To do everything wrong
and be a wheel
or be a hammer
and miss every nail
and still be in the sunlight—

the permission
to continue, the precious
ingood beyond metaphor
plain as pebbles
under sore feet
thank god you still feel.

13 October 2010
The face of the emperor
on a coin in your own pocket
your fingers feel him
no matter how long
ago he died you feel him
now, the form continues

and in his thing-world
the emperor remembers you
in you he comes again
to rule the blood world
where you stand at morning
studying the empty field.

13 October 2010
Catching up with sunshine
like some dumb song
I decided to go to your house
to make you my girlfriend my love
bringing ten of my red cows
but you were busy, washing
your children’s hair, shaving
your grandfather’s chin,
making a pie. I hate pie.
I would have had my cows
trample your garden but
you have no garden. No house.
Only never-ending family.

13 October 2010
LITURGY AND POETRY

One more word of mine
and then the liturgy
the words of the not-me
howled at the rising sun
with many an amen and so-may-it-be.

Anaphora the schoolmen call it:
what has been picked up and carried
again and again, as if the gods were deaf
or easily forget.

Or aren’t there at all
and such words are meant just for us,
to change us, whittle down
our ordinary wood and leave us
fresh and powerful, turn us into
the very ones we pray to—
while poetry instead is always after you.

13 October 2010
Caught napping.
We woke and found a planet under us, tree, rocks, sheep and so on, even some birds to remind.

So much to be done. We’re still at it with a century off now and then for peace, resting the genome, sleep. Then invention starts again, and all the other wars. Crusades, cathedrals, jihads, calculus, the fugue—the restless germ renews.

14 October 2010
Those things that call me
call you too
thunder, or the creak
of wooden stairs
at midnight—who is there?
Who would care
to climb such a tired hill?
Or a light still on
across the street at dawn,
is someone sick?
What can we mean
by what we forget,
or doubt, or pretend?
Nothing is real.
But it hunts us down.

15 October 2010
Call on the way to be.
As a bird or
from a fence a neighbor
tell or be told

you’ve had your adventure
on the moon now
you owe us something
a snapshot of her waving maybe

lipstick kiss on paper napkin.
= = = = =

Music continues where there is no rain
no sun no towers no cars
just tones,

    and if we try to move away
an ocean everywhere around each step,
you can see all the way to the horizon
but it sees back.

15 October 2010
To be ‘of another mind’
and it not even be England—
a land always lost inside itself,
England lost inside Commonwealth UK
as once Logres was lost inside England—

being just here
(where everybody is)
with wind frisbee ing the leaves around
g rand autumn s of the northern hardwoods
I would make a sermon out of that
if I were a minister

or there were a church
a stone church or people in it
left over from a work week
hoping to become ‘of another mind’
via words poured out

or who am I trying to fool now
imagining a population
when I say two words to the one I have.
Or three words. Live with me.

16 October 2010
I have to catch up
before I go on/
I can hardly see myself
up there a week ahead
scuffling through amber leaves
as once on Batchelder Street
in blue October
I missed my father
on the wrong way home.

Now it’s me I have
to rendezvous with,
you there ahead of me
you person I was last
week with your mouth
full of what might turn
out to be wisdom

or even interesting,
how far you have traveled
while I hurried in what I thought
our common direction.
And who are you talking to now?

16 October 2010
Sending the spirit to
the other side
of my side

and yet not rubbing itself
against your skin,
side beside side

with a space between
and in that space unseen
any song begins.

That is as much
as I can tell you,
it’s already a little

more than I know.
So there is real going
in what we do

and coming to
and coming home
where you’ve never been.

17 October 2010
But to talk about doing it
and not doing it is dangerous.
It’s crying Wolf
when there’s nobody to hear you but wolves.

17 October 2010
Язык

Agèd encumbrance
grandpa Yazyk
but what would we do without him?

And his young wife
all shell-pink ears
just hears.

17 October 2010
Knowing things to be said
say them. The snake
who has no ears
is listening. Almost his time
to slide beneath the land
into the invisible law

on which we stand.
Autumn, *aves stumm*,
the birds are silent.
Where the corn went down
ripe pumpkin trash
peaceful carnage in that field.

I know someone is listening—
the way the congregation knows
the hymn they’re belting out
falls up to sentient ears
somewhere. It all leads:
these words for that sake.

18 October 2010
= = = = =

The centerpiece of everything
is supposed to be flowers
lilies for virgins and martyrs
since we all are virgins
in death’s smug embrace.

18 October 2010
LILIES

Calla grandiloquent
but Peruvian humble
odorless pale long
lasting as the truth

bird looks at everything
we’re almost there now
there is a roar in the distance
I think it’s the sky.

But does what I hear always have to mean me?

18 October 2010
ATTACK OF THE MIRRORS

All the transparent people—
there is waiting to be done—
a slide trombone
(think of all the other kinds)
onks outside Jerusalem—
a sunflower for the families,
only me without grandfather
and my only grandmothers
hidden in a book. You are Edda.
I am so much born
that I hardly have to be here
but am for you, just a scrap
of always lying here among you,
heavy in your lap. a testament
of torts, glissando
of tuneful complainings.
Why do you even listen?
Why do our shattered words renew
stealthily by night and come
with biting force in dawnday?
You are almost safe, almost wise,
almost complete. And I,
shouldn’t I be someone else by now?

19 October 2010
To identify one voice in the crowd
not easy. To marry her or him though
thereafter easy as $\pi$. Always some remainder.
Always some part of him or her can never be yours.
IT & US

Poets, for want of anything better to do,
reprocess clichés. It’s a waiting game,
kairos comes not every day, when *It* speaks.
Till it does we spell our little musics.

19 October 2010