

**So much depends  
on all life being sentient,  
on all things being alive.**

**So much depends  
on listening to trees,  
young linden out my window,**

**listening hard as I calmly can  
I'm like a rat in a lecture hall  
while Heidegger is speaking.  
Maybe a little more**

**than a rat. Maybe even more  
than the philosopher  
the tree keeps making sense.**

**25 May 2024**

**= = = = =**

**Sometimes I think the wood  
of the Cross whispered  
weeping to the dying Christ  
Now all living things  
are dying with you—  
now sleep us all  
back into strength.  
Later the stone  
rolled itself away and cried  
Come out, young Man,  
and be God again for us.  
And Jesus came out of the tomb.**

**25.V.24**

=====

**I've never been  
in Istanbul  
but did fly once  
over Ankara—**

**with such propositions  
we children console ourselves  
for our inability to match  
names with things,  
places with being somewhere.  
Philosophy doomed from the start.**

**25.V.24**

=====



**Playing the heart,  
she has long fingers,  
the strings sing  
even from far away.  
A little one walks  
beside her, hammering  
now and then a little drum..  
Every kiss a warning,  
every smile  
a voyeur at the window.  
Yet it is still all music,  
sunlight, arpeggio.**

**25.V.24**

**= = = = =**

**1.**

**According to the screen door  
the air's alive outside,  
fresh if not cool, slow  
but on the move.**

**2.**

**So what am I waiting for?  
Dr. Crow, maybe, to bark  
a few suggestions from the tree.  
Waking is hard work.  
Everybody knows that.**

**3.**

**So listen to the door.  
Never mind the cars  
that go by, all too slow  
along your street in Strangerland.  
Mostly they have other  
things to worry about.**

**4.  
Or too fast, danger,  
but at least they have  
elsewhere on their minds.  
Not here. I'm safe here.**

**5.  
The work is almost done.**

**It comes down to being  
up to me. Hands, eyes,  
teeth, hair, almost there.  
I keep trying to remember  
why I chose this job  
on this planet. Then  
I guess that it chose me.**

**26 May 2024**

**=====**

**Accordions, remember?  
Gypsies, cafe in Vienna,  
me pretending to speak Romani?  
Music has reminders built in,  
every instrument  
a filing cabinet of  
meaningful memories.  
Sounds ridiculous but I  
have heard love from an ocarina,  
the little china goose  
they give you before  
they let you play the trombone.**

**26.V.24**

**= = = = =**

**Long time since I've eaten cherries,  
strane,  
love them, once ate  
a pound of them one  
after another as I walked  
south across Paris.  
Strange how things fall away.  
But memories stay.**

**26.V.24**

**=====**

**Each leaf a telling,  
one by one  
each page of the real.**

**26.V.24, *lune***

**=====**

**Soon it will be now  
again, dreams  
fall from your fingers.**

**26.V.24, *lune***



== == == == ==

***Babble on* we heard  
the priest denouncing,  
and even at home  
they said I talked too much.**

**26.V.24**

**=====**

**Anything I touch  
belongs to me,  
at least enough of it  
to carry it with me  
all the way to Jerusalem  
wherever that city is today.**

**26.V.24**

**= = = = =**

**Episodic transmissions  
from Andromeda  
turn out to be  
disturbances in human  
hearing aids,  
the things a less  
learned sge called ears.**

**26.V.24**

**== ==**

**The trouble with pop culture  
it sprawls out big bright  
signs that say  
COME TO THE PARTY  
but give no address.  
Whereas good art  
always gives an address  
and the address is always  
close to where you live.**

**26.V.24**

**=====**

**I want to find a church  
with a big map on the wall  
that shows me  
exactly where I am  
and all the roads  
to all the elsewheres,  
showing plain  
where I want to travel,  
or the geology I want to become.**

**26.V.24**

**== ==**

**It must be Sunday,  
everything  
seems so very now.**

**26.V.24 *lune***

## **OMETIMES IT HAPPENS**

**Sometimes it happens  
I dream somebody else's  
dream, people I don't know  
places I've never been or seen  
fussing about matters  
I scarcely understand.  
Are dreams just little  
scraps of broken epics  
tossed around the world  
and some of them catch me?  
Catch you? Freud,  
like a good late capitalist,  
tried to prove each  
dream was meant for you,**

**you own it and it serves you.  
Now I'm not sure,  
not after last night's  
Chinese bean sprouts  
under the pine trees  
we never got around to eating.**

**27 May 2024**



**=====**

**Dutch gets it right: U  
capital,  
i get lower case.**

**27.V.24 *lune***

**== ==**

**Cup on the table,  
empty, wonder  
what it's for,  
too big to drink from  
must be a pitcher  
but has no lip.  
I feel that way sometimes.**

**27.V.24**

**=====**

**Sun went behind cloud  
my keyboard  
went illegible.**

***27.V.24, lune***

**= = = = =**

**They sprinkle.  
Us with holy water,  
priests. Girls with ordinary  
water, boys.  
Seas below Etna  
ashes of the wise,  
their sad children.**

**27.V.24**

## **PARKING LOT**

**Sheltering under the one big tree at the edge, in shade that tempers the cool breeze on my arm, I look out over the vast sunbaked lot and suddenly see it as a beach.**

**The cars are cabanas now, beach umbrellas, bathing machines. The long low white shopping mall in the distance is the sea itself.**

**Out of it the swimmers come, young and old, solitaires, family clusters, tee shirts and shorts, nudging their shopping carts up the sand to their whatever they really are grey and**

**black and bronze and white shapes,  
some even near me, where I sit  
waiting in mine, prisoner in a  
metaphor.**

**26/27.V.24**

=====

**Let the warbler sing,  
the earthworm rest,  
I take the blame  
for some of it of course,  
by being here at all  
I cast my vote in the weird  
democracy of being alive.  
But let me cause  
as little trouble as I can  
and help the old wheel turn  
painless, like a quiet morning.**

**28 May 2024**

=====

**Eventually the helicopter  
but for now Mahler's 8th  
maybe, or if you have a moment  
a glance out the window.  
See, you're there already,  
that's me loafing on the bench  
watching women feed pigeons.  
You don't need a whole  
city for that, any book  
can be a bible, right?  
Am I still there?**

**28.V.24**

**= = = = =**



**Priest and Rabbi walk  
through the door.  
Which one would you be?**

**28.V.24, *lune***

**= = = = =**

**Sitting alone at the keyboard  
(laptop or piano)  
is strangely akin to  
two hundred years ago  
dancing in Vienna  
with a lovely friend in your arms.**

**28.V.24**

**= = = = =**

**Leaving the pronouns out  
for once, let the music  
work alone, unimpeded by  
arrows of special attention.  
Let music be— just be  
nearby, let hearing help.  
be love song anyhow.**

**28.V.24**

**=====**

**Wild geese woke me  
northing their way over  
to the bay a mile away.  
They passed and let me  
not exactly sleep again  
but pause, as if mid-sentence,  
in a silence of its own.  
Not awake, not asleep,  
not me. Free!**

**28.V.24**

**= = = = =**

**How does a hill happen?  
Most home up from earth  
or shaped down from glaciers  
but a few I know  
were made by such as us,  
more faithful than we,  
heaping up earth  
our natural treasure  
to shape around and over  
some hallowed thing,  
body of a queen, stone  
they told me came from heaven,  
or a well we were not  
supposed to drink from ever,**

**or even see our faces in,  
but let time spill it  
up into the ground water  
from which we licitly drink.  
Every sip a prayer.**

**28.V.24**

## **BUZZARDS BAY**

**We flew 9ver once  
in a little sea plane,  
felt a little sacrilegious  
to look down on islands  
as if we could take our pick,**

**kids in candy store.**

**The exhilaration of Up  
soured a bit by ordinary fear  
plus the sense I can never  
be what I see.**

**Landed—  
a funny word for splashing down.**

**Bowed my way out  
onto the wobbly pontoon,  
from there to the jetty.  
Years later I'm still confused.**

**28.V.24**



**=====**

**Catch up with the past  
if you can.  
I doze in what's next.**

**28.V.24, *lune***

**=====**

**Anxious posture  
sitting on a chair  
halfway up the air.  
I should be standing up,  
a colonel before his regiment.  
(I should be lying down.)**

**28.V.24**

**= = = = =**

**Say the word to the one.  
And then say it again,  
this time so everyone  
can hear it and be one too.**

**29 May 2024**

**= = = =**

**Hut hidden in trees,  
sun does it with shadow,  
thought it was France  
but was right here.  
Things converge, Soon  
apples grow on pine trees,  
Art is all about waiting for now.**

**29.V.24**

**= = = = =**

**On the way there  
go through another country,  
a vegetarian democracy  
but see a poor dead possum  
side of the road and then  
rivers again and always  
how far now, how far now?**

**2.**

**But you knew the answer  
before you set out  
years ago, determined**

**to stay where you are,  
be root and stem and blossom  
in dirt you were born to.**

**3.**

**So all the philosophy  
is playing marbles  
on the sidewalk, some  
click together, some roll away.  
Sometimes you fall asleep  
holding one in your hand.**

**4.**

**Elements named and numbered,  
the Table set.  
Window time, mon fils,**

**look far away.**

**Dinners can go on too long,  
even now the host  
has not even risen  
to pierce our willful ignorance  
with his preliminary  
explanations. Too late  
to leave now, too early too.**

**5.**

**Along the way  
we stopped for a snack  
at one of those shacks  
where the meat is always  
not, spicy too, but who**

**know what beast it's from,  
highways ask no questions,  
the sun is setting.**

**6.  
So that's why children  
in the back seat  
leap whining Are we  
there yet, are we there  
yet even though the car  
is still moving as before,  
a safe five miles over the limit.**



**7.**

**Eventually even parents  
might think about the question  
and culture is ready to begin.**

**And sweet religion,  
the muse in matter,  
begins to ease  
our mapless meandering.**

**8.**

**Then you go over the hill  
and everybody sees it,  
the sea so alive  
shielding us from the horizon,  
sea, destiny? origin?**

**Say a prayer, go  
shuffle through the surf.  
Till we hit the beach  
only language  
can keep our toes wet.**

**9.  
So the sermon concludes  
as the newcast does  
with two or three ads.  
But here we don't know  
who the sponsor is.  
We barely know what is.**

**29 May 2024**

**= = = = =**

**Flow over, flow over,  
the blanket a river,  
the time spent sleeping  
is our real food.**

**The rest is just snacks  
along the way,  
that sandwich a quick  
and clumsy dream.**

**29.V.24**

**=====**

**Caloric value  
of deep breath.**

**We eat the morning.**

**29.V.24, *lune***

**== ==**

**One morning  
just after the bars closed  
the statue of Liberty  
came walking up Chambers St.  
Go back to Bedloe's.  
back to your sweet island,  
you'll hurt your elbows  
on our rough roofs.  
So Lady Liberty smiled,  
hurried west  
and swam back home.  
I think she was happy we cared.**

**29.V.24**

**= = = = =**

**Woke before the word  
let him think,  
stood a little slumped  
in the doorway  
like a question mark  
guessing the sun.**

**2.**

**Retreated, tried  
to go back to the dark.  
But sleep is a word too  
and would not speak.**

**3.**

**A little nowhere  
in the dim.**

**Then slow a happy  
ending gelled,  
one little word enough for now.**

**30 May 2024**

**== ==**

**Every book should have  
a septic tank built in  
to flush wrong readings away.**

**30.V.24**



**=====**

**I stroked a lion  
a snake bit me.  
Who are these  
people we all are?**

**30.V.24**

=====

*Our eyes enjoy the leaves  
wet with the clouds' tears,*

*we smile and sip rosy wine—  
that's the way of the wise.*

*Whose eyes will delight  
in the greenery round our tomb...*

**(Omar/Enard) 30.v.24**

**= = = ==**

**Roasting pan,  
grandma's, amber scurf  
of turkeys past,  
some stains never  
come away, I never  
had a grandmother  
though two of them  
sort of had me. The pan  
like most things in the house  
are real enough but still  
half-imaginary, mean things  
meaning more than they mean.**

**30.V.24**

**= = = ==**

**Wjat shall the message be?**

**Rose among lilies.**

**How should I spell that?**

**Wrap their stems in green English**

**and spray them with Latin—**

**French will do, or Occitan—**

**just spray it on, you can buy some at**

**the old general**

**store in the back of your head.**

**30.V.24**

**= = = = =**

***for Paul Heuteber***

**I didn't make them  
but the numbers walked  
home with me.  
One asked: how long  
since you saw a bat  
on your porch and another  
asked for a glass of water  
but it has to be  
the third drawn from the well.  
Who has a well  
these days I asked**

**and they were silent  
but still marched on.  
You can see them in my eyes.**

**31 May 2024**

**= = = = =**

**In island spring  
we saw one year  
three puffins northing  
off the headland  
early. The ocean  
has time of its own.  
We scurry like mice in its clock.**

**31.V.24**

=====

**The obvious  
is always an experiment.  
Look down from the castle  
to the Adriatic—the ocean  
is always pointing to you,  
sweet child, do the bidding  
of the obvious  
and all will be well,  
right down to the milk and roses.**

**2.**

***Exaudi orationem meam*  
we used to say in church,  
Listen to my prayer, it means,**



**taught us the difference  
between hearing and listening,  
o Lord hear me out.**

**3.**

**Put church and castle  
sea and prayer together  
you get a chess game  
you play with an impostor  
from the east. Who  
turns out to be the real thing.**

**4.**

**Sometimes it's safe  
to treat another as a thing,  
elbow in a crowd,**

**that sort of dance.**

**But mostly not. Mostly  
listen. Just listen.**

**5.**

**We were at the waterworks  
that day, I was a child  
in love with tubes and cylinders,  
lots of birds as if they too  
flowed with the hidden water  
flowing through the pipes.  
And believe it or not  
I suddenly knew  
this is the real at last.**

**6.**

**Water insists. IN-sists.**

**Always in us. We, just we,**

**carry the ocean**

**to the mountain.**

**Exhausted at nightfall**

**you show me**

**an eagle skimming over the river.**

**31 May 2024**

**=====**

**Frontiersmen  
are the last to know  
where the frontier is.  
Asked, they might point  
proudly to themselves  
as if to say I carry  
the frontier with me  
or I am the edge of things.  
But they don't say so—  
they leave that job to me.**

**31.V.24**

**= = = = =**

**Last of one moon  
hop to another.  
The moon is a marksman  
keeps us in his sights.  
We shrug astrology  
round our shoulders,  
musty old fur  
but keeps us safe.**

**31.V.24**

**== ==**

**We spend our afternoons  
dodging the lassos  
tossed at us from all sides.  
By midnight or soon after  
the sky lets us sleep.**

**31.V.24**

**== ==**

**Man in vegetables  
whistling while he works  
unpacking cabbages.  
No wonder they call  
this market super,  
I don't even know the song.**

**31.V.24**

**= = = =**

**My history lies open  
before me, a thrilling  
book that bores me.  
Some things still hum  
a little when I glance down,  
a well in New Hampshire,  
your hands in pink gloves.**

**31.V.24**



**=====**

**Need a napkin  
after noodles—  
that’s now the ancient  
epic begins, hear  
the house hum, read  
the red roses, you know  
your uses, shepherd,  
shelter your sheep.**

**You get the picture—  
there may have been  
battle scenes in the original  
version but tradition  
nixted them, made sure**

**the poem would be safe  
for children, nothing  
scarier than language—  
and language is scary enough.**

**31.V.24**

