

Versuche

(Tries)

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VERSUCH

noun

[masculine] /fɛʔ'zu:x/

genitive, singular Versuchs

nominative, plural Versuche

[HANDLUNG]

das Versuchen

attempt

Er machte unternahm einen weiteren Versuch,
das Tier zu retten.

He made another attempt to rescue the animal.

[IN DER WISSENSCHAFT]

Experiment

experiment

sich für ein Verbot von Tierversuchen einsetzen
to campaign for a ban on animal experiments

[SPORT]

Durchführen einer Übung

attempt

Jeder Weitspringer hat drei Versuche.

Every long jumper has three attempts.

For Charles Bernstein

Streams and Stanzas

OH SLIM

Oh Slim,
been kneading the alien roughage
since I decided Arthur
Rimbaud is science
fiction. Been tell-taling,
obtuse as I am,
who once wandered suburban streets
looking for his pig-sty.
That master-eye
is no longer in my vicinity,
I've galled him,
that he take a better look around
and see what I see.
(Didn't there used to be a song
about the red of the rose
when it's under?)
Saturn: I've blanked that spot
and a dark spot has
replaced it on my retina
so that
for example, parallel parking is
more difficult (and
my room is a mess).
They've taken off for vacation.
I mean, the neighbors took their dog.
(One, two, three,
nerves gone, nerves gone,

like in that poem by T.S. Eliot.
Science fiction.)
Oh, Slim, what is
Black Dada Nihilismus?
Once I was served a rare surprise, I brought
Parody to my knees, I found
it wanting. I brought
Parody to his knees, inspecting
the cracks in the sidewalk.
Zip me up one more cola for my phant.
That there are lazier days awaiting
in the golden years,
the afterlife of youth. Oh,
ATM. Oh AT&T. Laughter that is the edge
of seeing. Tell me how it all works out.
Yours, Hiney.
“Shiney.”

Melancholy that
drags the soul
drags the soil
for one soul more.

KIDS WITH GRAMMAR

In the difficult space
between the acceptance speeches, the
adolescent pimps
—zits, pickles, frogs—

lacerating amidst the demagogues,
aloof, strung out on
penitentiary wakefulness—
that is, the muscle between gags.

Blond, a tyro
like no overdetermined society
has ever had the discourse spoken for—
cuffs, sleeves, ankles

in the ballet mechanic
froth somewhat unmechanically,
the “racial,” the delinquent
a medication that explodes the pigeons.

THE POWER

They will be
finishing
up. The power
will be over.

*

Gangly, old
weather-beaten
poet, you
should have
been twenty
years older.
Instead of (as
you are, it
seems) young
enough to remember
a time when
you sky walked.

*

There were
the verbs.
Then (growing
from hard
earth) the

noun theories.

*

Satellites create
venues, of all
continents. Arranged
alphabetically:
the “Afrique ” on
which Donne traveled
in a lady’s tear.
Then came surface
activity on that Asia
invisible but for
its trade. Now, its
pro-forma charades.

*

Waiting:
such
produce

as I
have
open &

yet smart,
eager
to be

be-
lieved,
suggests

invasion
is
immanent.

THE ESSAYS YOU LOVE

The essays you love:
home about the home, preach
moral disclosure,
the sisters whom with
the width of past,
aggravated. The “iris”
hunger that accumulated, in
attics, hair follicles,
sins, brains,
self-damning luck, self-
defined—the mutter
matter? Rutherford
is not taste of the
Seine; bleakly in bath-
rooms, poets here
are blent with the earth;
the scrawled caw outside
troubles no tem-
ples, no Bloomian fana-
tics. Such that
misery invariably varies
the glut of eye-glass,
pickings, choosings,
mondo-pathological blunder-
ings, that are quar-
ries for our Dantes.
The razor-edge bleeds head

radii, stadiums,
coo-coo solid verbs plink
narrowly exact, fuck
up, gorgeous
companions. And no girl
seen on the street
corner, speaks; she
exists, aching in military
regards that stif-
ling “discourse,”
that discord becomes Parnassian.
For this, he was velly
solly, framed inqui-
sitionally, ragged in the
cuffs. Seasons beat of
winter/summer, spring/fall,
are: Ptolemaic? no, sanely
different shoes and
gas prices, not drains
through which one’s honor ex-
plains. Mercy music
collides with skull, wags
no finger from a syllabus,
and no Pontius acts praiseworthy.

ZEPPELINS

I.

They tamper
loathfully with
my dimples—
this time.

The streak orange
glancing
my scalp
picks me—

this time.
But next
year, a walrus
continues.

Proud of hart
the Scot.
Being sold
by temperament

I scout
alternatives—
lily pad
peace nik.

Obvious

chagrin
at the
call. Toledo!

For the rec
I'm whole.
Otherwise, the
cement's cracked.

License
vibrates
in the hotel
rooms of Toledo.

A porn? No,
a parent.
Comeuppance
takes time, and

energy, and
drugs, and
powerful
gigs in Washin Tong.

If every
day went
like this
I'd know you.

2.

The verse
of reverse
is: Animal.
Like the cutlery.

I plug one
low with
a Nike
sentiment of class—

Diderot
wasn't a fool.
That's just
too uncool

that ad.
A promontery
delays my
Aunt's vision.

Pillaging
in Japan?
Why not try
this retardant?

Cornice
on which she
sits with
a chilly kid.

Jive won't:
harm the—
well that's
surely debatable.

In *this*
town, we're
starting anew,
trying impatience.

Zeppelins
tuned the
flamingo. Now
it fires

the imagination,
liquid, gas
and solid-dancing
and walking.

But on come
the traffic
anyway; Skippy,
Cheerios, and Milk.

3.
The passim
choke my
affct, my
affect.

I think it's true.
The weight
plums the
fibers depths.

Sounds of
dampness.
Bowls
of it.

Crayon double
steers
my children
wrong.

IS this
crime? TV
succubus
every night?

All the cities,
all the power,
but in
Swahili—

nervous,
unintelligable.
It's from
DeLillo.

You are
already
there, at
the other

end,
waiting. I
sit here
a tomato, you

don't know
that.
I can't,
no hands!

The problem
with fissures.
Wax on,
wax off.

4.
Verbal hypotenusé
—is he
autistic?
Architectures—

the baby
comes in
and changes
her shoes—

Korean.
The sun
pops dimes
off the bed.

The challenge
a sea's
prose,
radio waves—

commas, comets,
Koreans,
countrymen,
herbal "we."

There's nothing,
there's nothing,
there's nothing,
a babushka.

Tiny Tim
traipses
the tulips
of sobriety, the

popular
psychosis—
geraniums
with votes.

Easy
to sell rooms
with gels
of horror.

Let us pray:
Edinburgh.
That's
my angle.

But movies
chuck angels
with breadths
of dope.

5.
If this is
so white,
my tower,
my height—

eavesdropping
on a crate
of millionaires,
fornicating

that sounds
like issues.
Pallid
he rode

a horse,
solved riddles.
Isles, sands
are riddle.

Now it's
in someone
else's court
making its fingers

upset
you? No,
I won
the toss.

Paste the
colon
twixt the verb
and article,

doesn't seem enough.
Home brewed
calisthenics
exercises choke in

contest,
consent
a constant—
dividing our twins.

One wears
gray, the
other “
”, like shrubbery.

Oh, for
Paul Muldoon's
knackered response
placating the Hellespont.

THE MAD DICTATOR

The mad dictator
made the
trains

run well,
so punctually,
no one questioned his demeanor:

mean.
The season's
change, all's caught

in summary
surprise: so reason's
otherwise luminous demesne

was darkened: not a spark
of sense, or
nonsense.

Redactor
of histories, of lore
—he jerks off in the park

seeming
so teasing
to, really, no one. He

is a wonder
of abject pleasing,
of vagrant pleasure's teeming,

and thus
wakes, pissed.
The mad dictator is split:

one half
counter-parliamentary, one bit
running with us

toward liberty.
But never, never, in
fact, fruitfully

conversational.
So when the head count's in,
he's out in the random library,

doing
arithmetic.
They voted him in, nonetheless.

He was a resounding voice of difference.
Not too hygienic,
not so deluding.

SHE GOT SICK

She got sick, looking
at the internet, nearly
vomited, stubbornly
refusing to eat, to line
(in my opinion) her
stomach: continued to hold

and hold, true, that
she's been eating very
well, thank you, let
us remove to the next site,
please: greenly, cautious,
circling in my room,

cleaning, nervously full
of motion, kinetic
in her pantomimic efforts
to stay "still." Did
not happen: she left
strumming on her rib cage.

HERBAL QUICKIE

Strange, this night that
 (organs splashing away)
protects the mind, dark
with elegant burgundies, grays
 (the cigarette agrees,
 challenging the cold day)
as it floats, ever secretly
towards the more challenging way
 (struggling, ever decently).

THE BECKONING HARPOON

All the speakings, into
the dark: howitzers
aimed at the silence,
and a pig escapes from the
foliage, intact as
words can't be, struggling,
dividing against the stagecraft.
Part or parcel: frank
accords unhonored, tattered
at edges, frittering
away like an unlucky lady
at the station.
Strange, this strangling,
superimposed over economics
(cannot make the numbers
from the dots), it ails at all
fragrant professions
of faith. Strategic
doctoring: won't file down
to a figure, no
figure, strike from
the marble a sleeping
coward or gnat, grotesqueries
that are the desired syllables.
Link to the mere:
adopt child gazing at
a statue's testicles,

fabricate for the us factory
a column, a saying-
book? Only short before the
fecundity of piled (leaf-
like) suburbs, merely
stammering in the proper
English of the transient
settlements.

Of the story, its
verbs: cassettes, records,
percussion, melodies, chords,
the ripe eagle-eyed
desultory mimicking of time's
rather inebriate parade,
colorful, bundled by calendars
upon which are scrawled
screams: no art is prostrate
as audience in the wings,
no retina lacking tracking which
is a field: the sliding
on heels into mud or tar pits.

SOMEONE SAY BEATNIK?

Quark, divide
me, standing aside
that girl, who
sometimes sees me
idle, terrified,
dull, aloof,
fragrant, smelly,
totally distracted,
quiet, intemperate,
playing with words
old, new.

 This is brilliant
or, smashed
in, concentrated,
vaguely productive,
soiled, mussed,
acid, distasteful,
loopy, hard to
say, but sayable,
ardently remiss, but
standard, alas,
obscene in all the
old, new

 ways. Fracture
it, but ran
together, always
hand-in-hand aligned

fro, to, tensile
in beatific struggle,
able, sublime
in the modern sense
flexing confidence
now, then
 true, very wrong.

CLOD SONGS

I.

Oh, to
walk, to
pitch
and turn!

a rose
turns
me, like
a magnet

does
a pin.
Cloud
coverage:

over-
age!
knees
motoring

sloppy
slip slip
job, of
slumped

slap-

sloping
of me,
down,

eyeing
with per-
manent
fear,

the clod.

2.
Under
sky,
that tone

variable,
puppet-
master,

who
firts
with all,

who
skirts
the fall.

3.

Time, tumor, greater
god, fraught, forsaking us
usually, talentless
tenor, antiseptically adept,

wrecking
radically, spurious symmetries
deceiving, dumpy
syllables slushing, throat

therapies grudgingly aground,
step stones, slip sloping.

4.
The slip slip
slope of
your suffering
is a motion, only.

A reach
for an
exposed
root (after a heavy

rain, the
ground in nougats
of dirt)
hand blistering

after
but a weekend
of grip—
the sour sun

slap slap
and slathering,
so that
the producers

will cancel
the performance—
the clod
speaks: “Vagrant!”

like a fable
in Blake.
The slip slip
slope of

your suffering
is a motion, only.

5.

Who takes a large
broom to all
it: slope by slope, eradicating

the figments of
miles, timorous
stuttering of lay-on-the-

line: suggests

surrender

bodily or holily
before the grosser confabulations.

NERVES ARE TIGHT

Nerves are
tight, are
expectant, in
Henry Miller's
delusions:

that forty is
the prime of
life, dick
mastering the
social crisis

without
duplicity.
No betrayal:
when one wanders
into the

fiction:
so it is, and
shall be, so
decidedly consumed,
no

pain to others
(otters).
Nerves are

challenging
this death,

suggesting health
is protean
when, alas,
it is achieved,
and very smart.

No hesitation,
no bus-
stop waiting,
just go and go
in, on, pro-

duce that story
line, line
of poetry:
it is health
for the opti-

(cian?) no
mist, belaboring
the corny
codes, the
scruples that

edge one
toward death,
its duties,

its grants—
its gas emission.

GOVERNMENT JOB

Government job procreation programs
—the initiative is active, streaming
the masses into their cordoned lives
(codeined “project noir” dissing simulations)
—thousands of pulses like this have come
in, since we started the rotary, what
we anticipated in several previous gauzes
—gazes at the 3D freebee shoulder butt.
The persons (she and her large body)
were grafted onto the stones of the old way
timorous, the new jobs—she said “school”
and the old, the good things in
“the new generation” needing people like
that (her French was terrible): she
plans to use the job to build a will, and
—not true, says the Head of Forecast.
Three and a half billion dollars, or fifty, or
less have gone in (Coriolanus, it’s useful)
toward the laugh lines solutions, Par-
sons hailed the program, and this is Mark Chase
with flute-bedeveled news, in the morning.

THE APPLE GENERATION

Sound poets
that don't sound like
withered narcissists—
that's America
to me. On
to the next chump.
It retains philosophy
as an extravascular
activity,
this fatal habit
of smoking while
singing. Blue moons...
don't have 'em in the
nineties, but
the fifties
bound them
to soporific bleats.
This way... dalliance
with Puritan exoskeleton
—pop balloons,
they go pop
with demotic pitch.
Younger than
driving age, then
younger than
drinking age, but
younger than drinking

age, not necessarily
too young.
This is a private
fasceme. Pushed back
into the
mind-altering stages
of youth, sublimity
takes on many moldy
customs
to forge the hack.
It's claustrophobosophecy
on Broadway, all
naked and humming
when everyone's dressed
for football.
Stalling courage
fakes it, in the wind.

The stadiums pop.

-ISH POEM

It is you changing
crutch: winter's
fancy pings, delicate
bow work on the
appetite, or strumming
strong-arm storms
device in devisions
largesse, transitory
as an acorn.
The blue hair, the
orange lips:
part them with care.
A slow suffusion
should not be
discouraged: harp
player, strut
fantastically, await
with preternatural eyes
the approach of
the masculine, white
black: millions
flutter to those sales
and congratulate,
cheaply, no achievement.
The timorous
shatter finally;
o stratagems, o gems

of crystal deterrents!
the fake heart
never compromises,
it's artifice is a show
that is deliberate
in goals, its
nakedness must be
concealed beneath capes
or the cape's no
flattering. On a map
the assistants
boasted: careening
comet-like on
toboggans, they shamed
the lethargy of the
too abstract,
eating peacefully
tethered to the sure
rope, nestled in the
crag. Odelay, odelay,
the echoes of
the undivided hillocks
were the warmth of
applauses: a pantheon
erupted to paint
the sky, so many
"Riders," too little
fun in the roller coasters
approaching them.
This is no appeasement!

The verdure exchanges
itself for other
molecules, but the
blueprint is priceless.
Luck upon
another corpse, lay
there, beside it,
talking lines sketched
hurriedly in a meeting
that was never boring,
concussions meeting
over a satisfying lunch
to, aggravate history:
“Micro-gestures...
I wanted your comfort
packaged, alone, for my
individual pleasure,
but you are dead now.
There are few
now translating me;
o ebonies, o splenetic
affirmation! cold
as a winter kiss, I leave
you for the earth.
I want to exchange this
gift. Gulf.” A
single eagle on the
crest of a family
escutcheon, responds
deftly, spin doctoring

this rubber mourning.
Is it possible to palliate
the aporia? Sing
in a straw castle?
Animate the dimensions
of a point? point
to laser line? Of
the many (manly)
options offered, one
spoke up, like
an egg waiting to be
cracked: "The
blue lips must go."
It was shamed but not
entirely irrelevant;
a cyclic turn in
the episteme suggested
new resonances to
its misguided
wrench: fraternity?
No, fertilization.
Avid strugglers are
in every cake in the
store: even
evil sweets are
familiarily nutritious,
fly with that eagle
that is boundless
horizontally, if not
the ass, sings

no pleasant show tunes,
but is a winner at carnivals.
Ambition relegates
the children to
the backroom, until
fashionably late,
they are forced to suggest
their obvious superiority,
shuffled off the
guests, whisper thin
songs into the
cold air, puffs of
generosity eventually
dispersed among the
shaggy, bumbling adults.
“The groin is a problem.”
“Meat-eating has
done this.” Etc. And
as if the town never
knew its name, or county,
the fiddle playing
nominated it for sleep.

AVER

Take the
sharpnesses,
railleries
separated
from som-
nolent dis-
courses:
the pikes &
bruises of
pummelings
gleaned
out of night
“streaky,
weird” in
its myopia
that tie
the hands,
cuff feet to
paragraphs
& mimes,
imitations
of object-
ivity, but
just divorces
from engage-
ments on
word level,

the graphemes
that pick
noses, like
pitchforks
scandalizing
friendship,
sanitations
arguing
indecenty.

ABSTRACT INTERNATIONALISM

As you can see, the palette
runs dripping down the
arm, slow canals, like breath
in a smoky room, alarmed
varicose veins, excuses
for anxiety, laziness, sedentary
passivity, what strangles
can't wrangle, jip bargains
never fluctuating in the Asian
markets, pig heads that get
all the attention, speech
working up a friction
that wages the slave, puts on
some dinner plate an economic
miracle, it's slam time
now, the railing against
walls, daily dapper living that
is a surface for the maggoted
guts, the sinewy attitude
(never working its way into
rebellion, never satisfactorily
prepared) metered life mered
like a stripping hour,
a plague on your pax, limn
the frothing that has passed
into unitary consciousness, blob
like, running the malls, fit

in its shivering sinecure
for bureaucratic bays and
here, now, there is the mime of
what was once recorded as
the tense and relaxation of
hunter-and-gatherer Modern Man.

CARNIVAL BARKS

Larks and too-cool favors from word
streams with minuses featuring stalled
ratifiers, AWOL and bleeding fuel,
staring at fanatics sandwiched, winters, in
stereoscopic, Niagaral hale, to sate
theology prudence. Fate is fun, in the
humblest deliberateness of hot toddies, after
French waiters thought through two
Lazarine spreadsheets, nothing swells.
In sidereal radios, Arnold Palmer's a
manly proposition, hefty, and wearing snow
weights decidedly for skiing, in fidelity's
Mormon duplex, framed in blue (mellower)
malls. Thievery, farcically, wins
its grievance: Samoans on turnpikes
fatten brothers, conical or theoretical,
hair hardy, cannily fighting with freak
instinct hearts. Fed, funky, but no hoot
brandishes disclosed innocence, trance
of parenting cubicles, orifice that smothers
its dream, or ipecac family trace of
reticence, withering its stony face.
Rats or firs, or Lazlo fount indenting old
dis-pastiches, remorse in Spock's hand
wholesome pitches, proper little elves sell
thorough barter, in teams, if in their
clowning with breathing Celia, winch hooks

neither the gyrating heel. The fans
speechify froward spiked preachers, fuming
cheroots and debates like faltering bankers,
intimating and subtracting, unaware,
hex-strewn diabolics. Hippy witches are mental
and scary, insane, remarkably pleasur-
able, almond eyes, minimal thuds affirming
screening of radicals, ethereal or of
other eras. Assuming correct topics,
pals grow from the waiters they were (cartoons)
through months berating their crowds of
cinema (askers snatch hulking feys when
fancier-than-thees switch intentions, resound
the truth) and stall weathers un-serious,
running, harped hotly, toward 'scapes with fools.
Rated for their hillbilly subsistence on
meat, the fans crawled, in insult, into dying.

The New York School

THE WATCHER

Cackles from the plumbing. So give me a scene
From the deck. The watcher
Follows a hand leading through the sky
His sight guide. Constellations
Titter at the smallness of it, this enterprise
Surviving on tape and glue. And
Like an alertness that is its own identity, an
Eye will flash only negative
To the watcher who sits down to inspect
His shoes. No camaraderie
With exiled slaves from nothingness
Brings him peace, no choke
Hold, obvious, will serve
To be pointed at. His eyes which are diamonds
Will make his prose, his hands which are callous
Will thumb his nose, weariness
Will inspect the progress.

The

Curtain will ridicule his
Own choices, seeming
They surpass even mother's
And father's forthrightness, or still
Cages erected sometime
In his youth

to gather hope. Watchers

Do not come together
To give out hope.

WHITE SESTINA

Again, they've tricked me out of bed
with the rumor of sight. No casual joke,
it seems they didn't know what they were doing
as if this dawn of rose and of white
were the gist of some other problem they were working
on. I am up now, and seething

with expectation. How I am seething
that the vision filtered through, and on my bed
stood, for a sweet second, the pilot working
its craft down to its pad, like a joke
which promised to be innocently white
discovered, in the end, to be something doing!

And though I wish I were doing
pet tricks, like a hound who can't stop seething
espying through the brush notes of white
(a brand new car, or pillow for its bed)
I am rarely ever in on it, when the joke
escapes into the higher lights, like a clock never working.

But I am working, I am working
listening to what the repair man's doing
to the faucet upstairs, and when a joke
falls from his lips, like a bubble from a trepanned seething,
I recoil like a child in its bed
taking notes, but protecting its fairly white

neck, wanting to keep it white. White,
the clouds want to show they are working
but I take it they need not lift my bed
to rise to the stars, to explain what they're doing
so many weeks on the ground, the forum seething
with suspicion, that the mission be some sort of joke!

And, someday, we will just joke
about it, Aeneas. But say this to him, white
is the cloud, like a bang, and the working
a fairer standard to satisfy the seething.
Sure, it is clear there is something doing.
So lie down here, next to me, in my bed.

For the bed is the joke
doing lines before the judges, who are white
with pride and indignation, seething, working.

SENTIMENT

I.

Tears are dripping
down the softly gilded window panes.
They are taking this house
with a guerrilla solemnity
like adverbs coolly draping
their foliage over some architect's pride. But who is com-
plaining.

I like it when there is some barrenness in the initiative of
spring,

forcing me to collect,
to correct,
the puerily scattered
remnants of that pilgrimage
I used to deride
as so formally normal,
then attempt to make
fantastically correct

like a saint. Though one says that the saint has form, too.

2.

Spring does not
have form, proving
again, today, that it may deliberately

abstract from an abject noneness
its promotive name, pulling
out all stops,

pulling
for some feature
of the rain.

LOVE POEM

I.

I'm shaking now. Can't sit around
And think of something. The windows are white
For redecoration. So my wares
For the week, are not advertised.

Amazing. Amazing it is to hear
Through music, the complete dialogue. I saw your name
On the museum. I saw it
Go, and then gone. But it stuck.

So, I am in a quandary. It is called The Rolling Stones.
I've been, like a slug on the television
Something like the fruit of all contemplation. The stadium
Closed

We exit to the
Empty fields. There, you will see the dance
And the teacher, who is sick
Who beats out the rhythm with a stick.

2.

My library is complete. My tongue is dry.
I love you darkly. It is
Weeks since we were newlyweds. But I am doing
Better now—than the author of *Sordello*.

I pace around the floor with
An image of you on the wall
Which is my arm. I love all four corners
Like I've mastered the secret passage.

So, to hell with it. I live alone.
A package arrives, for a signature
To set it free. As
I will you.

I am edging towards a darkness
Complete, brutal. And
Like a crime in the night
All will be well.

3.

In the last days before Eve
Let it out what she'd done
They scrambled around
Her to hear her story.

She was beautiful. The vase she held
Was clear, like water. Lies
Filtered from the sun
Fell to her like leaves.

One night together and we will be pure
Pure like the green of celery
Or baby's toe. I am trying

To be obscene. I want the entire thing

To last our whole seconds of it
Like something you see on TV
But which is great again and again
No matter what we do.

THE DEATH AND RESURRECTION
OF NICK NOLTE

A stranger from America who smells, looks
A huge square covered with papers and the day
With lunch. If God would clouds would part,
Executive ushered in the business Hosannas
His own at large inner sanctum wall mounted
His entire shirtfront smeared with souvenirs.
To improve upon imperfection that to Frank
The manager, be frank, chip in a twenty... kid!
Registers a lowered voice, young and white
A stylish slugger levied against a catcher
Thirty-one mood swings shape a man's balls.
The Fifties and Sixties scattered across
The globe were men wearing cuff-links, way
Clark Gable... the primary off-sensor dish.
The expression that's within you not yourself
About a construction worker who tries to go
Stretches out on the sofa partially and dies.

(UNTITLED)

1.

They meant nothing of the jug.
Comparable to the depth it appeared
To destroy the idea simple rape.
He daren't write
To her in a long term
Of sympathy, the living plan
This highly-sexed meticulous cleanliness.
Strange, scandalous
Aspect of self-punishment.

2.

Not alone the stars
Its towers and cables
Fascinating inhabitants

In their identity
Excursions into free
Opening into scenes

3.

Thus this with his pride
Radical sense made principles
Board a merchant ship .
Determinism is reassuring.

ALL ABOUT ADAM

The unadorned truth. The rosy glow
His problem. It's hiding
Like a whore! Yes, we agree

Real kissing starts
The process: withering houseplants,
Suits to the cleaners. Even willing to cut

Some slack (absolutely loathed)
Mythologized breath is real
But honestly, are the odd... This woman out

Frown
An actress whose fueled.
Emily went change for the holidays

Cup size, va-va-vooming
To her trade. This line of inquiry
Their mind whim, the designers lent to his hand

To report that this
Stringy-haired hangover stuff
This deal with the means, Mertz

Imperfection
(Harbor no illusions).
As long as it makes

Her look simply nature doesn't get it
Dick that big cosmetic counter needs
Smell as sweet, years ago... Bad

To have a
Kill
The beauty part

Will beg to differ...
Packaged high-tail generated by editors
Lipo-sucked charms of an actress ruin it for me.

LITTLE RHAPSODY

All the criteria seem to disappear
when we discover them to be a hoax, your wishes

balanced on a skillful dime
which tinkers down the hallway to ineptitude,

a hallway which we discover to be
that in which tempests flounder, as if in time,

where the tempest herself may be seen
or merely wished, in one of her famous contractions,

that cubist exercise in economy,
the language of saints when they crave privacy

or true obscurity in the brushes
fired as they may be with illegitimate prayer,

some gaudy garment one has tossed
to the street, but which a gust has purposefully carried

and lifted to high windows, a sonnet
by which you have fashioned your interesting criteria.

LETTER

As it seems you've never forgotten your love for me, which is unfortunate, as I am only a reminder of your other loves, this is yours to keep.

And your other loves are lively, too, in all urban areas they are teeming and in parks they are sleeping.

I understand there is cause in your concern, and as I've latched onto it, we've motioned to each other to dance (which is our fault) and we thought that was it—a dance—but it is more.

You remember me.

This is only a visit, but we are still talking.

And other figures seem like figures from Blake to you, seeming to step lightly and glowing with meaning, so much meaning.

We, both of us, agreed that it is something seasonal, having to do with something in the air and not in the eye.

But you needed that more.

And even the seasons are not matters for the government or geographers but are matters of commerce.

That means we should know about it.

How I would love to step up the stone steps leading into a house in which there is a family and comfort, and possibly even my family?

These last days have been wonderful, and you have been a part of it, certainly.

DIARY ENTRY

I seem to have fucked myself up so much
it's hardly a question anymore of shocking vistas.
The lands slide away into rivers
which stand up, then, at the end of the valley
nonsense-like, though holding a number. So you have to
talk to it.

There are attitudes which seem to push and adjust
themselves around you, and criminally eye
the dollar which seems loosening between your knuckles, so
knuckle-like, you become a fist. This does not help.
This does not even get a page in the catalogue.

It floats down the river, too, with all the muck and the rest.

Feigning holiness doesn't work.
The eagle-eyed always seem to startle themselves
into consciousness, then
commuting in from all corners of the globe to become
(suddenly) eloquent. Vagabondage in this pristine chamber

leads to the overwhelming mile... it must be learned.
You get yourself all shot up like a president.

HOLE

A poem is
not like a painting, since
there is no sense
of achievement: since
a poem has to
be remembered: not
like a painting,
which is an object.

Though one can
paint poems, and one
can write poems
about paintings, to
destroy a poem, you
have to burn paper, to
destroy a painting:
canvas.

Which, of course, has been
done before, so
it seems I am getting no-
where with this poem, which
will be thought of
as a hole-in-space, which
again, has been done
in painting.

Now

I lie in bed
this night of March
the twenty-third
after two aspirin
failed to stop this whirring
James Schuyler did
and ordered it
into this poem
marvelous! which you see
here: creepy
dawn is a chock-a-block
of night away, and

I'll awake
inspect my lungs
and scold the cat
to which I'm allergic: I
don't have to be afraid
of dying tonight
seeing as I'm
merely sick, but manag-
ing quite nicely, with
my insulin. Not
good matter for poetry, but
whatever is
deserves to be chucked

out
the door with
yesterday's papers
yesterday's sophists
and other important
facts, not the good ones:
the muddied umbrella,
the walking stick,
and in golf news...
In golf news
all that you choose
is to stay home.

AFTER ASHBERY

I. Again

Your poem continues

Marching on, fatally as in the first ecstasy
Of the scrupulous way you once arranged your clothes
Before waking. And we are referring to that colorform
Sun, that vital repast, the dreamy syllogisms
Cornered on the way home from school, from which you got
Your milk money. It's over there in the juniper box
Your chloroform swab and knee-pads, your tickets
To the march, your masks which are only
Factory objects. But I am not fooling you. If you
Fail to meet me half way, well that's your dumb luck.

You probably shouldn't
Have made it anyway. But don't think that. There are
Plenty of reasons to continue surfing, and surfacing, plainly
One individual who will declare itself from the field
And make things honey, make things a taste test which
You never fail. You are underestimating the church I give you?
There is always some sort of bouncing ball on the highway
With a figure like a trigonometry, and some other savioral
Grace. It will want to conform you. Well,
There. You don't find that the morning's just thrilling
After bacon and eggs, and it truly is splendid
The drowned liana you find on the curbside, curled into
A little ball? So keep thinking that. So you keep thinking,
And the wafting nonsense and the syllables just picking

Your nose will upset you
As I upset you.

2. For Change

Forgotten. Amused. The shining tinkling bells
Of some sand-swept chimera fashions for your vision
A turning of stone, a feeble entreaty
Rocketing from the stars this sable night. You don't believe it.
There is nothing in this world and all, nothing that's quite
Your own. You own up to it. And of
The primitive spires which promote the last galaxies,
The simpler lessons of the dwarf, the constant
Itching which is divine, and is complete, and is there already,
You won't take them: that is not your hunger. Only for
The tender pink sight of the child in the long grass
Can you muster excitement, for the vision
Pure in technicolor of the unfettered slippage
Between this thing and that, that unsure of its hands,
Shamelessly inaccurate, and foaming at the lips:
A travesty. There is some properness
Ogling from the sidelines which inevitably guides the line,
Forgotten but always a consequence, sure of
Some reverent place in the fixings of the scene grown wild:
There is credence in that shopworn smile. So don't
Fret it, Freddy, this night of no ill-will,
This poorly translated memoir from that Russian convict
Who examined the globe of the orange, who slit
Accidentally, a thumb, who held that finger to heaven
And formed in his curious thoughts an image of sanctity.

3. Petit Poème

Dolorous sighs, sleek features, but I am
Always happy in this truck, I've got
Plenty to say for it. I ignore the raven. Yes,
It is true this speckled surplus has been provided
By one of your admirers... sitting at the bar
With an eye in the mirror, and a perfect
Lucky Strike. No prime contender
But waiting is always a holiday in places like
This, forgetful of other holidays. Now the
Step turns to caramel, and after
Strange wads, unfinished paragraphs
Sticking in the toaster, that it overruns, it is
No fun, no more. Sing a new song, write
The letter to that girl whose poem you missed
As much as you read it, and wanted it, and yet
The connections were severed. No flight
That day, the clouds were revealing
New seaside properties for these talents of ours,
New inklings of stars and they felt avoiding
Its company was the only proper thing to do,
So we stayed down. Let's not spend much time here.

4. This World

Take the turning star, put it between your eyes. There, you
are free. After the squalls
Harbored in your heart as your presence began to fail you,
the plain melodies
Of popular culture began to wane, and began to be replaced
with something irreplaceable:
We give thanks. Surely something unbelievable happened.
Family photos
Transformed into the bases of literacy, and the foundations
of the home
The foundation of the next generation, which with ax and
hoe
Profess in the wings that there are cities inside the needles,
and minds
Between each atom. It was so simple as to have made us look
ridiculous
And foster like a healthy heart the bland tendernesses of
comments, of life
In the varied mind, and, as this may be getting to become
auspicious,
A life in the sidereal valleys where they play basketball and use
Nothing short of semen to win their game. These embryonic
youths, these tigers
Are the stuff from which beginnings are fashioned, along
with every other girl
Who wanted to stick her thumb with a fractured three-iron,
but couldn't, for this
Is a comedy. Write smaller, I need more paper. You need
more sugar. So

Long has it been since we've been truly fascinated with texts,
that love
Itself is going to be doled out, like in wartime, and we will
measure this
By the bed sheets hung with the washing and what tints
them. So very few
Wait in the lobby for the autographs, and would prefer a
neat handshake
And not even a smile or a promise, but a somewhat worthless
feel, and we think:
Ah, now I've something done. Take the wall down, put it in
the car. For next
On the list is a recipe for adventure, and we notice that this
list, too,
Has a copyright which expired sometime before hieroglyphics,
and we are not interested,
We thumb for a decent taxi to take us farther, even farther,
and fashion
Quatrains like there was no tomorra, versos and quartos like
A fainting fit with toilet paper which had everybody dazed,
and wanting a little
More. You got it. In Germany, the Schwitters home was
privately destroyed
And all those nothing canvasses returned to high heaps, and
a flash of a deadpan
Smile sufficed to reintegrate the bitten hearts with that comet
That sails so peaceably in the sky, and creating junk. But it
will never
End. How 'bout tonight? I know a wonderful place, by the
Rue des Ternes,

A macrobiotic place with a dwarf and ruler, it is called World
History.

5. Calypso

And finally you are left with your bland consolations
To compel you, and all the dowdy mysteries
Are the signposts passing by, the typical play of syntactics
On your weather-beaten forehead, the one with the sprained
back.

And your mother, *mia madre*, a delinquent in her time
Shakes down the fakir for information on the next recital
Who's gonna be there, what will they play, is it gonna be
You? But you don't care, you can't. The tripling
Surprises which are peeking through the back screen door
As you read the paper, the Situations Wanted, with your feet
propped

On a chair, are contacting you
For a position with its nose in the air, and you plainly
Consider it. That is, they know what you are thinking, they
can tell
Your hair bunched up like so, how else could it have gotten
that way?

And we are all convalescing, that's what the news is, with our
loves

Safely concealed in our pasts to avoid the examination
Of the magistrates, the one with the lawn mower, the one
with the hips.

You were formerly on the edge of a dream, and looking down
You realize it was filled simply with marbles, which constitutes
a beginning

But never congealing so now it seems like tattered ends

We are considering. Oh, do not take it personally. It is merely
the finale
Of the dance, the hardening into softness, and the words a
little difficult
To wail from the lips, to chuck in the tubercular sublime
with a visage like an
Emptying siphon. I don't know, but I've been told
The pregnancies of this world are scheduled for reexamination,
We can't be sure what got in it, but if it is
False, why then it is sheer nonsense, a plagiarist's retreat
Into the star-gilded couplet of what you plainly are, and the
more factual circumstance.

VERL

Londres, 5 juillet 1873

I can't get you out of my mind though you are so near my heart my spotted elfin an academy of tears stands before you though we have not yet begun to incite the shimmering of your visage when you disappear down an uncharted corridor and become enamel. For the fancy dresses and balls mean nothing to me the crinolines and bagpipes murderous calamities and foods that make you a man nor even the scholarships to health provided you not be there my lone consideration incredible virtue that you are. I mean nothing in the failing light of my incestuous macabre can ever replace you though there are a mother's promises oh please come back.

WORDS FOR JACKSON POLLOCK

A curious distaste for celebrity
The britches keeping it down
The welling up of fingered souls
Populated train of conspiracy
I cannot see that in that range
Spring of heightened-from-life evidence
Two bits for a passage into there
My smock was no bargain for it
Formerly never to be discarded
And the mica flakes collected too
They needed a name for the library

HOLIDAY

Voilà la jeune rue...

“Zone”—Guillaume Apollinaire

i.

Whose red hair brings me a place in this
Cycling in the moonlight the color of my interest
I move like brushes to eliminate the walls
I such a distance from the room with supplies
The crowbar the necklace the loop with my scenes
Now to do it now to not hey I know these kids
I stock up on solace and remove to the lakes
Lucrative propaganda though shame in this region
I but a phantasm in these circuitous gales
Friends from the dimmer stops a fright after hours
A dog washing in puddles though Hank is alive
Now I think of murder in the dog food aisle
Pummeled to the sweet sense of knowledge after all
After all it is the crises we scratch and fear
An ominous lucky stripe doodled above my box
And over you dear red head I can straight remember
Like wonderful Sandy Koufax and Mr October
I floor it to the manor where the docks are still
The possums free to touch for this is nature
Ubiquitous excessive all the things of an ology
Another realm one rears like American history
Knowing my way and signing checks like a fixture
I to snack on Cheetohs to contemplate my livery

Dumb to the Cajun sounds and crux like a theory
He who dormant as an apostle stands admiring
Centipedes of casual sense winding my waking hours
And take me to your stables I cry out suddenly
Though being committed to you the gulls the rushes

ii.

Burst through with the assurance of second sight
And a riveting applause for the redeeming giant
Crowds the vales like split peas and lost joys
The task I will admit was bully in this sense
The condescending policies forming only wholes
The sandals tracking to bedrooms probably sand
And just coming in like that without even knocking
Discussions never coming to the diaphanous kings
Who personified alone the obsessions of this land
The harmless seeming nowhere who know where to go
The cheetah reading papers who was such a good scout
So I was tired and saw perched upon the ledge
The trophy you had cauterized like a stubborn family
Seeming to be neither too late nor even enough
The talent but a prince though drool with the man
And afterwards the rain seeming quite the same
We emptied our pockets before the famed sunshine
The sporadic brilliance filling only the holes
Thus adding to our sport but not ever claiming
To be fairly indicative of the precepts of this town
Clockwise and hungry to the left of an opinion
Naive and approaching like a lyrical syringe
To be prudent and amiable making for fake cadences
And I for the borders that were rolling sweets
And the planes being grounded but for rolling mists
I could not help but wonder about the television
Set like a dim-witted child in front of the television
Juvenile in the next room as if the past were recommended

iii.

And you who are auburn-headed I have said
Survived the policing of the grounds to the palaces
Nut-shell sunshine but you were recommended
And the fossils making jewelry in their own images
Now to fool you now to not the great pretenders
Spontaneous exercise of the half-moon its whole distances
We disturbed not a single hair when we came alive
The very green of the turf we leave unvisited
To fail you and to please you we will entertain you
Tactics considered in bowling alleys being sure
Being the very special meat of the seventies
And a very special meat indeed because of the magazines
I am not sure there is a dock comes after this
The spectral will of the sun on my paisley watch
And Kafkian parables parading like laundromats
Dear I am very unsure of the Wawa or we are there
You truly dreamy though we carp and exist
And contemporize ourselves with Goo-gone swatches
Fashionable entrances being more prone to decay
The Bible tract seeming to cave it all in
Tomb of the radical despots tooling it all over
A fragment of a hair of Genghis Kahn which explodes
The chimneys coming down finally in this dead-end town
Swooping in to cull from the sowers their own taxes
To invigorate the mind its repressed sensibility
Where I have wandered too close a spotted million
Tapped me on the shoulder I said God bless you and a
Sudden flaking commenced and then a chorus and a Holiday

THE LAST POEM IN THE WORLD

The last poem in the world
is left out in the rain.
She has a name
and is failing to call.
The streets are filled
with broken pieces.
All the pieces are broken, I hear,
so I don't mind.

I am trying hard to complain
but can't, they are so cold.

So how to explain
that my sister spends her nights
out of house, in another
room,
her failure to communicate?
I am unsure enough of
the stillness of the night
and mistake it for misanthropy.

I am trying now to practice
beyond understanding.

The last poem in the world
has the name of my sister.
She is silent, and tall,

but actually laughs quite loudly.
I am waiting for the door
to open to her,
this house is so silent
(including her laughter).

I awake some mornings frozen
with no knowledge of the night.

LANDSCAPE FOR TWO OR TREE

after Robert Duncan

1.

My mother is a would-be surrealist
and I her treading falcon, by the shore.
She'd nurture me into all goodness
and prank me into shrinking certain welts.
My mother is a would-be herbalist, too,
thanking distant cousins for purchased bulbs.

2.

Thanking distant cousins for purchased bulbs
my mother is a would-be surrealist.
My mother is a would-be anarchist, too,
dreading bold Falconis, by the shore.
I thank me they are spurning planned welts
she's nurtured in my mind, beyond goodness.

3.

She nurtured in my mind burnt goodness.
Thinking distant cousins certain bulbs
she thinks they're for the plants of burning welts.
My mother thanks would-be surrealists
for when they dread Falconis by the shore
my mother sees they're would-be anarchists, too.

4.

My mother sees, in the woods, anarchists, too.
She nurtures a blind, perfect goodness
for when they dread Falcons, by the shore.
Thinking distant cousins distant bulbs
my mother thinks of old, would-be surrealists
and thanks me for my planting hurting welts.

5.

and thanks me, also, for the planning of curtain felt welts.
I disagree, but woody anarchists, too,
my mother thinks are would-be surrealists.
She nurtures a blind, perfect goodness.
She thinks the distant lights are distant bulbs
slow to spread their falcons, by the shore.

6.

I grew to dread falcons, by the shore.
Also, thinking of the planning, certain welts
were thinking dipstick diptychs distant bulbs.
I disagree, but wood-sprite anarchists, too,
she's nurtured in a blind, perfect goodness.
My mother's shrinks are would-be surrealists.

7.

And would a surrealist be by the shore
enraptured in goodness were not welts,
too, the plan of my mother, that dim bulb?

Juvenilia

FROM *THE AENEID*

Aurora rose in the meantime;
surging, she left Ocean.

Through the gates

the forms of the select youths, bathed
in light, went

with thick nets, and tipped spears, and
then

the Massylian horsemen! the sharp-nosed strength

of hounds! All forth
in a straight rush.

The queen

dallies

in her chamber.

The foremost of chieftains of Carthage, those first

men, await

her

at her doorstep, and

arrogant in gold and scarlet, foaming at
the chain bit, kicking dust, her steed

also stands.

Finally, before the
hot crowd, the queen makes her entrance.

Enclosed in Sidonian cloak, with colored
fringe, her hair

is bound in gold;
she wears a golden quiver,
and a golden brooch holds fast

a purple cape.

With like pride,
beside her Ascanius goes, bouncing with big glee,

beside him the towering
Phrygian cohorts, and
in that group, he most splendid,

before other most graceful
Aeneas, who comes

with his line of troops, which he joins to hers
an ally.

Just as

Apollo, when he deserts Lycia, in winter
Xanthus'

floods
frost over-ridden. Just as

that god, who visits the land of his mother
Delos;
just as he churns the chorus, just as he sparks

the dance! Cretans and Dryopes
take part in this dance!
the Agythyrsi

with painted flesh! round
the alters. Just as
Apollo, who walks

in silence
the high ridges of Cynthus, and bands
his hair, with twisting

fingers, in green fronds
(though his spears
make chatter on his shoulder):
just so goes

Aeneas:
nimble as that god, with like glory on his face.

And when they have gained
their mount
on the height of the peaks, in pathless thicket:

Behold! the
she-goat jumps down

“ENVISION...”

Envision, in the
arena, lax Zeus
bleeding each wrist
for the lost music,
pale Zeus. The
yellow child,
knee-bent at his
side, smiles,
conjures dragons.
Fitful queens,
bosomless, their
black pools of
want
exceeding to rivers. Ever-
green spires
punching pinholes
in the blue milk
of sky.

The
procession is
tolling, boredom succeeding
that spent way. The
child has jacks in
each eye. He
will not confess
murder of Zeus.

MYSTIC FRAGMENT

Babel creeps an arm
shaking Minos' rattle,
taking children green
turning them to cattle.

Zeus in ennui
bleeds a soporific
stench from open wrist
—deliberate music.

Griffins in the air
drop the daily Dis
punctually to spare
punks from great bliss.

RETURNS

Fiction betraying
found outside the
 whole life
not entertaining
 not quite
 home to many
expected inhabitants
creeps to my cognizance.

Never betraying
past or present
 then found
fatally boring
 old ground
 evanescent
assurance of interest
past the first dinner guest.

Wondrously lying
my progression
 here or
trust not denying
 the door
 in digression
an eye on the prior cares
then to the victory stairs.

Foolishly paying
some attention
 the oaths
pledged by the weighing
 high hopes
 minus mention
the yawning inconsequence
counter experience.

Insinuating
egotism?
 the sort
all to berating
 mean sport
 of the schism
between face and content
wielded like armament

not to regard spring
illustrative
 to pains
cautiously inching
 from rains
 to the plaintive
remember the sacrifice
witness my paradise.

OPHELIA

The essence of Ophelia who
thanked the skein of Hermes' fire
who found the trailing to be true
of this quick and solid fire
who reveled in consistency
of a blank illumined sea

The essence of Ophelia who
danced the pilgrim's dance of life
who found the falling to be true
of a wide and tended life
who celebrated ignorance
of determinating chance

The essence of Ophelia who
wept a state of common bliss
who found the flowing all untrue
of a pure and honest bliss
who honestly unreconciled
viciously denied the child

The essence of Ophelia who
spoke of an accepting place
who found the picture to be true
of a whole and other place
who ambitiously conspired
to provide what is desired

JAZZ

The fingering of time in jazz
like weather in a tonic taken deep
awakes the stifled comic from his sleep
 the comic who in dance
reorganizes space with female hands
is now the swaying branch and singing leaf.

The sky is now the pattern leaf
the wind is now the professor of jazz
the cold is touch of mitigative hands
 the well which is not deep
in pulses strong and weak will keep the dance
forever, now, until the crowded sleep.

Who wishes when in ready sleep
to fall to frozen ground like reddened leaf
participate in winds and in the dance
 in time which is not jazz
in space which falters congruously deep
in space which drops like old, rheumatic hands?

The criminal in cautious hands
returns, a painted knight, in sweated sleep
in quest to realize the springs of deep
 inside of branching leaf
which more than symbolize the fated dance
which grow in minds like swingers set to jazz.

Before one takes the hint to jazz
to reassure the mind of hidden hands
of silly feats and turns observed in dance
 in hollows of one's sleep
the step and shudder of remembered leaf
will prove a lesson well and print it deep.

And never in this witnessed deep
have ever two grown souls united jazz
so well as those who like submitted leaf
 are limber in the hands
of midnight guided all too vicious sleep
who as the pitted beast resign to dance.

The suffered dance and deep
respite of sleep define the jazz
like interested hands the fallen leaf.

So
have
you up
there begot
more mysteries of
sounds and confusions
walks and your profusions a
new way to take up your interests
to conform with my inevitably demanding
self? I am lucky there is no compromise, for
here in this dock, with no one to talk to but the old
vague and possible selves which clutter these
drawers I am not too keen on selling so
I hold onto it, again in spite of
the fact of all the silence
issuing from the spot
I leave it Shrine
of Solace I
simply
call
it

I
nor
you nor
anybody who
sleeps in these
woods could ever keep
promises from these trees (as
the forest is a lonely place) to deny
it your favorite story or the
joke for which you're
famous would be
a thing too
cruel a
too
limited
function of
confession that
will bring about true
isolation That is many things
weighing down on the heart and on the
trees so all the forest be in
a dark which is false
as there is the
space where
lie you
and
I

“YOUR BEAUTY...”

Your beauty, or the figure
of it, shaded by word
processor, now supine
on a grandpa bed of iron
frame and inhibition,
the metal clock and calen-
dar set teetotaler-
ish on the safe dresser,
smart head to the magnet-
ed interest in that
central mission, is simple
like the macrocosm symbol
in my book, the dream.

Twisted in earnest drama
ill-spent on the crowd
of kids in Sunday tow
by aunts, lisp and muscle
spasm, rewards of fickle
day may seem unsettling
like fish as compromising
meal at Lent, or dance
tainted with circumstance.

A DREAM FOR WINTER

after Rimbaud

Winter, in a railroad carriage
to Niagara (pink, with blue cushions, and
sleepily in the corners,

kisses, with goblin smiles, howling “Stretti!”)
We will leave together, and we
will be comfortable.

You’ll close your eyes, you don’t want to see
“the evening shadows with mocking faces! those snarling
monstrosities! black elves

and black wolves!” I ask
if you don’t want a cigarette. Then you feel
your cheek scratched. A kiss

like a mad spider, runs round your neck.
You scream, “get it!,” you bend your neck.
Your neck, quick! I see, and I soon realize

that it will take a long time
before we really grab that creature
who laughs, and travels a great deal.

HOUSEBOAT

Roger Rabbit kicks off a sneaker.
Lofting through the air,
the sneaker seems to land in a plate of
cookies,
oatmeal, Oreo, but
with a quick turn,
we see the nose sink in Yosemite Sam.
The shoelaces hang from his mouth like spaghetti.
Understand

the ways beneath the ways.
The houseboat sings when the Delphic waves
prick a lost strand in the consciousness
fixing the stare as a soulless, dark eminence.
But nothing in the houseboat seems to stay.

With the refracted
light through the crystalline
proprioception
of the vamp donning her Maybeline,
the schooler with legs like Bruce Jenner,
the priest with his
CDs in his corvette,
the housewife who, apotheosized,
is a demon who should not bleed your eyes
—all, now a
trick of the light.

Know the curtain
closing on our first days
when we were taught
reality really does not matter.

In the silent
forum of our earliest thoughts
one could hear
a hairpin drop
under the shattering tea-tray's disaster,
under our first saint's lisp.
Were it a lesson:
veil the creature with a neon fiction.

PETITION

from Emile Nelligan

Queen, will you assent to unfurl just one curl,
One billow of your hair to the blades of scissors?
I want to inhale just one note of the birdsong
Of this night of love, born from your eyes of pearl.

My heart's bouquet, trills of its thicket,
In there your spirit plays its roseate flute.
Queen, will you assent to unfurl just one curl,
One billow of your hair to the blades of scissors?

Silken flowers, perfumes of roses, lilies,
I want to return them with a secret envelope.
They were in Eden. One day we'll take ship
On the Ideal ocean, where no hurricane swirls!

Queen, will you assent to unfurl just one curl?

THE SHIP OF GOLD

from Emile Nelligan

There was a mighty ship carved of massive gold:
Its masts touched the azure, on the unknown seas;
The Cyprus of love, hair loose, with nude torso
Stretched herself on its prows, in excessive suns.

One night, however, there came the great danger
In those clever oceans where the Sirens sing;
This horrible shipwreck inclined the ship's bottom
Toward the depths of the abyss, unchanging grave.

There was a ship of gold, and its diaphanous flanks
Displayed its rich hold to those profane sailors,
Disgust, Hate, and Nerves... they split it between them.

What is left of the ship from that so brief Tempest?
What has my heart become, but a deserted ship?
Alas! it has foundered on the vacuum of the dream.

COMPLAINT OF PIERROT

from Jules Laforgue

Oh, that model soul
bade me her adieu
because my eyes... too?
 lacked principle.

She, such tender bread
(now a Wonder loaf)
...typical! gives birth
 to one more brat.

For, married, she is
always with a guy
who *is* a “nice guy,”
 hence his genius.

PIERROT (ONE HAS PRINCIPLES)

from Jules Laforgue

The girl decided (oh in her vain way!)
“I love you, simply, for yourself.”
O la la! what conventional cribs!
 just like art,
but let’s have calm
and indulge in our capitalist ideals!

Then, she whispered to me, “I wait...
Here I am, but I just don’t know,”
her gaze affected by milling moons.
 O la la! was
it just for prunes
we attended, in our town, the school?

Then, one beautiful evening, perfectly
ill-starred... the moment just right!
the girl dies. O la la! now that’s
 original song!
You will be reborn
as we know, some time on the third day.

if not in person, then in the streams
and smells of spring months, taking
up more fools in quest of the Zaïmph
 veils of the Gia-

conda, and the Skirt.

I may possibly be one of those fools.

TOTO MERUMENI

from Guido Gozzano

I.

With its rambling gardens, vast rooms, and its
seventeenth century balconies overrun with verdure,
this villa seems like something from my verses,
yes, the typical villa from a Book of Letters.

The villa thinks, sadly, of better times. It thinks
of gay parties beneath century old trees, of
illustrious banquets in immense dining rooms,
of the festive salons raped for their antiques.

But where, in olden times, came the House of Onsaldo,
House of Ratazzi, House of Azeglio, House of Odone, now stops
a sputtering automobile, trembling, twitching,
and some hairy stranger walks to knock the Gorgon.

A barking is heard, a passing... cautiously the door
opens... in this cloistral and barrackish silence
Toto Merumeni lives with his "convalescent" mother,
his schizophrenic uncle, his gray-haired great aunt.

II.

Toto is twenty-five years old, melancholic,
quite cultured, with a taste in the inkwell works;

slight in brains, slight in morals, and scary
in his hunches... he is a true child of our times.

Not rich, one day he decided to “peddle my wordlings”
(there’s his Petrarch!), an embezzler, a gazetteer...
He chose exile. Liberated, he reflects presently
on his follies. We’re safer not to print them here.

Oh, he’s not bad. To the poor, he sends money
to keep them going... to his friends, a basket of fruit.
He’s not bad. Students come to him for a topic;
for connections... he’s a service to most emigrants.

Cold, conscious of his self, his faults,
oh, he’s not bad. He’s the Good Man sketched by Nietzsche:
“...in truth, I must deride that fawning creature
called good... simply because he lacks claws...”

After draining studies, he runs to his garden, plays
with his sweet friends, the earth inviting...
His sweet friends are: a caterwauling blue jay,
a pussy cat... and Makakita his little monkey.

III.

Life had taken from him all his early promise.
For years he dreamed of loves that would not call.
Despairing, he conjured a princess, an actress;
today he loves the cook... she is eighteen years old.

When the house sleeps, this girl, barefoot,
a fresh chill plum in the day's first light,
comes to his room, with lips to his bounces
onto him... he possesses her blessed and supine.

IV.

Toto cannot feel. Some latent, untamed illness
dried up the prime founts of his sentiments;
analysis and sophistry have made of this man
what flames make of a house in healthy winds.

As that ruin, however, that has seen fire
produces gladiolas with colorform flowers,
his parched soul loosens, oh little by little,
a scattered efflorescence of consolatory verses.

V.

So Toto Merumeni, after sad events,
is near grace. He alternates research and rhyme.
He is locked in, meditates, expands, explores, understands
the Life of the Spirit which he never understood.

For the voice is small, and his treasured art
immense... and because Time (even as I write!) flies...
Toto writes apart, he smiles, sees a future.
He lives. One day he was born. One day he dies.

SEVEN YEAR OLD POETS

from Arthur Rimbaud

And the mother, having shut the book of exercises
walked off proud and quite satisfied, but she misses
in the blue eyes of the child, the brow of eminences,
the young soul of the child given over to repugnances.

Oh the entire day he had sweated obedience,
so intelligent; however, some black tics, now grown
in his character... prove him to be bitter, duplicitous.
In the shadows of halls draped with moldy tattered
curtains, he walked with poked tongue, fists
in his groin, and in his closed eyes would see spots.
A door which opened onto evening: by the lamp
one would see him, upstairs, gasping with his cramps
in a gulf of light pouring from the roof. Summers
especially, conquered, stupid, he remained stubborn,
and would shut himself up in the coolness of the latrines
and sit there, tranquil, and let his nostrils breathe.

When, absolved of day's odors, the small garden
behind his home, in winter, brightened by the moon,
supine at the foot of a wall, in marl capsized,
rubbing for visions his already swimming eyes, and
he listened to the swarming of the mangled espaliers...
So sad. Few could he call his friends, just
those sick children, bare-headed, runny-eyed,

who rushed to hide their muddy, jaundiced fingers
in their clothes stinking of runny shit and quite old.
They spoke with the smutty gentleness of morons!
And if, coming in, surprised by his filthy pity,
his mother frightened him: his tenderness, so deep,
nestled itself profoundly within her surprise.
Very good. She had that blue regard: that lies.

At seven he wrote novels, romances about life
in the desert, where freedom in exile shines!
Forests, suns, rivers, and savannas! He found
images in travel journals, where he saw, blushing
the Spanish girls laugh and the Italians. When
she, in a flower-print dress, wild, eyes brown
eight years old! the daughter of the workers next door,
when she came, the little brute, and then she hurdled
from the corner onto him, shaking those terrible curls!
and he was under her, he nibbled her soft behind...
for the worker's daughter never put on her panties...
by her kicks, her claws, her fists, he was badly bruised.
He carried the taste of her flesh back to his room.

He feared the livid Sundays of December
when, on a mahogany table, pomaded,
he read the Bible, the one with the cabbage-green edges;
his dreams oppressed him each night in his room.
He didn't love God; rather, the men, those low
spirited, in overalls, whom he saw return to the burbs.
Or the town criers, who with three beats of a drum
made the crowd roar at the policies, and chide the fools.

He dreamed of amorous prairies, where swells
luminescent, crystal perfumes, pubescences of gold
would make his disturbance calm... and promote his flight!

Because he savored especially the darkest matters
when, in his room, with its shut blinds and all bare,
high and blue, he was caught in its acrid humidity,
he read his novel, he worked on it again, meditating,
full of its heavy ochre skies and drowned forests,
full of the clearest flowers, then astrally unfolded...
Dizziness, wreckages, routs and endless pity! and
when those tortured voices rose from his corner streets,
all alone... he crouched in his miles of beached canvas,
yet unbleached... but announcing its sail with a violence!

“LE MOT JUSTE”

I.

The gay tomcat poled
ferry music, its hind
legs the attraction.

2.

These furry limbs, once
of mistresses, now
of distant children.

3.

The boast escaped, around
one corner, patiently
the town realigned.

JESSICA

Jessica wheels around, not
through air, through memory.
This decaying surface rests on my mind
troublesome, as if growing.
This growth is in recognition
until all is decayed, then it's gone.

What have you, that a lonely dancer
slowly cuts plains, until light
free in space, and time, instant
and then drawn out, is subtracted.
Crawling along, the desert is
hard, quiet, but not lacking.

Tease, and then weave, into memory.
The cloud is a white sheet—silhouette
of body, dance at will! softly.
In a second, fear hinders, don't
worry! in the absence, ignorance.
In decline, beauty snaps her reigns.

LOVE'S LABOR

If this Christmas you feel
nothing but unique gall
at ceremonies which seem
the indecipherable sum
to a human mathematic:
the human mind is stuck
in Thought's thorns and pricks
—might as well get him socks!

If through winter's mist
shouts the routine Must
and pleasures for the kids
don't taunt experienced heads
like color for a sister's
nightgown, or dear brother's
difficult taste in hats
or brand-names for the aunts

If for the special racket
you finger the vacant pocket
swear one time you had it
now some bureaucrat's got it
to finance a mutual war
—if in department store
your spiteful credit card
whispers what you most feared

If you have marked dissent
of a conscience sorely bent
by measures you have taken
to service each guest wine
—though not wine for a king
the mind now fully swung
to conclude the season's ill
with a long, long-distance call

—Then, presuppose a pass
a lucky, explored course
between the gift of chance
and awkward social silence
—a poem is what you mean:
the riddle of deliberate man
whether object or good dead
is solved by the schemer's word.

Fact's Bird

POEM

Thank the gales
tempestuous monk ails
perfumed
 pose pales
in rain

Down has crammed in
fist in
limber pock
 lock, and
wrist

Did a
an of
storm
 billing claimness, waste
whiles as
 tote

foal

Cold as code is
ode, meek and
me
 aureole
bull quarter

Doodler
greet
long after

SCATTERED NORM

fashion faults
its stoned gnats

guarantee swizzles zillions
bathes to maybe take it
home, frame illumined
in story's billing groats
perchance to wean, prophesying
odalisks of
nuts
 the sure tired

lay me down
ordinary people
maxed to the role dole

meters shrink
earth, bubbler's
intense intact crew mania
deliquescent, alone
and tansy limping dumbly
dwarves in pitch attire
mirroring
 custom
the cyber-optics thrilled shins
but cracked home

built
surly, or
musty
hued

maybe makes it sanely
or you

POEM

Now
o sweet question
there you
go
I have memorized my tears

the materials are agonistic realizing

Ple-
num of horse
regret
if berries are metonymy???
o sean

regal trap

Dapper dance damned the prolix quip
grouper grouper
o heiss!!!

vegetative
si'

Frankincense and myrrh
overlapping household considerations
o
there you
go

rare and quarantined

NOT SO CLEAR

Say that these
migraines cause
gutters

Say
these houses are closing
shutters

My

memory is
a tool of
the government, once
equal
in
weight

to rain

on bloodied front step

Take my
dance
last to
survive night

Say that these
things
are

minimal

mineral water fruit and vegetable

Like it or

not as

cousins

we

plagued the dear

with visions

ORACLE

when love
squeaks its
beak

O lime
E egg

THE HISTORY OF WIGGING

Pollock is a mastodon of modest painting
Chirico a master on modern shaking

Mondrian a mastiff on modish Blaking
Picasso is a mastodon of modest ski baking

They're tearing at the insides growing in the park
Peculiar in their excess way shaming lemon ark

Gorgeous as a pencil body slim as a limb
Ganging up on anybody looks like him

Making all the standbys see sky blue
Making all the lubber butts feel bad, too

After all and after all it's because war
I mean a sudden lullaby to charter this before

Grant this an abstract ballast
To navigate insider balance

FACT'S BIRD

Life's
sad a
lie
second. Saur
dining.

Wink
or
over
older
bills
primly
it
heids
Sams.

Hind'f
Oz. S-
hame
its
live pain.

Fickle
 air
 sham, pick
acrid
 stock, as
sic.
 Pig a leg
 can, a
lined
 padre
 flight, can
hick. E
 as
quick, o so
 slow
 butts. Is
it?
 A
 wren surrendered.
A
 emblem rendered. In
doll. Bloom
 in
 sane
helas,
 ditto
thems. Hailed
 a
 cab
hour.

Ce-
 rebral hound
dog, o
 sound dog. On
mix,
 link-
 ing will's
 dastard
poesie: o
 drapes.
 To
never have
 to
 go to
Jersey.

This lo-
tus
bull
sessions can
quake
a
quote. Sure
lick
in
vain,
vagabond, in
land. In
fact.

In
fact.
Shrine
lift, as
like
light list, its
kind. Its
kid.
In
sect.

Did
dandy slim sveltes
limn? In
mural
api-
culture, too
stone, sin
fine. It
o
limpy
quick does
slender
hick
time, pulse
pattern-
ing (a
fit) jus'
nuts. Slowed
chick.
Lion
pylon. Did
"did he?" he
dod
lovely quite, lov-
ely
quite
mic
a dolorous
pine. A
dig quiet

on the
sent, pig
rotor going
stored
time
broad time broad
time.

*An
end station
moves, has
an
end station
Mac, also.
Carriers*

*are credited
panels. Fresh
set John. No
single dominant
theme.*

*Emulation sub-
working. Flex-
er levels
overall throughput will
increase,
based.*

*Router topolo-
gies, hell
examined the approaches to.*

Rog Frillman
President of Bloke Ail Issues.

But our kind are tissues.

Wound a
wand a
ditto
pansy
choke
tuck
bag. I mean
now.

SISTERS OF CHARITY

after Rimbaud

Young
dark, in
twenty
brow
Persia.

Proud
revolve, on
rash
child's
estivals.

Young
in
wounds. All
sister. Is
sits.

Oh
are
ever
pity! Not
breasts! Not hands!

Rock.

Lull. Really.

Ours
pupils (charming
oh).

Blood
ex (hates). Swoons
night
so Ago
all.

Ardent
green
justice
comes. A
woman, born.

By by
the the
sisters, for
science by
arms.

Wounded
staid
pride.
Still. Black.
Coffin.

Call you, you, to. Oh

through
his
vast
ends.

LES ASSIS

after Rimbaud

Pocks
 of old
leprous
 eyes
 like
green
 bags

grafted
 fixed to the
chairs,
 have
them, and
 the
epileptic

skins
 weaved,
sun window's
 snow
 or
toads
 thriving

seats

good. For
them. In
corn.

Which
lights for
them.

Knee
pianists
tambourine,
a
seat, of
love. Waver
rollings.

But, it
ohohoh puff
rage. Open
slowly
champ
a
shipwreck.

They
their
beasts. Their
them. And
you, of
eyes. Bald
again.

Dog
 poisons. Of
 in
funnels.
 Sweat
murders, in
 presence.

What
 fists, to
chins
 up
 tonsils, small
cuffs. What made them
 get up.

A
 fecund
 their little
realm, oh
 crowd
proud. Lower
 a
 sleep, of

ink
 spit. Flies
flight. A
 crouched
 of

corn
penises.

ODE (POR FAVOR)

Where
figments, freely, as
known as
well I'll
bleacher, in
the
icebox (in
short) razing, act
transports, giggling
vice. So
there.

Counter
act. Its
groan. The
Marx. Up
crank. Up
feat.
A
plain
tact.

The
last, name of
Paris, its
shore
rhymes
perchance to
greet (Otto
Dix) a
doll, at
all. Luck's
up.

A

drawer. In which this
picture
pills
nets, a-
greeing fictionally, mails
batters
neglect. The
elect
stet. Miles mac-
filling.

Toll
 meekly
atlas. Bowling
 frilly
bits. Of
 shimmy
satins, it
 jests. Lords
callous (dim
 sank)
 spit
peak.

Humming a
make, a
lax
developed
tint a
sun-
rose trice
postcard
text.

Ogling a
meter's strangled strangely, a-
wake, a
while, of
crime. Mormon curtly bless you'd, in-
ti-
mate, a
warrant
for
its
arrest. Make of this curmudgeon a
pardone
you
shame
off.

Where figments freely
 dwell, I'll have you
obdurate on ice

or holiday that transports giggly
 vice.

Last
 fission, doodl-
ing the
 snakes
 of
granite
 forest.

In-
 sincere-
ly
 forecast, this
blue

 blue
blue

Pontoon
 downed, y
levered
 hit.

Me
 fist, o
Mephisto
 to
 vaulter, up
feet
 cork
 swim (miles

macfilling).

POEM

Shine,
 poet. By that
 hill-
side (kill
 side) of
 leave. To
 rest, is
not rest, to
 Keats. Till
 one, by
thrall,
 make it. A signature.

THE LION

Time
was
 ending

This
 blue
cloud
next

to an
orange
 sky
a
beautiful
queen

*the silk
tedium
 of a*

*kiss
on the
forehead*

It's
wrong
to
paint

lost
in the
woods

NOW THAT WE'RE FROM CALIFORNIA

Style has
changed. Infor-
mation
 packets, cards
 neat,
scrofulous.

 In a
 bag, lozenges.

 That:

the new
 saying. A walk in sunshine. California.

Crabs
 wait,
 skitter, and
garbage
 wharves, no
 longer
nest. Now
 that we are all from California.

Someone
 thinking: her
 films.

Player
scherzo, whistles
quick in
lime
drink. Tainted good:
amiss,
three-tossed
sides. Sinking tankers, and
jackets. That
were sick and rescue
workers.

Blue jays, crews,
scraped
pennies
and flew. Someone was blue.

Selling bomber: mile
per
hour,
knifed. In winds. Alaskan
sick. Distributing his
tripled
sick.
Plurality was instituted.

Shores, old
brothers. Old
space. Balked in
each. Diligence.

Name it
now (but on) takes
to care
its
catalogue. In
the end, is this
raw
conceal them
clause. Praxis
of everything, that
stops
you,
meaning remonstrative.
In the
stress.

But
damned if it's
veritable (with
lowered, the
curtain
coast) enemies,
friends. A
plangent
purchase. That
runs with it. Sweet but nay-saying,
foundered.

She'd
To despise it ef-
ficiently (timed
code, enough
fortified) banked on
nobody: plurality
lines. Cracked
and that
was
true. How lengthen,
serialize
love? How
alter? That
the
coast (true) exchanged. She
followed, was
something
strong. Thinking to her apartment.

And thinking return to her apartment.

SUNTREADER

Myths of
vain
applauses, in
this
warp factor
six. It's
to Scotty, don't
bring me
no. In
these suns.

It's
of OJ his
lawyers, my
wee

commas, my
sky
roll. Its
chattering.

Oh,
the
Millennium. Tape
diamonds. Clock

its
new
career: mean. To
lock, oh
ticker-tape
end.

I its
Fox
special.

Boughs of
this
wrist climb, its
rain. It
against my
cry
heaven. In-
to the rain-drenched
ear
appraisals
glow. (On can can it's
slightly
aged).

Machine
oh
bourgeois

frightening
Oh
memory. This, the
Berle
horizon.

I
wish, for
rain. That
is narrowing.

SUBURBAN NIGHT

I.

Intelligence of
three verb
 night,
tomorrow king
canceling the
streets: patterns

charged blowing
out: spiraling.

Now: a babe
 shrunk
pillbox form, in
tense charade: somnolent,
vegetating,
 deluxe
sportlessly
careering, in sham

play: in total ice.

2.

Investigative
imagination's
career shrinks from
patterned walls,

the gamecut diamonds.

3.

Pounce: mind
short on taste
but mirroring
one
's suburbs that reach
like spires, plain ads,
all sure homes.
Let us hear talk.

4.

Dragged
forth: into

a pale day's
dialogue

with the pure
mayors.

STATEMENTS ON AESTHETICS

Circle, square,
possible, a
passage—search
exhaustive,

exhumes no
fossilized alembic,

alchemist's forte.

Resources
(discussing).

The new structuralism
cannot un-warp
perversion's singularity.

LOST CANTO

Grammar
group
ducks, to
knees, its
cares. Balancing the
drink-
think
sayers. On
tits, and
mustard
stuff,
fallacies have
lingered. This mystery:
fragmentary.

REMEMBRANCE

Screwy
 strum a
dial of love, o
dial of
 love

that
 often after
seconds seems
acrobatic
 pygmy

rants and
screens

WHITTLE POEM

Listening to the
after hours
a pale lake sheik of
memory
 tries its
stolen latch.
The borrowers close
in on their
failing

fortunes, muttering
wrens, too, climb
apice scaling towers
ordinant
 to wit. Life's
dingle tremors
sanely in its fate.

To wrist a
platinum avowal, wander
close in
single
 luxury
confined, daring the
construct policy of
dittering
 maxim

maids, like
store bunt men

intent on
cringing booking parlors, state
famed,

 tagging socks,
is boring.
That, too, agrees the
costumer, Moloch
faced.

A

dance tumbles
sternly, shattering
all goods
 collected
since prancing time
ended,
 brim
chuckles erected, waxed
obstruct oddities
 stumbled
to their crates,

binging
on mushrooms. It's
silence darns
the growing cake.

Boxed in halogen
cursors, glad of
taste
buds, cant
muffles every fume. A
nicer place
is next to
Nixon's alibi
badgering tool
time,

immer. Gorgeous
is the flattened
rose in
Lucy's
book. Raging
is the aspic
shuffle of
crooks. To
think

and therefore paragon the
smile of
gypsies, and
imitate
in a
steam roll plain
fact, arrogates
the mime,
plunders the

jewelry

of entertainer's engineering

fibers. But

that's a lackey.

Organizations rarely

feel too

hard on

mapping. Aft

of

hours continues. The

buggers

creep,

maxed

totally

on silver-skinned

pajamas,

miner

jokes, and

drinks,

calendars,

open to crass substitutes. One

wonders on

the streak of

Providence. One

wonders

of San

Francisco.

Plumes,
 dragons, the
entire regalia of
distance,
bossed.

AX-

mind racket
can't ear oaths

think down

a
"this is just to tell you" of
kind:

now Brainard
(of elevator
too
quick)

is life of
day

Ceravolo (do

him? a
favorite
Jersey
trial

in it & in

that

“cubo” to make things

shattered &

“futurist” id

terms

id’s) ivy-

factor

chemical o p can

that but

return

oh Rutherford

&

kin

ERE ON...

Jordan! healing
feeling
night's reading:

Howe! Bernstein
interesteen
in ANGUAGE

“other Davis”
Beavis.

at the Marlborough
River at lunch

“bad”
that
past

tense “tease.”

he painted G.

six
ought in

patter-pit, patter-pit

thinking
arduous
balance.

But this is news.

Not pews.
io of achoos.

letter.
cruel fetters
a totally rent matter.

UR GAL

there is nothing much to relax me
only those things that tax me
like Tan

clapping British orchestras
my

the laundromat
to put them in the dryer they're
probably insisting to each other
obsolete

care

*

60's

feel

here in

ion drapes

whims

terribly

side

ere

life as

ward

perm

*

not post-war America anymore
flutter

narrow
corpses

antic

way

*

I'll get up and

! go! show

that is my play

tell o

Saturday

vast

ill

*

eventually there'll be gain in that

SONG

o
in
sever
 plangent
 desire
 inflatable

sweeping
 me with
 that

were
and
oh

dream me
 night
 vacation
like
I am

 is music
 and the hills
arrest it

Furniture Music I

“WE ARE SURVIVING...”

We are surviving on our drugs
(Waldo fed his heart to her)
but goddamn these things anyway!
To feel he could think his heart
through the small cushion!
So long ago! Before polyurethane tabs!
Now she fondles to Tao
(but she couldn't find out how)
dressed in silk Latin finery
(the hands stuck in in her hair).
Afterwards: “They must have gone away...
Beneath the white thighs!”
Back to papa's madness...
Don't be upset if someone removes his plate.
You are still very much ahead.
(That must feel like being alive.)

“IN THOSE FILTHY THIRTIES...”

In those filthy thirties
he was known to hang out in times square
with the pushers and dealers
but imitating bird-sound
from the pigeons that would roost
under his bench, telling stories.
Coming into this, telling out of it,
bunts, crackles, pops, zings
is how they described it, initially,
and the pop elements, of
course, and some of the other stuff;
too many lines, they'd say,
and order a complete duplicate, anyway.

Those were the telling nineties,
typos and all, but he was
known, of course, for going beyond it,
past it, above it, below it,
sometimes reading his W. H. Auden,
poet of the twenties, long forgotten
for being absolutely modern,
the meandering pollen to his mind
falling into this, this crack,
and now, considering Henry Miller
is a new god folk, global and democratic.

“YOU WILL PAY...”

You will pay for this silence
some cartoon cat doth thpit,
and over fifteen years of education,
and thinking about things
(the cat thez)
and never smoking American cigarettes
that you call “American cigarettes,”
and never visiting New Zealand
when we have nearly the same seasons,
only opposite, obviously.
Your celebrated silence
animates my short beard, too.

“PALATABLE TWO-TONED...”

Palatable two-toned democracy
in subway, over struck guitar,
again struck, biblical merci enters
what wondering stops are permitted
here, at the entranceway, a light
cast coldly over the shoulder
ugly as the retinal stuff, magniloquent
parses shelving the lamps, flecks
mesmerized off those faces, and
that would be a “team shoulder” bub
apoplectic variants thereof
they are young, hostile, perjurious
whose vocal chords crisp as dollar
ha’penny blank stare, vitreous eyes
the train entering the mute,
knees shrink, attitudes adjust,
plainly abutting against the sport
fresh from the good aunt’s credit card
pole vaulting that anger,
the blending of reveries archaic.

“A PRAISE OF CULTURAL...”

A praise of cultural land masses
may make the rival a tenuous
projector, split-heeled into heaven,
the sarcophagus of sommeil, lured
safely, one find to the next, a
shattered specificity that creates.
Turning, turning, the wooden horses,
the fat soldier, the fatter
maiden, delirium suffering its simplicity
until fashionably in exile, but
as the scare quotes peek in the retina,
the newer nations under ground...
—Fashion, Major, out of the limelight
what is, between religions here.

“PLUMS FROM THE...”

Plums from the
new style,
 in neon
follicle,
branches,
 splints
domestic
ardors that
 seem modern,
call it
a sketch, un-
 til then.

“I COULDN’T REMEMBER...”

I couldn't remember our journey.
In the palms of my hysteria
I scribble this down: *take out the face.*
An elevator car
that smelled of vomit and disinfectant
black heart of the populace
coming back to ruin perfectly good machines.
Of course. The lavatory
where I avoided perfectly bland conversation,
the most I ever had
in a week or a day, same thing,
but the men were so much shorter than me.
Some of them were graying blonds.
Now dark at five
where elsewhere in the world it hit at six
not augmented by the buildings
unswaying and impressive
prior to their camouflage among slush.
This is why I stayed here
despite dreams of Florence, or Patagonia,
even Halifax, or Tasmania,
the phlegmy throats of the streets riddled
with masculine excuses for not going home.
Who goes home? Some linger
for hours by the death subways, reading
nothing in particular, a magazine
too frivolous to be subscribed to, but choked

for information about an evening's
events. I walk briskly, I
bounce when I walk, even children mock this
with an invigorating liberality
free of the spies that occupy my office
each day until writing at six, when I get here.

“A LITTLE TOO MUCH...”

A little too much feel good philosophy
that has ossified into a pretension.
But I bet her legs against us:
some future antiquarian
will marvel how her leathered cutlets
have bound the scripts which we have been remembered
by. That's some *hardscrabble* vision,
as Provincetown, Cape Cod, elopes with its shadow
darker than Canada, nearly as inflexible
in the scrum of cultural schism:
this dream takes a turn at the forest's end
and finds a basket of heads, not strawberries.

“ONE FOCUSES ON THE HOUSE...”

One focuses on the house, initially,
for it is the outermost social skin
of a moment (provided one is with family).
What is contained in the house is the generally
valuable, though one could imagine
a house that has only half or so of
its volume taken up by the valuable, the other
being trash that has not been gotten around to.

If this is rotten, I'm nowhere, being
in the mood to travel, to write in several languages,
and not to my family. Only the muscular
“lusty” typewriter keeps me going.
Save it for analysis! Does one enter
the house sensing its inherent
meaningfulness; does it radiate security, or is
one absent, lost in there, as elsewhere?

A bus stop? A friend's apartment? How long
does acclimatization generally take?

“TAKE THE BLACK EYE...”

Take the black eye: winter's nerve
twitches, all style and grace
blanches, otherwise, fails to fist
blowing from the horizon, or grasping
bodies to it. The strength stark
bounty, pricks plashing in redolence,
puddles of imagery: so a cat
dreams soundly in this burrow but
not I. I tag this “sprocketed I” as
strumming loudly inward, pieces
piecemeal crowd, arguing several gifts
against it; the puzzle barely fits
the illustration: a crooning boy
naked, knees buckling in the leg: high.

“TRANSLATES THE ANGLO-SAXON...”

Translates the Anglo-Saxon
word for “Mommy” as
“the stock markets plummet”
somewhere within “Dream
of the Rood.” Breast-beating,
he warms the car, for
his weekly go at the
supermarket. Hair-thinning,
waltzing, not limping,
the street lamps light his
cigarette. A credit
card wrapped round his thigh.

“A SONNET’S WORTH...”

A sonnet’s worth of blow now would be fantastic.

“THE BOOK MADE A SOUND...”

The book made a sound that was not its ornament but the necessary byproduct of its creation. Not the scratching of the pen, but the noise outside, was, by necessity, the object of umbrage. The work was convinced of the relative flexibility of its task, as opposed to the bricklayer, or technician, who, by nature, must be efficient. The work was inefficient. And yet the draw of its very appetite, recognized as an imprecision, was a precision.

“THE PRINCE OF SHAKY...”

The prince of shaky, shaky bones
marvels at the permanence
of rain-slicked streets, mothers dreaming
the dinner in the mouths
of men, storefronts un-rampaged,
the coast of cerebral cigarettes, gracing
an unemployed tongue, and cries,
and thinks, and tries.

Therapeutic... a day in the town!
weather scratches balls, sky casts down
nurturing Cartesian winks that
hide, indeed, what the
neighbors think—it is all well, in
excellent health... or exile.
The ground is bass-less, the wires sleep;
foot follows foot like a storied pose.

“WHAT EXCITEMENT...”

What excitement in the primitive heart, with
cigarettes, coffee, Tim Davis's *Dailies*,
it's like blackmailing paradise with a spyglass,
or did I say parricide, it is wet
on the forehead, this approach to bliss practical
like a wedding on a Sunday, or something else
can't think of it now, my ankles twitching.
Someone left the new rag on the elevator
by the olives and heads of cheese,
we had left them out for the party guests to consider,
or help them consider, these vanities
on display for the circuit of miles of civilized canvas,
you take them to the oven and bake them fresh,
nothing's impossible in art-town New York,
though the insidious rag begs to disagree,
decaying like day-old fish in the gaps between the teeth.

“UNTIL THERE’S A DECENT...”

Until there’s a decent substitution
for substitution
my smiles are dependent on my lips,
we’ve eaten them so often by the poolside.

“VANISHED ALL TRACES...”

Vanished all traces of the motherfucker
(words inspired by Eugene Debs)
here, in a spiral-bound notebook, here
on vacation, with the glossy Kenn Knabb...
vision is reeling again, but it's air conditioned
and stamped with venomous approval,
the kind with legs, blurbed (as is the fashion)
though these assays will prove no vowel
ephemeral—indeed, they are the swarm's own eggs
hermaphroditic before hatching, alive
not yet belching, not yet catching the eye...
these words are the portents that will not peg.
But I suggest: one doesn't spell the “life of the mind”
in colors too stark, nor with words too kind.

“SHE ENTERS...”

She enters with a hurt wisdom.
I say, pluck it, and begone,
we are three steps into it,
there is nothing left but style, style.
She argues, then relaxes,
knowing it is about easter and transcendence,
calm with that, and creating
with her words (not mine),
with speech scratchy and mellifluous—
we are thankful for the “insidious” imports
of words underheard,
a sort of catholic loam, invigorating,
engaged in the battle of time,
deep in my losing memory of her.

“IT WAS THE SEA...”

It was the sea that was lucky
and not your mama.
I've thought of invisible loves.
Now, I will confuse myself with regrets.

“TRIPPING, CLEAR SINUSES...”

Tripping, clear sinuses, with nothing
but epistemology to supply this feed,
arrogance and paranoias docilely at bay,
it almost seems a dream of Hakim Bey,
the pirates angling for attention but
on streets I've probably walked too
many times to feel the magic of—lace syllables
spiral down in some other vision, some other
monad, a lolling sphere that is someone
else's mind, but *my* creation—that's
the sad truth of it: that love even, or especially,
when imagined in a fracas of writing,
hides in a mirror that is the failure of speaking.

“MY EYES TURN ALL DIAGONAL...”

My eyes turn all diagonal, though
I could blame the veins, the
vane way the mind suggests betterment
in an exercise schedule from Mars.
I hear them reformatting the hard drive.
I try to persist coolly, though
find difference a matter of suggestion
heightened to a tropism of self,
I mean the sanity's on the other shelf
by the wine, and printers,
by the venal, and the consenters.
Turn the socket the other way,
make of telling time a sport for girls.

“TAKES THAT DESUETUDE...”

Takes that desuetude seriously,
fills his words with Marxist tags, his
“sentences.” Parks by the river,
brandishes, in secret, his sword of
meaning: returns home to the chef
of the kitchen of quotes-of-the-month:
random accesses it and, it turning
pretty, bullocks the whole natural cause.
The rivers retire with their applause.
Shaking hands. Bleeding aorta.

“I KNOW YOU’RE ALONE...”

I know you’re alone, fleeing the iron deserts,
cooing by busways like an unfragrant bird,
I’ve seen cataracts and rainbows in your drying feathers,
knowing the price of truth and the pythagorean third,
so together let us greet our final mission
and remark upon the clouds, and celebrate the fission
of all things ephemeral in what, Buddha says,
plagues every one’s employ with the rite of stones,
knowing that one’s wit and this one’s delay
in understanding the farcical nature of white bones,
together, walking one-to-one beside each other
implanting the sacrosanct ear with the words of a brother,
believing one’s culture bound to a grain of sand,
perceiving the blank forsooth, which no solitude withstands.

“THE CAREERISTS ARE GOING...”

The careerists are going to the cannery
to dogmatize on dog food's versions
of human food that is humbling the masses
with messes of proactive mustard
gasses and other gushing, verbatim facts.
Strike down, strike now, stoking
any fire that is desperate and free
of the gang that greets, with sympathy
their mirror versions in the moribund scenery,
logging onto the terminal, loathing
all peaceable intrusions, when possible.
Therefore, there is therapy in skies
that otherwise offer little bungee jumping
beyond their pale scenes of poverty
and their washings, frequent as wandering
songster on highways, or happiness on holidays.
So the raw and the cooked, retaliating
within their binaries, beneath the lead,
nonetheless find agreement that arguing
offers more bounty than merely sleeping being,
though one wonders, whimsically, how
much confusions can be decidedly accounted
for, when there are so many waking reeds
among the otherwise insufferable blue factories.

“IT’S A BOOK...”

It’s a book one reads
by the cranky Symbolist,
a comic strip
of silence and presence,
but not lacking dark
enough, clanking
like the absinthe radiator
in our communal lofts.

Collaborations

THE GOLDEN AGE OF SWIMWEAR

with Judith Goldman

Narcissus,
your absent mirror
is like the male cravat—
a proprietary foible
of itinerant presentation or a
flight into carnival,
the spun sugar, inviting
and shunning.

You, Sailors, have faith!
They will drop you a neckline;
they'll be lenient with the strap.
The gender-specific
iconoclasts gather
their sheets at dawn,
their dreams at night—
filthily eyed by
the squid in its crevice.
And Dziga Vertov is counting
the stills,
the tended tender, the tender tended:
his Speedo, gilt-feathered;
his Sappho, fluted but irregular...

Meat is implicated americana
affording lucid nudity,
grits in ends of bread

for the frictionless voyeur. How
to retrieve the foiled mean,
when hair was a commodity
and navels blinked together?
Glandular and projective
as a Toyota, these hours
that recalled
the pearled teeth,
taut pin-ups in a larceny of
technicolor comas,
bake, bake in the babyface sun.

The camera dreams
perpendicular and pale,
an abstract oath,
frantic diamonds. A
sky scraper's wife crowds into
a house; her gestes shuffle
gnats in the debris.

AT THE ENTRANCE OF THE ARBOR

with Judith Goldman

& I'm channeling
our superstitions
to a fine
pt.,

porky content
(aftershocks).
(& I'll
harp on it)

—Habitually
stupid—paying my
dues, Space a
portion

of that—doubling
over a transitional phrase,
apologizing &
apologizing.

“Byron
leaks now”
[all for want
of a spittoon] “& I

owe it all to
Popeye, to
henchmen working
at the mouth,

regurgitating
Lolita,
perpetually
drowning at the Hellespont.”

A tedious
15 blocks
to the chain-link
music? At

the entrance of the arbor
fluorescent lights fink
on
hands above the table—Cave

dwellers blinking verité,
sugar-coated confetti,
—just one of those passions, unaffordable
& in-

sincere.
For the quota.
Handkerchief.
Hurt, burnt, a point

of pride...
On my
knees in a tearoom in a
single strong-arm display,

Hell
froze over,
crystallized
like a public mural.

Or a letch
in aspic,
dishearten'd &
callous,

abstractly de-
claiming
arcane
furniture:

“ode...
odor...
parking garage... quarantine... rhapsody...
sharing... Tiananmen

Sq.” Remarkable to hanker
after a parking garage, a
commode! Similarly ludicrous
(makes things better), the

mythmakers
derail
slick & fickle
Nobody; Nobody

knows
this pesticidal
door—even
E. P

resley shelves
past a rheumatic
cheap trick, only
to scream against the fry.

The tragic
Jacks
—Smith, Spicer & Sprat—
trapped in the trapezoid

on the \$1
bill—sloping
jazz life, no
harmless expenditure,

Alice struggling against the forces
of Tyranny. Vaguely the
jury plays autocratic dice:
“Cleared that up in 48 faux hours.”

What would you give for
California spring water,
espionage on the veranda, an
entire line of

X-mas lights X-

ploding
—overhead sprinkler
system, a vase of tears.
While the horrible truths script the news?

X-mas
with the Shah,
a spray-on
Kennedy, or a

slightly more
credible
version:
aestheticizing

mushroom clouds,
years with Mom & Pop, all
in one backlit
scenario.

PASTORAL DISPOSAL

with Judith Goldman

Theft is a property
of the lethargy detergent,
and the Japanese
fantails, burrowing
into the gravel, like phantoms.
But modesty isn't
a property
of the big guns of Modesto
who ride and ride (their
lungs bear chalices
of the choir), catch on like
wildfire
or lowlier, even lowliest,
suggest the irredentist
heaving cathedral
—“You flew me by in a
dry heave sigh,”
the blond scat-sang,
pandering to desire.

Cocktails, therewith, as
in Molotov, sarong-
wrapped, and laden,
and benchmark-smashing
prosciuttos, and

Bourse-smacking
croutons
among
alien renditions of
“Go Tell the Mountain on Me” and
“All’s Western on the Quiet Front” and
“The Land
Waste,” yes
tonight he’s gonna party
like it’s 1998, and it is.

Ok, ok—the rhomboid!

And of the horrible, terrible, portable, comestible, he chose
a Scottish lambskin and a Japanese “look-at-it-this-way,”
as though you, so to speak, were looking through and not
at a TV,
scratching the remission with a failed sense of fiction—

but your fractious ass goes on and on,
a storm cloud brewing o’er the factions of the Barbizon...
“O, Brazil! I’d take you in, if you weren’t carrying me!”

THE COSMOPOLITANS

with Sianne Ngai

DOCTOR OH:

Metaphysical blippety-blips
while sucking candor lozenge?

ANN LANDERS:

Cartesian licorice, I think.

NARRATOR:

Bouncing errata—ironical jokes—the crafty customer's constructing a connection.

DOCTOR OH:

This analog frittering, this paradigm stuffing...

ANN LANDERS:

...in plus sizes...

DOCTOR OH:

...in “plus sizes”
echoes the torrid income saliva.

ANN LANDERS:

A brachiosaur echo.

DOCTOR OH:
Heard by...

ANN LANDERS:
A suburban buccaneer.

DOCTOR OH:
Have you, er...

ANN LANDERS:
Hear the one about?

DOCTOR OH:
The protean thrust adjustments,
the authoritative “oh my”
in the rocking meters of Mark Antony?

ANN LANDERS:
You are an as-phyxiating person.

DOCTOR OH:
Breaking ex!

NARRATOR:
Fancying widgets lowers snack pressure...

DOCTOR OH:
(munching)
Breathing ex, ply—

ANN LANDERS:
—my trade?

DOCTOR OH:
Go for it.

II.

DOCTOR OH:
Gritty empathy soap
after peewee snapper dis.

ANN LANDERS:
Did you feel that, too?

DOCTOR OH:
Fourteen haiku!

ANN LANDERS:
Ironical jokes.
But she's got a hunchback, too.

DOCTOR OH:
Belittling exegesis
has a stanchion at each end.

ANN LANDERS:
Entry or exit?

DOCTOR OH:
A cornered leotard.

ANN LANDERS:
Entry or exit?

DOCTOR OH:
Corrupt loofah!

ANN LANDERS:
Bourgeois enigma...

DOCTOR OH:
Bourgeois!

ANN LANDERS:
Thus, closeted Clorox encounter
requires pinky finger, adds things

DOCTOR OH:
to the sentence.

ANN LANDERS:
Ragout Darwinian abstracts...

DOCTOR OH:
(So I suspected.)

ANN LANDERS:
yield candid Boolean eros.

And then I thumbed my way back into the guestroom.

DOCTOR OH:
Anorexic day-glo?

ANN LANDERS:
Don't crank manure talents!

DOCTOR OH:
I wasn't!

ANN LANDERS:
Out of the stereo—

DOCTOR OH:
I wasn't!

ANN LANDERS:
Into the stucco!

DOCTOR OH:
I... I...

ANN LANDERS:
You... you...

DOCTOR OH:
Jeremiad impasto!

ANN LANDERS:

Soiled your linen in misery aftermath, there!

DOCTOR OH:

No, no, candid tantrum package.

ANN LANDERS:

Running with pews.

DOCTOR OH:

Snack pressure.

ANN LANDERS:

(munching)

Plural.

DOCTOR OH:

Snacks... pressures...?

ANN LANDERS:

Polyglot crib

balancing pregnant fax.

NARRATOR:

Of course, they are simply calling each other names.

DOCTOR OH:

The sextilla, a Spanish form...

ANN LANDERS:
(Beautiful ergometer...)

DOCTOR OH:
of Catholic loam. Huh? Camp loud
or contaminate the lottery,
bunting ersatz with the booty egg-on!

ANN LANDERS:
Bureaucracy euphoria?

DOCTOR OH:
Crap lice!

ANN LANDERS:
Banishment's envelope?

DOCTOR OH:
Credit liposuction.

ANN LANDERS:
Concupiscent lasagna?
Carnavalesque lobotomy?

DOCTOR OH:
Majesty's orders to amputate the sound limb...

ANN LANDERS:
...too?

NARRATOR:
Took up a proper nose...

DOCTOR OH:
You... you...

ANN LANDERS:
I... I...

NARRATOR:
When push comes to suck...

DOCTOR OH:
You... you...

ANN LANDERS:
I... I...

NARRATOR:
When the crocheted llama freaks, the katydid turns
languid...

DOCTOR OH:
You... you...

ANN LANDERS:
I... I...

NARRATOR:
Snack pressure...

DOCTOR OH:
Lentils, then!

EARNEST VOICE

Equivalent to a “valorized moment when the eyes contemplate the world alone,” this nation-building **agenda**¹ accelerated the 1967 centenary. Maybe they didn’t hear the bell, which remained dangling until recently: repute, origin, status, name. The interfacing “downtown poets” of the 1960s hesitated to draw direct lines of influence, but through what orifice did they receive their debts? Women, the “unformed spirit of the North American place.” This is only partially true, and if so, false. Cartesian perspectivalism assumed twenty-five million Africans, the European powers, and the Congo at the turn of the century—a pleated faucet, yet **ironically**² distant. Another stunt phenomenon, a *homo loquens*, size 12 and a non-emitter, a *pulp log*, but also a political insertion. Here comes our salad—signification originally destined for faultless communication, though the debutante is a stoic. Olson never rejects the heroic, a transparent nostalgia for an ordinary time, yet the “only” is taken back. Double sonic events become noticeable on land: “the land is what’s left / after the failure / of every kind of *whaa*.” Memory

¹ EMPHATIC’S first verse should start being read here.

² Second verse starts here.

fuzz³, a distrust of lust, a precarious position of battery difficulties—aspects of both taste and frocks. Good equipments. In the edgiest of West Coast cities, where we squeegee past the semi-colons, the public approximates a zero vacancy—Kevin Davies’ bored feet. But the idiosyncratic post becomes whole amidst the flux.

³ Third verse starts here.

EMPHATIC VOICE

I.

This nation-building agenda accelerated
The think. Suburban errata of *er...*
The one heard about? Snack pressure munching
Plural snacks—has a stanchion in each
Orifice. Here comes our salad—
Bourgeois! Another stunt end. Manure. Son,
I'm not ANN LANDERS! Soiled
Your distrust of the sextilla.

2.

Direct lines of influence, but
Through what ironical jokes? Then I thumbed
My way for an “originary time.”
Clorox enigma. Good equipments.
Exegesis closet at the turn of
The century:

*Becomes whole amidst the flux,
When push comes to suck,
Tra-la-la-la...*

Unformed pee-wee then! Taste
And frocks amputate the sound limb.

3.

Communication leotard dis.

Hunchback signification dis.

Crocheted llama freaks, katydid turns languid dis.

Valorized lozenge dis.

Brachiosaur flotsam centenary dis.

Of course, they are a kind of memory fizz *whaa* dis.

The candour of widgets dis.

Candid Boolean eros dis.

Part III

(voice 1)

Then
pressure
you
languid
llama
when
suck
flux
amidst
I

(voice 2)

you
idiosyncratic
Kevin

zero
public
past
squeegee

coast
in
equipments

no
a
limb
the
frocks
both
difficulties

battery
precautions

orders
lobotomy

concupiscent

credit
banishment's
euphoria

egg-on!
with
bunting
the
hub
Catholic

ergometer
a
distrust

other
each
fizz
kind
fax
pregnant

polyglot
snacks

munching

snack

package
no
aftermath

every
after
linen
impasto
you
you
stucco!
wasn't
is
on
noticeable
events

noticeable
events

Landers
wasn't
crank
glo?

into
"only"
way
thumbed
Boolean
I
so
Darwinian
a
ragout
things

arrivals
faultless

comes

of
Landers
wasn't
crank
glo?

Darwinian
a
ragout

finger
requires

originally
encounter
closeted
thus

insertion
political
but

non-emitter
lozenge
enigma

loofah!

exit
leotard
exit
stunt
distant
ironically
gruesome
of
Congo
European
million
five
perspectivalism

Cartesian
if
this
American
spirit

unformed

nations
the
women
receive
at
exegesis
hunchback
the
jokes
through
of
haiku

feel
snapper
soap

gritty
my
drawer
1960s

munching
snack

fancying

breathing

asphyxiating

meters
oh
authoritative
thrust
about
er...

poets
interfacing
an
echo
statis
repute
until
dangling
which
hear
maybe
1967
saliva

the
plus
sizes
paradigm
frittering
connection
constructing
the

errata

bouncing
accelerated
nation-building
this
contemplates
eyes
cartesian
candor
to
to
similar
blippety-blips

bouncing
accelerated
nation-building
this
contemplates
eyes
cartesian
candor
to
to
similar
blippety-blips

“MAO’S GIFT TO NIXON”

with Jeff Derksen

Panda. Contradiction. Bonjour
Bon Jovi. Yet the effortlessness
of moving through social space
underground
in a language
orange and grey
better suited to you
(polyvinyl). One-
stop riders disengage
against the false hostess
of transit police! But
the accent
doesn’t so much beckon
as reckon.
Dear Jeff, “I’m not
a radical avant-gardist, I
just want
to broaden the concept
of pop music.” Dear Brian, when I
say “Hand me the
screwdriver”
I am saying my cultural
heritage counts. When I say “turn the Bon
Jovi up, Jeff,” I’m
saying my cultural

heritage should always be
played
at full volume. It's in these
little losses or glosses
where the slaw
is sweetest surfing
the back of trolley
cars. Normative poems
for my friends,
deep ends
of volleys from the ball rooms
and secret saunas
where the "downcast eyes"
comes with a coversheet. I've meant
to be mean, son, and so on. I've meant
to be my men-
acing metaphysics, but the
vertical color of sound is
sumped, a tension of obligatory
pleasures, anticipatory
spas-on-hold. "Here I come
to save the
day," that means Mighty
Mouse is synchronic cash. An interview's
afterglow, signs grounded
in confectionary lice. It looks
like it's Friday
the 13th on Easter Island
all over again, Brian, tied
in the umlaut of my love

and the slipstream
of transnational grinder culture's
homosocial ale. Ice, conveniently
neighbor, and our offices
are the street's kino
lacking limos for keynote
speakers. Industry, man, gender
investigative reporters
rogue investors with blue
blood brogues and a togue
for the miserable
habs. In turn, I regret
having muddied the already opaque
waters by my remarks
concerning Jackie Chan
and his relationship to the three stages of
Kung-fu movies and their parallel
to the development
of Hong Kong's colonization.
Plus the internet. It's so boring!
So incredible. Most
poetry written
in America would not be
if these simple steps.
It's so imploring
to keep putting food
into your body. Hence,
the return of the person,
the pronoun
of the pizza. Edit

was act but
now it's my unique
subjectivity glittery
amongst the consumer goods
and my fabulous pals
consuming as radical
rearticulatory pleasure and then,
Brian,
 the artist reproduces the cover
 of a Flock of Seagulls album
and the Nair. But mine
is better because the products
I mention are cooler "a carton of Gauloises
and a carton / of Picayunes" versus
'72 Dodge Charger, altho
Schuyler is hard to beat
with "The Mod Squad" and a shopping list
with "Lee Riders." Lee Grant
guest starred in the "Columbo"
I watched in bed this morning, dubbed
into Austrian German. (See
how easy it is!) Dear Brian, I must
ask for some clarification
before we proceed: on Saturday,
when you referred to me as "the
Patrick Swayze of post-
language writing" were you basing this
comparison on the Swayze of
Dirty Dancing (with particular
reference to the sexualized

working-class body and
the antagonisms within a North American
class structure) or a more
sentimentalized Swayze from
Ghost? Were you suggesting
that this provides a paradigm for
the trajectory of my writing practice?
“Should I
check or should I
go, now.” And I must concede that
you were more accurate in your application
of Mars Attacks (“Bugs in the minds
of the candy masses”) to your relationship to
language & hegemony
in your textual production
than I was in my confusion surrounding
Starship Troopers, a confusion
which expired any thought
of competence in submission
to the spectacle of Patrick Swayze
in drag in the American film that
derived from
Priscilla, Queen of the Desert
(“Australian for beer”), in which
indeed, he appeared in drag, and
to which I was referring, Jeff.
But Patti Smith was a donut
before we invited her to Hamburg, liebchen
the curse of the article
plaguing our star

with a comma, instead of an
asterisk, which she
deserved,
nearly choking on fava beans in the desert
of our disappointment, the site-specific
gummy-ranch we call
Home. Good news!
The Moog is back from the shop.
The Eno setting's tuned up. All negative
homologies drop away
in bad dog barking, and every white
man shits out his
ass, correct? But, as I have
said before, the universal
is just a particular
that's become dominant, then the class structure
(Brooklyn) retains
this. Like:
This is your shithole and
welcome to it (at least
it's ours). If our
preliminary transcendence
is false, what plagues for the effigies
of the poster boys, Spock?

Little Orphan Animal

POEM

Little star

you lean like a Russian dancer
and your lisp is energetic
and you talk to strangers
and you confuse the housewives
and your horse is waiting in the yard
what is your name?

I came from afar myself
but have forgotten my direction
and grasp my abdomen
and sniff the nosegay on my lapel
and speak with an accent
and am divorced from my countrymen
and don't understand most books
and stayed after school most of the time I was in school
and don't like people in business suits
and have a first and last name
Sam Slade

when can we meet?

THE GREAT EXPECTATIONS

are withering
fast, are slowly
on time in
reaching their proper
denouement, strange
French place. It
is Wednesday, great
perspir-

ation is gnawing at
my head, round
robing me in
a halo of smelly
aether; where
are you, Ezra
Pound,
these loud nights when

a romance like
yours would
be
welcome (even if
W.H. Auden ruined it
all for
me!) Great
it could be, life
as a lung, mind, and *sicher*

eye, grand

like a role stood up
straight at attention.

CHINATOWN

its
streets make little
“sense” so
I thought about
Barthes, how
I put
to the gun would
“explain” him

not! so
to come off as
some long-haired
Victorian
freak, in
my diligence I

have much to
own up
to, as
my library, stuffed be-
yond equilibrium, so
society so-so
and hermetic no no
good at
it This

is

a confession that

I was lost

lost lost

in my

colorful

glasses

in Chinatown

THE STORM

The storm rages
sadly, as the
night becomes

a memory:
books
are littered everywhere: a-

mazing that
the night
becomes known
at all!
storm

and rotting window
bearing the thrusts
barely
that the timpani
of the storm is in my room

and the
pages
blown o-
pen
how
to conceal them?

a camera, perhaps

THE HOST

And now I
take you
into my room: victim
of my
 lost
consequence:

parlor
games
to attract you teas
straight from
China

poems from hell: the
radi-
ator
hisses (I
 assure
you that
it likes
you): you speak

up

you speak up

you are

welcome my
guest

my trays are all
yours
before the divorce

POEM 33

Night wins me
its game of
chess: that
image from a
film: that
night so un-
inspiring with
its images!

*

And talks
and talks and talks: banter
of an
 irrepressible
instinct for
survival: e-
ven in these
dark
times.

*

Night you
know me too
well: how
I am never

one
to raise an ob-
jection to compromise: that
I take
what I
get.

*

Night you
continue like
a gossip: con-
demned
on the
 streets for
mis-
information

but always one
for *friction*.

*

Escape:
the holi-
day on
Mars sounds
good to
me these days.

*

The horror one
feels when
confronted with a globe
of happi-
ness that
merely is a light
show, or
worse
a poster from MoMA

*

that sen-
sation creeps
over me
these times when
words are
merely
fashion at the mall or
a di-
vided conscience
on what the peace-keeping mission is doing these days.

*

Night you
coughed go
build an ig-

loo
 cruel
cruel heart, make
your dis-
guise

one that never fools
a wheedling kid.

*

For what is happening
for what is lost

and take
from the
poor and
rich their
circum-
stances and
 reply, in the
end that
what
follows

is invariably real.

LITTLE ORPHAN ANIMAL

The telephone won't
ring, nor the

mailbox be
filled with
 postcards
from loves
Gloomy! walls

containments, these
flat surfaces, of
my
images

scratched out in
the heat of
a
 passing
moment
governed by anxieties...

Walls words
learning me, I'm
goin' to get
 some
learnin'! from
these things

diligently arrayed
to a code
of fluttering wings

“vans
beating the empty
air” you
say? I

dare you to find
so much in Paul
Klee, as
a rigorous assignment!

I dare
you to
toss the dress
of your finesse
and claim something under it
A

plan, a
scapegoat, I
am ordered to
retreat
at each new second
that warrants redress

and take
nothing

from it

Nonetheless, the

curb

was

delightful

and carved in glass

FREE TO BE YU AND MEE

What would
a poem like that be
like? the prayer
asks the charlatan
It would
on a calm afternoon, in winter

be much like the peaches, in spring.

*

Thence would spring
a squadron of declarations, would
the room fake the pallor of winter

that the prayer be
no silence that would
be mistaken for a prayer.

*

I mean it a prayer
but rococo spring
interrupts those solemnities that would
could it (and would
it) distil from the powers that be
its necessary, finite hold. It makes a winter

that feels like winter:
progressed, entirely, without a prayer.

*

What's to be-
come of spring
and the Bermudas that would
be ours, and beyond momentary, would

there be the option? There would
be winter

as there would
even if one not

 memorized the prayer
for its
opacity.

One asks that a spring
be simple, direct, and provident... that it just be.

*

But nothing will be
if there is a would
to disturb it: the roads, the spring
won't contain it.

 One rejects winter:
it brings one to sleep... and always to prayer.

This monotone is both: what would

*

that the prayer be
the would that would
make spring of our winter.

TO THE GATEKEEPER

I am
green, and
red.
How
“I don’t give a shit, do
what you want, just
do it!”
of me!
It seems cool.

It seems
publishable.

Itemized, I’ve
little to
offer
though
and get on with it.

I mean
“whose vocabulary is
this, any-
way?”
It’s
ours and rare.

THIS IS A PRODUCT

Maybe—just
MAYBE, tell me
in the growth of
this eye
this eye that is colorless...

the corners
are
dank
with neglect, a
February sky
neglects them

The
story, gross
with reprobation, huh!
the Kafka
figure, the
Lowell, snot-
ty nosed!

seed
and
bedtime a-
gain a-

gainst a

garden
of slights

The dawn that
cherisher of
marbles
is
active

with
its duties: steel
coils, tricycle
tires,
natal kicks...

pur-
suing the
vision
to its logical ends...
 jus'!
 jus'!
and its sadness that figures it

Re-
pre-
hensible ineptitudes! spires
in synch! swallow
deeper deeper deeper
though I sink!

I
sink! a
round the
abstract orange

ABE LINCOLN

Is it
gummy? the poem
is the same
 tyrannical
principle: juice
of the
outside of the
orange. Flagrant
drunk. Fulsome
in the
aptitude of excess, quiet
like
Abe Lincoln: quiet, and a
melancholy man.
This is
my
idea
of
democracy: whatever
idea is different
than this: the
extent of the
difference: that
is
democracy. He said

“that from these honored heads

we take increased heads
we take that increased devotion
that these dead”

under this nation
of god
and government
of the people of the government
shall not perish
from the earthy.
democracy!
et.c e.tc etc.

with Gregory Peck
as the narrator.

JOE KAFKA

fingers his keychain
eyes the 666 building
fingers his keychain

has hairballs but is
a working class lout

damned if he's other and
damned if he's drinking
espresso coffee on Sundays

is Joe Amplitude
is Joe Aptitude
Joe Scaramungus

fingers the keychain
of the 666 building and
wishes it'd fall
into the Hudson River or

into his palm like
the poems of William Carlos Williams!

Joe Kafka is a Manhattanite
knowing it all but none of it
Joe Kafka is a Manhattanite

he knows
no girls

INTERLUDE

this is what she does
and drives me crazy cuz
washes all the window panes
after it rains and
after it snows all night
this is changing grace
or saving face
like it or not this action
like a thinking
typewriter is slow and “hyperreal”
this way I feel

PROSE

the girl is exposed
to the reflections of a novelist
the taste of the century
this or any other
and it takes two to approve but
only one is satisfied
short life
the shrill hope expires and
under the curtain
a stain remains
and that is divination

A LITTLE COOKING, AS

how many Samoan
 proverbs say
don't give up the boiler rats, they're
delicious
 not intending this to be reductive, but

life
 and it's not as bad as
"I've fallen in love with a beatnik, Mom" or
"Trade me two of your secrets for
my Red one," no
that's simply obvious

 where rigor mortis sets
in
 the dachshunds are baying

the truth of
that matter is
 stocks
 stock
of one's life, of
where it leads
up to take
that! you lonely
 podiatrist, one
says

but we keep on conforming
dreaming on tintinnabulic
hills that life's worth
fate

and there's plenty more where
that comes from, sport!

satisfying

sore
shins

grease spoons on the bunker ship until Fantasy Island

karaoke sunrises
bum the
gums

but that's
delish

how, muttering Progress, can one
continue? this
cracker country
mediated

"I don't believe I know you, but
now

it seems I
do" outlet
gimcrack colloquy and sore burns
pleading Jersey

“Shopping’s always better in the evening,
drive

my
car?”

visible until menopause

it’s

so

sleepy

tired

the victim of conscience lays down his wick

slowly, its

shogun

aftermath

doesn’t seem

much, but it’s soon coming out on

CD it’s

a crutch, he

confesses

but doesn’t mean Kenny Rogers has

talent

doesn’t mean he’s joining the

foreign legion, doesn’t

mean that he’s feeling bad, doesn’t

speak much for the

future

of television

which is unfolding like a

knife

careerist sandblast
that bathes
diversity in its stagnant
virtue

terrible twins
are twin sets

so you plan your ear with a loaf of shimmering
olive oil of disconcerting
poker-snitch

please pass the kielbase

PERMIT ME

Permit me
to forget
I have friends,
please, so

the cityscape
appears:
it is Leipzig,
1990's

style,
with girders,
students—
discontent, but

contentment,
too, a
feeling of urgen-
cy, etc.,

for now,
that's where
I am, not
here in NY

forgetting my friends.
It's simple:

a pax
of tears.

ALONG

The things we
pretend, to
keep them down.
I do not

want to
pretend, not
without a sound.
Thus

January
starts
in silence
expectant of language

I will
learn from friends.
Arguments
can't be so conspicuous.

And when
we don't have much
to
say,

we can drink.
That's

in lieu of
laughter, also.

Winter
scarves
conceal the neck from
cold. Thereafter

is only honesty
and getting along.

SONG

Is there then
a chance? pagan for love
with delicate bands,
retreats into

the forest confused
(rosicrucian deference
to silence and
to penance)

that's where the
city tires on
its feet, can't
follow, no chance,

no chance, no chance
for love there,
and fanciful
meetings.

JULY 17, 1994 (ASTORIA)

Here, one knows it is
Sunday, by the
trespassing
of the birds,

and the sound, perhaps
of a student's
violin, in the
gutters

—I mean that is
the fantasy of
an angel,
knowing angels.

The park is a
palette of
effects,
ruses, compromises—

one can barely
breathe but for
the slender
branching of sunlight,

breaking
through

the genius of the clouds.

—I'll take my rest here,

for a summer, migrate

when the air turns cold

and I'm

truly bored.

Strange Booty

GULF

Lamentable, this quiet
I “ordered” of, is
presently odor, (physic)
lastly no (sub)stitute
4: (lover, car, keys)
leettle bit slower m(I)
(lover, car, keys), & sad
to remark, the house
's not KLEAN, no KLEAN
left in the house:
knead (ml) 2 bi some
) more (? Safe to (sanft)
say (sonft) DAT I)
so odorous und in ordnung (
am plastic and true/trhyth.

THE AGE OF TALKIES

“My books are little sluts. I don’t love them,”
the analysand trembles. Computers and popinjays!

“It’s all vicious Carlyle.” Who else would tell us
that? “I’ve given up on emotion. It’s no longer in the
syllabus.”

SEVEB B

Seven North Korean soldiers entered the tense demilitarized
(no one
stays innocent
forever)

Glamour in America was once the sole property of a storied
aristocratic
(Dzhokhar M. Dudayev,
left, the
leader)

An avant-gardist early in his life, Takemitsu eventually settled
into a language that was often caressing rather than
(the perils of
the press in Indonesia include
jail)

(From a planet closer to the sun: 1 teaspoon olive oil, 16
ounces whole onion, 2 large cloves garlic, teaspoon
caraway seeds)

CHEQW!

—Cheqw!

of such store credits, of kong footsy
the whale white onits holster, handheld itls

toulouse man guts' got out
his men had pissed uunder the dropped fates
when he wizzed "Attica Attica", a shoddy
thistle of Kung or Confusion, and of "Shilock his further
Yo Yo reduced

orpheus oand tuxes

Tootsey thought it bad-in-ass

(and ten page frickn' poem)

and jousting, curled herself with the Umpire ("my accid-
net")

the "Emprop of the Occidnet"

brian wok

pollen idem

and Tchang-tchanges (tch tch changes) turn...

Sous-tsin (i'm copying this) murmering ruckus, wirred

project gnader... 3388 did KONG's unc's fang

("not exactly a ball of laughs, I mmena bundle of yarns...")

that damn...

Grreed, murder, jealousis, taxes, and dominions....

reupsfraizianation

nor swing drifters neither, no—neither, Tahis nor Nahon

hom (muldoon)

WALKABOUT

Cited cows.

I think I need to leave the city and see some of those artificial paradises that Baudrillard, who vacations in a log cabin, would have us believe do not exist.

My idea is a heart in the basement

UNTER DEM LINOLEUM

—*p-thuck! p-thuck! p-thuck!*—

“My little idea is in pieces until I finish this work.”

“I would like to assure myself that we’re doing everything possible that can be done to save what is genuinely one of the biggest colonies of Jackass penguins to be found anywhere in the world,” he told reporters.

What do you do?

My idea is in parts, the book leaning slightly to the left, hovering over the sleeper, like an image from Fuseli.

Perforations in the fabric suggest the pogroms of history.

Dissimulation. Efficacious. Hope. *Feeling it in his bones.*

Stranger than at first imagined
—a whinier “Waste Land,”

—an egg come back from Gillot.

A sort of syndrome. The typo that is exact to you.

Pick up the pace?

Poetry to order, these are poems made to order.

The checklist was presented by Benji Sands:

“More names for the fictions, more jailbait for the roped”—
they said.

Yes, American Congress.

POSTLUDE. THE APPROPRIATION OF PEACH.

The talk deadened (reddened) the fat tethered.
lettered weather. The feather
measured mass.

In a fettered (labored) green sway
the showman waived, waved, gave (in
sure place)
no compromise.

Sure as smoke, against tides
the bored redundant spoke of high
deliberately interesting shaved
thighs.

Better to thank heaven than go bone broke blanking blather.
(A curious Flintstone
matter.)

POEM

The big stilted grammar
of a tall scout will
kill you, the thrill sport
of a doubt a lot
will dread the knot, thought
matted, in a clump, on
a skull's pot. Put
on the G-spot, paste
to shimmering waist
projects of the Lancelot that
managed to cede that
boogie mushroom platelet.

I'M BOUND TO BE

polite
a gentile
over 20 years old
part of Canada's misery
letting food go to rot in my cupboard

a typist
wildly overrated
a natural born sleeper
something the cat can't drag in
author of several exclusive and inscrutable thoughts

improper
humorless
opaque to young people
the father of my three sons
the hero of several rigged disasters
(you can sleep through this last one without feeling like
you've missed anything)

it's hot as hell outside

E-MAIL TO MILES CHAMPION

Hop, pixel,
devil sheen
dub hog
(entitlement
a Scree
damsel up
"A now
you martyring
jejune,
lazily
+ crow talkie +
ankle jim
assed ill
yen) Pasternakilly
blue*
stencils
-above the currency:
gills.

& stone.
7 friendly 7,
(concentwate)
phenom of "us"
-the English Paisan bulls.

Humbert@
iggle.pop
tup, Nigel
34(to sheen
elope.
But the praxis (
-h!-h!-

) organically
weir strewn
hic =
raunchify
yodel pus,
Pastoral
darning quilt
guilt-
alas a tokenism

0|

is a word
of a shroom.

In the
d(a)mp of oom.

0

% dark ocean

3453424656974.32.42

Jangle the hutzpahs!

LINES ON YOUR HEAD

No poet should be faulted for not being an updated reader—a flit. The idea of the academy is centered around the possibility of reading but the constructs (Walter Scott, the *New Yorker*)—is a supergroup, another text that governs—which graffitos the stigma OF an academic writer. Vulgarity: write poetry for the unsuspecting. On the poets of the non-major urban centers: how do they progress? Freeing of the serfs.

Poetry should have a theory of power—Money Trust. Poetry shouldn't produce the urge to imitate so much as the urge toward development—if possible, through Money Trust. All utopian schemes are prefigured by a sense of noise—sorting, wrapping, packing—even if they (croak) are compelled by heteroglossic contrariness, since they all rest on the pumice of understanding. Poetic paradigms: must have agility, must have portable complexity.

Full frontal authority. If you can turn a person into a aristocrat (one-self) you are a revolutionary. To relativize each

Third World nationalist issue (the ability to squash, that the West possesses) is Money Musk. Squash. Golden. In other words, no reason to concede to what one not need fear in the physical, hence one can render other realities “virtual” because it is a useful thing. I want to write for disaffected teenagers, not tenured professors.

BAROMETER EXCHANGE

Mister Emotion
Paging Doctor Solace
(Apter Replies
Dormant Humanities)
Single Glazed Chicken
In The Boss Quad
 Dancer's Quip
 What Smokey Shoes

Virginal Cascades
Implies Legion
(Ousting The Alibis
Uction To Spree)
Dapper Bunk
In The Poetry Slam
 Marching Sherman
 Oderless Quark Staple

A Stan A Dirk
Wondrous Presence
(On Golden Honda
Random Access Id)
Terminally Sly
Stare As Derangement
 A Sun Forest Of
 Damaging Coalition

Options Presently
And Perfect Health

...

Short, m'lady
malady, trough
scrim battle not

in terror's
brimming cadil-
lac, shorn dump

parody's all
star quiz gams
redolent, it

and the tansy
race home reactor
talent. Hype

diamond legs I
in delicate re-
poses, ana-

lyzing the sky,
scree, goals
providentially in

circuit, being
everything to me,
baby. Italy,

France, Egypt:
“countries,”
it all stems then

outward, ovid-
ian, sexy, apt
in fanslation.

Lucky for you I
I you for lucky
you lucky for I

in Italy, testing
water, dumping
minerals, hate-

wracked and jealous.
Beste Freundin,
tag it to me, take

all, ill duped
I am in the coup
seville, civil, or-

dinary, and not
so cheap, veggies
tabling my wares and

staring. Glee
has a foot: you

snare it up and ware

with it, in awe
to the effervescent
high low of scone

sugars: because
of the vagrant stench
in the room, I you

leave with submission,
laughing green dues,

to just stare & happy ampersand
notice different coloration of special keys on typewriter
Harry do. start in on apoplexy
 retard it tomorrow. sound of shills on street
Consequently, the bladder of the slender; scaled manifest
one year before Pere Ubu &
 you didn't
 bleed we'd all want to be in there, typing, hugged
& aihl that & all that & all that
moving toward the ocean weakly people thank
depend from the ceiling
 coughing through Parkinson's noses
Father peeking in from the outside was arrested
& half of that was drum and vast recorded entirely

zip, off, of
wedge specific
 who cries
worldly, tank
avid peeksy
television orb
 to her
sit, monolithic
per, natch, id
crinoline
 and make the holidays
and make the weekends
 and make the long weekends
my stupid curse

HOWARD STERN

little girls
of Howard Stern
“which is why I have to prism all
 over them”
this talk is lax, they alter
their straps, make meek way to the
lavatory, and I’m
 significantly posted on the
wooden bench,
waiting.

like evening with its dollop
of cool climes to remind
you that it’s hairy weather, this winter
planting its whole crutch in your foot
there are the restaurants we stumble into, lines
zig-zagging across blocks of
 pavement, that issue
their own versions of tropical topologies
their genius never substantial but hopping cars.

girls
your talk
which reminds me:

AUTHOR PHOTO

Lush perjury barks its sole
salad commission. End
dry. Parallax. Pulse
rocks. Rigid defamation's
honor ragout limp
edifice. Impediments. Lathered
runts. Recon shaved
pate.

 Mexico oh license
starves regular guys,
stirruped hones! Rip out of
throat chrysalis canary.

 And country

peats beats
ovular rookery.
Ipanema. Aberration. Amps chatter
it up "strongly," deciding chores.

Thermosaging Wayne.

ICE-GOLD SLEEP ENVIRONS.

Cattle raising news.

FILE UNDER "BLICK"

POEM. Lava lamp**S**.

Shis too many.

Life a ltreaty.

Hawai'i (Hawaii).

Gorge raw matterschick

Elevating normalcy.

Pope makes news. Criminal rhyme

store. Bliss

shrink heaven.

Second-rate

date. Third-tom

verdicts. Fan

cy-pants mulch

wonder. *Freedom*
of fast stick. *Roil*
the *mummies*
Anticipate gyre
style. *Reverber*

ant condom anti-sham.

FILE

Today.

*H*ence the burger lathe.

Anvil under
bowls. Undershool.

Asylum gain. Braggart
tome. La-la lymph
noShine on
doorknob.

Leg's a use.
Important Nice-to.
Gripe of Onion.

Lolly-cop.

Dipwitch. Ripe for
hickey. Insecurity
pass.

Grant lifter. Hip shammer.

Bubble-u(blunders).

Gorgmenghast
proto-land.

Singlof
counselor nipple.

Tbye вбебу!

O*ppen-attic.*

Hope steer

rear. **W**ine whale.

Pontificate

FLIRTING BAR GUMMER.

O*rgasm*

counter. Yule snide.

On the yipe trac **K**.

QUIET BOLD

Quiet bold and an affront
“she never needs me” sisterly
the caput swells filial
panegyric, but stately holds
Singe capillary manifesto
dark with whim
in the silk of ravishment
eglantine fascicles disarming
Hence the prayer gains op
in twilight’s suspect skeins
loose terminal infractions
a bolus of them, on the nails
“My talents to task”
in the pathogens and darklights
battalions in enterprise
occurring on record, honest
Dyslexic synthetic burst
margarine of plenty
hence, revelers in cities
the flux of encouragements
Idiolect’s temperaments
mailed sleeve and musk
satellites to quiver in the mesh
of these fancily prettified selves

VOYANS

or, The Structuralist Nightmare Goes Public

Of that we don't
and etc., the
come as you are princ-
tuplets, strangely
masking a
pride: frangipani
"El Niño" deep
six, gesticulator in
the crowd, awed
loud, load
on veer on crank on sin-
gly, or in groups
the tide turns on
deftly, (fink
sneaks along the quay
yesterday,
solid, soloing, with
sun) soiled, its
movies: that
deliberate sand-
wich man (sand Dan) corrup-
ting youth,
tooth, ruth and
TRAFFIC NOISES:
trap in glass one more

fly, for that,
jack up the feedback,
hacks, marching
(yodeling) into the
light: dairy needs in Far-
go elevated to
the Religion of Infor-
mation Act, 1962,
sined, scened, ridiculous
as a hat: for-
give me, auditors,
for the frog throat, I've
mimicked a cog
and that's no paradise
or method,
rather a shank
from the memory bank of
STRUMMING GUITARS:
cut to lean to
among the bums, one
of them dressed
like Nina Simone, one
avid idle incubator
of storied strategies:
ink, slate, chalk,
rice paper, clannish act:
there's no concurrence.

THE NAIF AND THE BLUEBELLS

1.

The [] monkey

swung
from
the
trees
and
deposited
a
banana
in
your
lap.

I'll continue this when you're older.

2.

sh
or
tt
em
pe
re
ds
he

longtemperedhe

iight
iji tight
iji iji tight i ght
hight ight ij
i tight
iji tight
i tight
k iji k iji tl ght ight
ight ight ight
iji ight tight
do you wanna remember
do you wanna remember
ight iji ight iji
ight ight t
h iji i
do you wanna remember
do you wanna remember
iji i ght iji
ight
d iji gihi gighi
h gight iji
ithg ight ight t
do you wanna wanna wanna
iiji i kight i iji
....

into dyihng.

POEM

755 glorious trimesters later
and the baby is struggling with its first
insurance checks. Having written
several autobiographical poems, she has
already alienated her father, Rob... etc...

She is standing at my door,
comfortable in the sound of boscaje and wimps,
terrier of the night, laughing
her two dark bytes of colander, her torques
—nested desire for frigid air, for ancillary quarks!

PHOTOGRAPHS

with Cindy Stefans

To focus on the exact in-
stant—or site—
fidelity

(an eight-letter word), moon-rise

—Sold my
gelatin silver print (soul) to
buy it
back again: “(untitled).”

Light
bulb, zone
system, a phrase (“let’s
see”)—The photograph

is as direct in its appeal as a sun-
rise. The camer-

a is the
simplest of
tools: comparable to a pencil.

POEM FOUND IN AN ANTHOLOGY OF
20TH CENTURY FRENCH POETRY

There are things to do, stories to
scratch on the surface eyes
that dilate at their
conception of eggs, anecdote.
Purpling, or empurpling
the stomach masses and
shit eyes
that dilate. Promise me
your wisdom the slide
down which I chute crown
of my head balls
dangling from it jester
perhaps anecdote, eggs.
Stories to do, things to
scratch it's a helluva
time a period, stop and look
too long lovely promise
and your name digs
around my unwanted
grave eggs. Tomorrow you
wake gulls, easy eye
over the stillness of the
aquarium eggs, anecdote
the lamp is an anecdote
you breathe it, shy flown
over the head flowing

deep within its
brackets eggs, anecdote
salute me and you and thou(gh).

BARGAIN

I don't want to bargain with the haddock.
"Simply confine, that's standard
in practices like this, don't mind
the eye / in the globe / that rises / out
your window. Paranoia punks a check,
in the thirty-floor walk-up, the
ice is delivered coldly, without deterrents.
Her name was Sue. His was Warlock.
After that, we had a game of hearts—card sharks,
that is, Texas steel." So I abate:
but unlucky as ever, and incontinent.
My journey to the Orkneys / fomented disinterest,
so New York schlaffs (sleeps).
I wonder... (three years in preparation,
the Epic just rolled off his lips, as
the daughters all rallied with his packing slips,
and mustered Eden. A virgin:
she's also a bibliophile, and a solid addition.
But that's before the death of Kim,
observed in all the hearts of the aristocrats.
Enough about." Me, what do you think of
me? "Gloomy. Scopocratic.
Kind of like a pile-driver when it comes to sentences.
That's not final, by the way. You
can still resist—
"And he has! one Sunday morning...
bologna, tea cups, all that's yummy, and

more, in a big sweaty pile. With cries to Thor
and Isis, and the other blokes from Hitchcock's
Theatre—"it's a game! I feel it!
Aunty Hummer would have never thought to just
'say goodbye,' not mix the beans, so to speak.
I'm silent. You're a version of Styx.
A pause... that's Rosy, but a better man
was Kim. Can't we go light the candles now?"
A slight gust... and the cards tumbled to flatness.

TECHNOLOGIES IMAGINED FROM IMPAIRMENT

A suitable boredom versus a bourgeois boredom.

“Why do I have to sweat?”

thump-thump thump-thump thump-thump

The weather report was good for Labor Day weekend. “Let’s” [the imperative] deconstructed: the goal is community, to “raise hell at the Pentagon,”

that was whispered

from across the waters,

a vague sense at the

knees,

but a vernal lack of compromise in the hissing of the vocables.

Outside the window,

the carnival workers

balanced on a monstrously sized beach ball,

devices variously, protracted stirring—

a fairly uncomfortable concern with self-health.

These values have been

rendered credible by mass

assumption. Finally,

taking vitamin C

to regard totality

with a bit of confidence.

“If you don’t have dizzy spells:

remember, there are other treatments

outside of medicines: wondering
what other people think.” More than seventy
percent of Americans suffer from
beer problems. A suitable boredom versus
an essentialism of social recursivity.

“ONE DARED ONE TO USE...”

One dared one to use
the one word
wit in my presence.
Digita-laugh track
scaffolding sunk
the one-lunk cousin.

High as all that.
Projective curse vulse.

OHNE TITEL

Stranger, you may grow up to be possessed by certain ideas, effusions from the rump. The cut glass will become your syllables, mister, miser—you will vacate numerous rooms before finding the one that names you: Sir Charlatan. And that's why there is something lacking in your prepossession, your way with corners and milk. The abstract on the vitamins was boring reading, but that's before vermilion covered the syntax with stories of wars, sparring, dances; the rectilinear applauses didn't distract you. On a purple bed, with the dawn streaking across your breast (freed breasts, shaking thighs, glow of misapplied diligence on her face—she is Pavlova redivivus, a flower-child—nobody told her of the industrial revolution!), clocks burn the misery of unslept nights in a crown of wakening suburbs, buses, and coffee carts, withering that ill taste in your mouth, calling it an addiction. One more year in the Gulag—when will they finally get your bed linen right, so you sleep all nested and comfortable in the smells of your hometown, those dandelion fissures, those maternal chokes, those cars! Frankincense could do it. But the body rebels. Artificial, fascist forms of education: pronunciation drills, charts and rubber shoes, books balanced on head—whoops, there it goes—could, indeed subtract from your powers, your exhibitionism; or somebody could simply show you, target, it's the industrial revolution! And it's coming to a theatre near you.

OHNE TITEL

I'm awash with spurious igloos (rains crashing down, worm muck unraveling my sensitive tissues, and I take all rhymes as they come), puttering until nascence lifts to an argot these contraptions, egg boilers, egg peelers, egg eaters, down ramps of twisted coat hangers, dropped on a plate. I've fake turbines (or investments in them). Struggles that protract asphyxiation (collegio, in the Latin, or just drop the n from asphyxiation, worsening the verse until cramped enjambment pipes in with clamors from the infant's back room, the monks, maids and projections), keeping labor stifled in baroque misinformation. That's all it takes, indecision, distraction. Walking, I chance upon a daffodilly, "remark the pregnant daffodilly," in its crowd of jewels, in its creeds of passions, in its borrowed lake. I am going to do the laundry, and meet a Polish poet, reading the latest Nobel laureate, a populist with a history, and she will remark that I don't understand, no and should probably read Ruskin, forsaking my Homi Babha, and also my William Carlos Williams. I will reply: "But I am in almost total agreement! I have just chanced upon a daffodilly! This recent exhibition of Mark Tansey's graphic filler, it's like a shot in the arm of the avant-garde! and so I am returning to ill-considered origins." Then I will return home and take stock of the issues, and know before I begin that I have probably betrayed myself.

BEFORE ODILON REDON

Plagiarist of this mundane earth,
amidst hockey (sports), yes
but the automobile is seaworthy
becoming the glove (in dream),
the soiled hair of the architect
matted.

Mussed. He drew the cloth
back—and there was the *Coup de Dés*,
dried anemones (reefs), Alfonso's
paragraphs on the Treasures of Trove,
I blanch. I skim the sea,
argue
 dispassionately
 with the seahorse,
skirt the dark corridors, horse
around with the Free Market rioters.
(The automobile sputtered, and so we chatted.)

THE ROYAL LIFE (AS TOLD TO...)

Dirty as dangling toe the screams bowed the high athletic slick tic in gangrenous hip applauses balancing tiled turds langorous as Ally's hip in a nice smile tummy-ache borrowing style

perforating shimmy twins pins and gowned clubs cankering for slippery tiles flipped dipped and tamed as Niles of shorter shanty dingle berries, coupling in

the barn.

I mean:

shivered in stifled spastic tit the roof scaled primrose solitude of gnarling piles and princess galls in television groomed will-dares of Python's wend surrender collapsing like sugary loads on purchased vaults of asphalt dappled prawns, waking.

Like or not, she said, this husband!

I'm argot.

Yerp!

A page siege while stumbling protons scalloped in whiffle mitts. That's Burt Lancaster!

Light:

doesn't wanna
learn *languages* any-
more, but computerspeak
that's easy, crazy.

There is no poem,
but the room for a poem.

COUNTERING THE LUDDITE ITCH
WITH A TIN SWITCH

with lines from Thomas Carlyle

Countering the luddite itch with a tin switch.
Finessing the first kiss. Burning crosses.
Did Kore earn the pinstripes? Did gyre and gamble in the
wabe?

Countering the techno fix with the thin stitch
of a thimble prick. Let me tell you. Let me warn you:
Lust never troubled me.

*Happy men are full of the present,
for its bounty suffices them;
and wise men also,
for its duties engage them.*

Add a hyperlink. Bluntly. Bullock? Bollocks.
But don't, don't blink. Blow it through the bull.
Protection. Dissimulation. Footfalls.
Green mayo in the soma. Red sores on the licks.

*Even the horse is stripped of his harness,
and finds a fleet fire-horse yoked in his stead.*

Heckling.
Hello hello.
Hello. Honesty.

I'm anemic. I'm anemic.
I'm delinquent. I'm delinquent.
I'm prostrate. I'm prostrate.
I'm too fat. I'm too fat.
It is a cavity. It opens.
 Words coming and going.
Words loving and strolling.
Writing like a cavity.

*It was the boundless Invisible world
that was laid bare in the imaginations
of those men; and in its burning light,
the visible shrunk as a scroll.*

So few, and the chalk echoes and elides.
So many, didn't think that'd happen.

So what, countered the pop star in Lenin linens.
She returns every evening. She returns. Shouting.

Maybe tomorrow.
Maybe yesterday.
Mercy.
My lazy glands will never support me.
My lazy glands will never support me.
My lazy hands will never stop me.
My lazy hands will never stop me.

*Nay, we have an artist that hatches chickens by
steam;*

the very brood-hen is to be superseded!

Did the flounder flounder, the bass bass?

Don't fink, don't stink!

Balance it on coins.

Plummet it for Bill.

Being out of necessity. Being unnecessary.

Bettering this banter with news from Santa,
buttering it up with puns from Butterick.

Stamping.

Surprise!

Send it on the Steve.

Blandly bunting. Blankets suggesting the progress of history.

Blasé clowns. Blue spangled sneakers. Cancerous.

(Cited cows. Coughing.)

Besting, but not the best; and of the best: worst.

Efficacious. Politesse with the finger bent. Professionals.

*Accordingly, the Millenarians have come forth
on the right hand, and the
Millites on the left.*

Reading silently to oneself.

Reading silently to oneself.

Reading silently to oneself.

And and.

And, and? And, yes.

And.

Send it to Gillot.

Or hell you.
Pliés.
Wanking prevaricators.
We wait for the door to open.
Weeping consolations.

*The French were the first to desert Metaphysics;
and though they have lately affected
to revive their school,
it has yet no signs of vitality.*

*The Fifth-monarchy men prophesy from the Bible,
and the Utilitarians from Bentham.*

*The Crusades took their rise in Religion;
their visible object was, commercially-
speaking, worth nothing.*

The great Napster.
The green napper.
The Napstermeister.
These words arm. These wounds am.
Think and don't think.
Turning up to claim to claim the prize.

Poetry professors professing the proofs of their own history.
(What do you do? What I do.
What do you do? What I do.
What do I do? Very fine, thank you.
What do I do? Very fine, thank you.)

Chancrous.

Professors of history.

Professors of their own history.

Purchase it for marquee.

Purple bandages on sore arms.

Perforations in the fabric suggesting the pogroms of history.

Furniture Music II

USHER

I have that mantle grey,
will rise and go away.
But you are cold and waiting
and I don't know your name.

THE PLATFORM

The girls with those Djuna Barnes hats
barely notice the Czech accordion player,
and I don't notice them, either
we're all so enraptured with our redirects,
self regards, personal exertions
on the subway platform that is like a mental gymnasium,
(we got those cards to prove our membership,
lifetime renewable, in fact, so you can't
complain—this is “compassionate modernism,”
just coming in to save the day when you'd lost
all hope,
withering like a bean pod on the vine)
—it's like that when it's winter in the city,
the cabs and streets steam, like the
Clydesdales in the beer commercials, making
a funky pastoral in this ne'er-do-wellness setting.

Someone will complain of the bombs
perched in the national commonplaces about marriage,
taxes, the environment, even the First Dog
who craps on command just off the mise-en-scène
of Diane Sawyer's shrink-wrapped visage,
the soybean substitute of the family Christmas
in which sleeping pills, the old-fashioned, Fifties kind
are the only dream of escape
on a lumpy mattress, in a hovel in Shanghai
draping the company jacket over the spare, naked light bulb,

praying for sleep,
the rusty buckets of coughing and laughter invading
like a “dull tom-tom” only this time, it’s real parody.

The stunt doubles never arrive on time, nor are
the bagels ever as fresh as in “the city,”
they pop in the microwave, for instance, and generally
make fools of themselves, as only bagels can.
But “compassionate modernism” promises more than this,
and does, pleads like the innocent snowflake
braving winter winds to land on your tongue,
which is in fact sentimental, but indeed is all you’ve got.

GROW

- Grow an extra nostril to breathe better when I sleep, maybe stop snoring and waking my lover ten times a night.
- Grow an extra toe to even out the imbalance in these new Italian shoes, and grip soup cans better.
- Grow some extra hair on my back and chest to shield my body from the wind, and look imposing and exotically European on the beach.
- Grow an extra nipple to breast feed my kittens with, and create a geographical triangulation on my chest so I can locate itches better.
- Grow an extra forearm and wrist to stand in for my other forearms and wrists when they tire from excessive typing, and to play cricket without a paddle.
- Grow an extra lung to smoke cigarettes with and sacrifice to the inevitable onset of emphysema, and perhaps tuberculosis too were I very far from New York.
- Grow an extra ass cheek to attract the eyes of strangers on the train, and to help in my Latin studies when I spend late hours on creaky library chairs.
- Grow an extra saliva gland to facilitate my new found love, speed metal sound poetry, so I can give readings in black light and spew like an electric fountain.

THE CHORD

The chord barely reaches; the telephone's a prick,
searching for the rhythm of this night, foul with impa-
tience,
grand with discomfort; isolated, so alone; a barometer,

no, but a bowel; shatter therapeutic glasses and five irons;
bled, histrionics, blasphemy, delightful catalogue,
insensate in America, a barn door opens onto the night;

angels of Ginsberg, angels of Blake, none other;
shivering, it is cold (orphanage), escaping the tropes,
it is cold, speechless, leaps the fence into the neighbor's yard

and pisses, no leaps again, finds that image of her (can't
remember
her name); all the way outside of New Jersey, all the way;
the margins, the coal mine, the strip mine, it comes

regularly into speech, conversation is excitable;
illegal, the Puritan dawn creates its substitutes for
penance, work in the office; no form, only juggling

incisors snarl like the "ancestors... clumsy with their fists,"
ha, so were mine, bleeding through their country in
sneakers; takes a five iron to the Nissan, takes

another moment to recover and rediscover poetry, not the
words
nor the letters, not the verbs and nouns, not the misprints, no;
running, another fence, spill diamonds on the ground

he falls; that's satisfactory fiction, unblemished recollection;
narcissist, beat off those angels, those Catholic nuns,
the Huns at the border, the ones with the credit cards, the nuns;

block, hush, kick, snarl, rasp, hungry, towel off!
abatement nothing for solace in the mire of heavenly prede-
cessors
who were, in fact, needy, mundane, lived in tight quarters,
nothing

to recommend them; but they're ours, so the anthem
goes, and forget about the whole rotten country it's a skit-
terbug,
in June, it's a June bug, in July no different, wait

for the next month; the next mong is Christmas apathetic
tastes,
packaged with the family and the ubu roi and the girl from
Mystic.

“READING CONTEMPORARY...”

Reading contemporary poetry, even if
it's bad poetry. The frailty cats are coming,
and the mystery that surrounds you.

You back up to the barge, and inquire: it's
deliberate love—it's politics with a hat— it's
Pekinese dialect—it's an Oliver
North film. Fume at the choice alliteration.

One back falls from the shoulders. Autumn
crowds: even through the wide angle it's
insidious, and punishing ack ack. So
demean it. One step away, and it's cerebralism.

Strip the landscape, curse the doves: time.

ANOTHER DAY

Another day in the city
drowning yourself in Diet Pepsie
(how's that, Dan Quayle?)
being the pom-pom of your age,
a tall lie in a sea of stalks
(the grunions are molting),
with memories of the Paleolithic
(indeed, they make bad sleep).

The plaid masks the coax,
the rude insistence hides the shy,
as the Catherine wheel grows old
and dark beneath punitive skies.

Partly sunny, southwest winds
at 20 miles per hour, tomorrow
to drag the satchel of books
down the dirt highway to the school,
—nothing tremendously Italian about it.

Largesse, it talks to you
with mouthfuls of vices.

FLIGHT OF THE YANGBAN

Erupted from 70 counties
with half a glass of champagne
still teething
with no myth of exactitude
to get my Heidegger right
I am the yangban
coo-coo-ka-choo
a Brooklyn paramour
with an external diaphragm
I picked up at Walmart
they're making them cheap
in Pullman, Illinois
bed of progressives
where the purebred live on souls
of cheats, daisies
for yangban who
cares, in a yangban hat
on TV, mother's video collection
that I had to return
every Sunday, NJ, circ. 1995
most likely late,
she'd watched all 70
78 times
(I think the Koreans are
doing much better
now, not so many
tapes, a little more relaxed

into the soil,
even the lawnmowers seem an
 exotic music)
who could be busy
complaining, 2002, economy
 worse than Lindsay's
when he started
worse than the homily
 that raised the twin towers
a "boondoggle," though
we miss them now, how
 ironic, and we miss
Kenneth Koch, John Wieners
 Larry Rivers, etc.
New American Original Species
they thought, we bought
 into it, feeling
part of it, America
 not a yangban, but
a cowboy, not an alien
but a president, presiding
 over an apartment
we could hardly afford
 only paying attention.

MY MUSIC

Talking about
my music, I
sleep in it, a

concentrate
composer. If
I am *in* it, as

Pollack says, I
make some-
thing useful.

PAPER SHIP

The parents take their tips, but sleep with ires;
a paper sailing ship sets out, then turns back
its clock, and sinks; nothing in the battery
prepared it for its dwarfish role. The time that
is wasted is thrown into the fire, where it grows
a face, with a harelip. Believing in such fires
only stokes the energy, the choke, that holds
the memory to its anchor, the forehead to destinies
that are always unfulfilled, because so old.
The body simply plummets, it is cramped and fares
poorly in a basement, or pantry, when it's locked
in patterns of the army, or television roles.
Sleep can provide the issues, those one can tear
easily from its staples; in wavering one is rocked.

JAW

The little heavy jaw, but
I'm by the window, so
it seems quite healthy, here
to be writing, just
one step from playing tennis,
 but true
 to myself,
I light up a cigarette, try
for second wind
attainment, sacrifice air
where words would be, which
I fear, more than, more than health
 itself, what
 could I
have to gain from consciousness, from
window and wind, from sound,
but the call to sacrifice,
finally, this attachment to body
like in some Jackie Chan flick,
 falling
 but fighting.

SCANSION

I would respect your pygmy scansion, were it
not all rain and weather: the drop down
into atmospheric lows, skirting the city:
blankets of mist over the cars and
speech, nobody groins a howitzer: fabrications
of myth in potato chips, lucky charms, the
battle of the bulge:

and we are

sailing

on circuits

of rime: cordons

keep the players off the grass, where the punks
practice their inane dances of lethargy,
the cops are unwilling, in this period of ethics, to
stake their claims, which is to say the
division of ratios protects the tangential queries
from overrunning the boundaries: high fly-
ing efforts at circumference are not welcome here:

strolling, it

is the manner

of the walk, turns

the eye from its

deliverance: the children run at hiccough pace:
blah blah lover the runways from which they
must propel their economies: oh, all unwilling!
(O'Hara): but there should be a devil that is deeper than
this, in the Dantescan universe: which we don't

want: scrawling on the sundays our graffiti of commerce
and magic, leisure is a syllabus: method is
 controlled by
 interests of
 the state: don't
 know too much, don't verify
discord: so that the streets remain green all day, and
no paradox comes unclean, no grumbling persists, in
parks of balked odor: bringing the matter back to grass and
properties: on them, we piss and shit: honor them
and the rifle of the mind is loaded with its teeming ponds
(which makes for fecundity) so that, alas, one
revels in the lack of transcendence: pornography of the
 trapped
Imagination:
 nation that waits
 politely: how
 true that deliverance.

THANATOS AND EROS

Thanatos and eros—

 bungee jumping from one to the other
 or a dyslexic combine that throws in troves
unequal but spirited poems;
 these trysts of banging heads that smother
 deliberations in the senates of hope,
 the flecks of eros
vengeful of the thrones.

THING

Five years, in an over-produced continent, from Williamsburg,
no longer trigger-happy, and possibly not thinking
of salvation, besides the project of urban renaissance,
not doped, not adderalled, and the proprioception
nulled by proper health, doodling self-portraits
on a machine too industrial-aged to care about Twitter,
this scene, sketched, pleases with its very abjection,
fleet-footed Hermes a methadone client at the community
center,

Aeolus well in the bag, even the prepositions of Beckett
not forthcoming, nor the minimalist nouns that support
them—

the sentence is but a SENTENCE without paternal attention,
pleasure in the way it wends, though *itself* is not content
for a poem, unless the poem itself seems to be speaking
to you, draped over the couch like some discarded kimono
of David Bowie's, sure in your disguise of eventful, domestic
culture.

EMPLOYEE SONG

I would be tired and I would be employed
Would that I would and there I was
When monkey's made a man of me
Warring factions derived from Harvard stones
Forcing the issue of Walden Pond
Whenever she came home

We were one thing to see
Were the one thing you could afford
When you worked alone

I could be tired and I could be employed
Whenever the cojones were clasped to my groin
The preacher's made a man of me
(I dialed up the telephone to see
But only got the number for MTV)
Would that I could but there I was
Not able to talk nor talk to me
Did she

We were the only thing to see
For twelve light years but none near Thee
Tracing our faults alone

I'd be tired I'd be alone
I'd be phony in a conference call
Disguising my voice as Lauren Bacall's

I could be employed were I Leonard Nimoy
Or Lauren Bacall (when she was alive)
Or would
Were I too have been caught alive
Tripped by the traps that the maps did seek
Wandering lost like a Melmoth walrus
Bringing her her cups and tea yes bringing her her cups
and tea
(Like a figure from Guy Maddin's movies)

I would be tired and I would be employed
I would be with her and I'd stake our joys
On the rise of the stock market and other employees'
Money
Would that I could kick this home
In this hut or castle by the diamond or honey sea

Would that I could kick this home
(We would call it our retirement home
We wedding partners or we wedding plums)
Waking to the sound of one womb scaping
Waning by the moon of wishful thinking
We'd love-of-laughter live or lying love
In this hut or castle by the diamond or balmy sea

PICASSO FISH

“Humuhumu-nukunuku-a-puaa”
goes this fish, dictionary
strapped to spine, like spuming
Schwitters’ bidden choral cast
of “Ursonate.” Vexed, victimized
by vampirish, warm currents,
its natal stamp (its camouflage)
suggests its trigger-happy namesake
before insufferable, erotic
poses. “Whether it’s more a compliment
to the fish, than to the painter, is
arguable.” Its booty (body patterns)
blend, frankly, with nothing
but art-deco artifices it’s not
privy to pry the sight of, absent
in sub-surface stellar regions.
Paranoid, practicing peering from
a steeple of blue, lips glued
to mirrors of soft, self-service,
this fish is no model fashion force,
rather, a radiant, hexed vehemence.

UAKARI

Princely vegetarian, though crimson
as if vodka-flushed, suggesting a bypass
operation's in order, the uakari is
(with principle agility, toes never hitting
the forest floor) solitary in the topmost
foliage of trees. Pink in captivity,
as if determined to sit straight, fly right, conform,
it deteriorates, intensifying
any zoo's struggle to strap its load.

OXPECKER

Mellow in profit, this deft neck-dangler
pecks at vermin, “hence its name”

(my card says, though one
wonders, indeed, how pestilent is the
ox!), is propitiously decked with clauses,
that double as arms, and eyes
blind to danger. They lick nights’ spew
(secretions from the antelopes’ and buffaloes’
lids) for drink, and harbor hosts
as favorites, returning each day, like vengeance
to a carcass. Its nest has “big hair”
(wig-like, briefly stomached from mammalian
interludes, o intoxicating strength!),
stitched together to form the hearth’s heart,
dreamily. It “obviously feeds on
ticks”—like rectal spasmodics? or like
reticence? Does it paralyze one’s defenses?

FURNITURE MUSIC

I.

Weekends, I'm entrusted
to myself, which is convenient;
no other pasty faces
lathering the windows, no.

My hips are scarred, as are
my hopes. A curl
in the centuries-long eyelash:
broken down Swedish fop.

Make of this toiletry what
you will, heroine, I'm game
for that—for the others I won't
speak, rather nod

off, as I'm doing now.
Fax me images of mittens, I
command, but my credit—
what's with all these possessives?

Alas, Starbuck's is open.
Did I mention Toulouse Lautrec?
Of course (gingham asper
flunk shlepp), not, not in my poem.

My electronic equipment

dies, I can barely
type any longer—used to be
quite easy, flipping a lid
and turning her
on,
noticing a rhythm
ego as it spills forth—
 lady with cocktails
who has just published a book
on the Postmodern Lyric.

All with a will
to hide—
poem of crisis
we'd ask you sluriously
do we have
to die?

And the crisis
responds—
with jackhammer
grinding,
with rubbled intent
—that we read.

Rather than retire the question,
perspire in the continued insurrection.

The doilies become custard.
At last, Tonto, to begin again.

2.

How to wake, how to wake one
with the specificity, and the damage
controlling outside
playing upon the unspecificity
of being in “Plato’s Cave,” thoroughly convinced
of the Immortals.

Waiting for the poem to crack and Eternal Light
rather than the emissions of amoebas—

He once said painting was “putting decorations on a white
rectangle.”

My tense
is to believe him, conversing
somewhere outside of the rubber band
with “gift economy”
and a pressed red shirt
suitable substitutions for authority
with their red caps and black sashes.

Insense.

The primacy of Garamond type in the “thick journals,”
one’s personal grammar becoming grids and other city plans.

3.

Is this what it's like to sleep

in a pile of corpses?

(Poetry is an afterthought.)

I woke up because my dentures were dirty

and all the thinking was like 1975.

She was there. So was she.

And she was there. We called her Gullible Madness.

The pose of the pulse in Soho

makes my hair bristles breathe

but that's before I was largely disabused

of the inevitability

(houses made of Saran Wrap)

of the inevitability of death.

I can't say I feel much better now.

When they had that hinge joint in the putter

I was the star of a TV series

secretly filmed in Toronto but claiming to be

in Cleveland—why'd they do that?

As the days grow longer, I become an emphatic 7.

Civilization can go fuck me.

I want to be a part of that outer fringe,

hiring a dog

to chase linen.

4.

Some little pimple of hope
on the expanse—
green and pink advertising logos
with names like “Jeffrey” or “Pam”
consuming concentration.
Where the bump ends, and the skin begins
is academic.

Everything relies on the digital fix,
mollusks speed across the surface—
rubber trees spray their guerdon to the stars—
when the
trial commences—
oh! then the seance around the bonfire!
Can the cannibal never know the neighbor’s death throes?

One struggles for distinction—amidst the blowing turnstiles
foot placed, one after the other, ahead
into the continuing controversy
of how we stay late, what sources provide the juice
of the most jejune of our talentless cousins, our stoic, uninspired
aunts,
our teachers. Button one another up, that’s what we do.

So the children extend past our beseeching, anyway, starry-
eyed with bare feet
of the coals of winter’s stock exchanges, the
obfuscating this-or-that of the talk show hosts with winking
eyes (hey,

that's you with the crinoline bagpipes! captured on digital disk
and never to be forgotten until the late-nineteenth century
quest
for closure corrodes)—
I think that's what she said. But in Lausanne, it was Gutenberg
who framed the psychosis that, since, we've been swimming
and losing
our balance about. With our own standard companies dri-
ving the oral traditions
to their graves,
helas, there are the other phenomena to aspire to, the majors
and minors
of a day in the subway—the tracks and the laughs—all that
is never considered.

The winding of the sentence used to be the pastime of aristo-
crats;
now, in the violent earth, the sentence is total
and so it must be short, sleek, inelastic, workman-like;
or so they seem to suggest: it must be feminine,
despite the acres of piss and penises it contains,
and must be somewhat approachable, like a building,
though it's wet.
The birth of tragedy out of song: what forms will surface
from our Dionysian rituals?

5.

If I couldn't hear this sound, but yes
I hear it. Every ass is a bouncing Savannah,
but the beauty of this urban avenue
is the necessity one feels to have to make a home
in oneself: flags in the nostrils.

The skull of the couch placates my loneliness,
you see. Fidgeting the Star Trek hymnal:
there're seven pianos in the warp,
twelve fingers dance gayly along their keys,
post-op, life-off. Tourniquets are salutary.

That way one slumbers in hypertext
burritos, lathers up in fumigious Christian
foam, dial X on the telephone
thirty-seven times in no particular order,
the flowers arrive with their careerist bartender,
so piss. Williamsburg, Athens, gone
so plastic and suspicious in an apartment.

Things you've never seen
in dreams or on TV...
a man being helped out of an elevator,
or waiting...
just "waiting."
What colorless green is that?

6.

As I said
to my friend, John, this
tired poem of mine
will never stop, I
must compose it in Braille
in order to achieve
a wider audience.

I will take this all in, he says
to arrange is to arrange
to arrange is not to derange,
and so, I will try
to take it all in.

Unbeautiful, visceral
black spot surrounded by silver
on the retina,
calmly as stars block the night.

He reflects:
why couldn't I have been smarter
all those years,
 and English,
and in the mainstream of life.

If I could sleep, I'd be happy.
It's something I want to do.

What is this thing called swing?

In the vividness, I try
your eyelashes. Dis-
cover a plateau of flesh
has betrayed my location.

Let's hope he's dead in heaven.

7.

I don't think much of this
will make sense. I know
indeed, the street wends further
than knobby knees carry thee.
You took me here, thinking
I'm a lover, a ghost of
previous cinematic composites
but, alas, I am an egg.
What's that asking for our bravery
in occupation? Do you
partake in the fancy rituals
of posing amidst specializations
of soul, hand, eye, all?
I'm respectful of your vocabulary
but my syllables are the art.

This is where I start spraying.

8.

These are the nice guys,
Master.

Yours is the elf
and everything else in it.

The ringing glass.
They're dusting the distance.

Scrooge

STARRING ROGER DALTRY AS SCROOGE

The purveyors of:

“My nerves are bad. Yes, bad.

Speak to me. Why doesn't anyone ever
speak to me. Speak”

are ridiculous.

Seventy-five Santified capitalists later...

I'm really
just dangling above the prostate.

9.

“It makes us pray again,”
ordinarily I’d just pass Go,
but he was different, cute
in that Andres Serrano sort of way,
in profile, metaphysically Indian.

If you collect the debts
of another man’s debts,
but I had play stations to do
and minded my own business.

The choired strings of the Brookiyn
Bridge loomed in the mist
above legions of dancing gringos
I’d read about, on the island
from which I’d escaped for a refreshing furlong
which I had deserved for some time.

As papers go,
this one is good.

But now my breezy moustaches
sense danger, my tie leaps westward
to the porn shops by the playground
where they drink diamonds by the tea,
all radiant in the glow of a Tuesday afternoon.
“I’ll gladly pay you Tuesday
for a hamburger today,” I hum

in jodhpurs, spandex, and other glam slacks.

How sensational

to feel Nietzschean!

My mother would say it's just a ruse.

So I settled for some André Breton,

a Corona Light, a guilty package of Gitanes

Katz's famous reuben, and an Ikea port-a-john.

10.

He'd managed to remain in the news:
all these people, dimpled copycats—
let's jack into the logarithm, placate
that demand for the exterior
that is flesh, is soft and supple.

The moon rose behind the mesh
of the Ancients, shadows on the sands
of Tranquility Phase Court:

 where earlier had been the demonstration
against the Academy no one demeaned,
reviewed, or noticed.

A sonnet's worth of noise now would be fantastic,
fandangoid and elastic, pretty and cheap,
smart yet solipsistic, spoke the soothing Elaborator
in the Mark Seventeen Headset.

The Fostex Capital Five perimeter was eroding,
soon, it would be time to hasten far hence, distances
measured in hype-years, googol-miles,
to the arboretum they fashioned in the catalogue.

 She approaches from the video with a slight groan.

“Hazards are in the palm of my history,”
leaks the vibrator, stammering with junk
the last loafer left to be considered
as art, or the decorative arts, at least,
presaging a deterrence. Tulips:
vis-a-vis, tulips, heh,
marvel at them as if stranded on a wind-swept promontory

coke-addled, struck by kindnesses that
finally, were black globs of gel
swarming up to the parking lots of the tenements.

“This freedom corrodes,” she intrudes, I think
to my benefit, as it was a tight fit here, all by
myself. She of the damask eyes. A Burt
I’d never known. So the collectibles continue.

One, two, I’ve said this several
times. It was recognizable as Ming
again, the Ming Family Christmas
boiling all the toaster ovens, flicking the switch.

II.

Like Sharaku's Japanese
I like to make funny faces,
is that protest?
It's not, famn family,
the earnestness of my waist
in Hoboken light,
red patent leather,
checked shirt, tan, sunglasses—
this leisure is diplomacy.

But what to make of Jacques Debrot?
they ask. Tyro sniggers, coughs
blood into his monogrammed handkerchief
and blunders some phrase
lifted from T. J. Snow,
all in some Bergsonian moment
that the bystanders don't catch on, no
5:14 on a Saturday, at the Ear
that didn't exist when we meant it to, and now
is still known
as the only place to meet.

Some from fear of depression
learning love of good paper...
some going out,
 drinking too much,
making friends.
And when he pretends

to have none of the information
 we are smarter
about history, but
duller about the present day,
some wanting to write home about
the price of batteries in Afghanistan.

“Bomb them with jobs, food
and education!” They were listening!
And abrasive cleaners and Limp Bizkit
and telethons
and the books of Guy Debord—
and then some pretentious accents
to deflect the pious ones,
 or street accents
to make up new songs.
Anudda one ride’s the bus-a.

The intestines can choke on wheat:
Celia Sprue.

Piano music: strong as pills.
Blocked moments persist
in this blue, late light
that wants to suffocate the rules.
 Pineal, corrective of
immediate activity in the fingers,
slivers of this excess
balance pressured figurines.
 Turn an eyelash

toward the door
recognizing a person late
arriving for your retrieval
who had disembarked six days ago, and
 rained on and impatient,
unskilled as you are, listens
not. So that the lock on
the door is ripped from its screws.
So that the lock on
the door has been ripped from its wood.

12.

Something smokes beside the clock's loneliness:
the speaking rabbit queries, its nods and suggestions
a procreative applause in these winter preparations,
while nothing thrums my heart in this flattering holiness.

No reason to attend to sense, is this
some sort of failure? A test, that time
truly be a ribbon in which the midden
of experience finds itself housed?

To chart the drift and currents of
as poetry, some American mission
imagining a frontier in the trivial?
A body on crests of the very seconds?

Eventually, to see colors
go on from there
not having any topics.

So smart, these jokes:

I could almost write a poem about it.
Pray, eventually,
for the experience: a bustling wheat field.

My brand of lethargy can't withstand it.
Eventually, going slower,
with no high-kicks and somersaults.

You might call it
two separate islands,
how to love,

how to beseech,
and when
 she's gone
the two islands
were strange fiction.
You should have been here
ten second ago
because, most likely,
you'd still be here now.

**Mutter Tongue
(To Hearing)**

MUTTER TONGUE (TO HEARING)

after Rilke

I. I.

A tree climbed there. O pure transcendence!
Oh Orpheus sings! Oh high tree in ear!
And all went silent. Yet in that silence
came forth new Beginning, Sign and dizzy Change.

Animals from stillness appeared within the clear,
disrupted forest—outside lairs and nests!
So, I discovered: that it was not out of cunning
nor from fear that they had become so lithe—but, rather,

from Hearing. Bellowing, shrieking, and roaring
seemed tiny in their hearts! Where
there was barely a hut for this to retire in,

some hideaway for the darkest needs
with an entrance whose posts were trembling—
you made a temple for them in Hearing.

I. 2

Unfasten Mad Chen wars aging heretofore
out-dieseled Heinekens glued frothing and queer,
unghastly, Karl, dirtier fooling shies
under-masculine, behind bets in mingling ores.

Anti-leaf emir, anti-all warrior Stuff.
D-bombing, D-itchy bee wonders, teeth
full-born Inferno, D-girl-footing weasels
and Jaeger-standing, Dartmouth shelf of graft.

Scene-shift the belt. Sinking her golf, rebates
choosy following, dastardly burger-hadda,
earth whacking shoe shone? Si, si Hermann, and deep.

Vote is Herzog? O, fearest you Demoting
elf-fingered wok, hay-sick, dyingly fair-haired?
Voting she in, house mare?... Unfasten Mad Chen...

I. 6

Ether in heat-seeker? Nine! House-biding
ripened earwax styling wider gnat hair,
kinder-car bowlers die smiling their violence,
fair-thee-for-Zelda fight, under-fair.

Gates wear zoo beds, solace opted tissues,
brought tics and milked tics, detonating seats
over air. Dervish worrying missions
enter dermatological decision meets,

eerily shining. Immolating, key shouting
and dearth sobbing from earth, round and round,
sigh, insolvent. Weed the chorus of Zoot Suits,

nifty can-dancing. Ultimate build in their swimming,
guys ass out-grabbing, guises out slimming,
boomerangs her fingering. Spanish, aunt prudes.

I. 9

Noon. Where the liar showed up,
ouched under shitting,
barfed those unend-licking slob,
owning ur-sitting.

Noon. Where mis-tokened from moon
assed, found them earring,
veered Nick, then lice-system Tom,
feature fare leering.

Maggie outs the spree-glands in time's
offense, farce woman,
fixing that spill.

Earnest item tripled by rhymes
fears, then, cyclamen,
ear-wig, animal.

I. 13

Fuller dabbles: burning un-bananas
stipple-bearing... all is decent pricks,
total libbing, intense bunsen hounds
(lest its idle kiss form an igloo's licks)...

vent its sea/earth check. The commies won fight.
Veered, ach, long same, numbing loss in moon?
Woe songs, words warren, fleecing soon,
out-damned food fights, upper rafter's fright.

Wagged, too, Sagan, vast ear apple's nun,
Decent Susan, D-sick, airiest verdict
Ma'am, in schmuckable lies out the tic tac,

car too burdened. Fog in trans-parent,
double-dutied, sonny, urging. He sings:
"O earth-farting, fool's lung, Freud and... Rather!"

I. 18

Horace! do Dad's lawyer, hear!
draw him, or babe him.
("Come in, fair kin, there,
thee is third heaven!")

Spar his kind Boring, while
idiot Dirk's opted. Buy
docks' thermal "in style,"
Will Self's gallon eye.

"Si, demon sheener."
(We thee sick waltz, rashed,
attendants salt, and smashed.)

Hot, thee (outs Answer Craft)
sea-owner lied and staffed
tribes and diners.

I. 22

Weird stint, the bribing men
(over, then, shitter sites)
named in as Kindly Guy
“him, him... er... imbibing them.”

Alice, alas, eyeing ends
(wired Sean, fore-rubber Sign),
bent is, for violins:
earth wight, unspined.

Can Obie, over tense smut,
in it, on dismal kite,
(mixed, indent “Fool for Sue”)

alias Easter House-guest Dude,
dangle and “I” Iggy’s height?
Blooming, and Boo!

II. I

Ad-men, do umpteenth, boorishly shtick!
Inner fort, strum dice Eisner,
sine Rhine, eyeing a Tao-ter felt rum. Go gainst wish,
in time it's mixed roomlier shrine to ya.

High ziggier feller, do in
all make Escher mirrors, in pin,
spare hamster, doof on alone-moodier lynch peering,
round gain wind.

Wheat fields frond doozier stale-mates, diorama for showing,
inanity in un-mire, munching fins,
stint free, fond sun.

Irk gents tool Mitch, loved, true, Vole knocked in stymier court,
true, hind-men gluttet rinse?
Run, dung, and splat Midas's works.

II. 2

Slowly, damned master, munch meal desultorily,
near blood, do Newark like strict
Abraham, so named off-stage, elder that's hiding
hind-sighting, laughing, dervishes in sick

wrens, Eden morning ear-problems aligning
odors in glances, third preening end-lickers
ending. Dance ad-men directing the kickers
patter, faulted, moored in shining.

Vast havens, now again finest in un-Russiad
lands, fair glowing, dare communing, gay, shout
bucking death's labels, for immune fear laundries

ach, dare-haired—working the four ushers?
Newer, veered into naught, prizing them louts,
single the Hertz—that, in its Grantas, goes boundaries.

II. 9

Rude oaf, hair-shifting man, Nick, their end-bearing, folders
unfast-fast fasten neat longer and hold. Speed!
Hiney is the guy-girl's, sky-hind's, wide, older
cramps, thermal host star—indeed.

Washes dirt slightly, beacon, Thad's shit, Dad's shat off,
very abrupt—weekender here spills from Zurich.
All them gabber's stop, enshrined, unshouldered—through it.
Offends the heart? Err enters—"parr" (golf).

Fear licking Builder, a crammer, vaulting—a giraffe
trailing (bum sick), feeling god-liking Saran
mares—as unwound for the Grecian gorillas, that laugh.

Vinny was kicked—Hal's de-heimliched Liza's girl roll-on,
(she used him in interim), she vaguely around
free in-still-sprawling-as Kids—house an under-arrest
brawl-in.

II. 16

Inner ear there from yous Alf girl dissing!
Is there God, dear, Stella's fella highed?
Fearing sharpers den fear vote lent, advising!
Haver her ear pissed hotter and espied?

Sulks the rhino. The goo-widened spender.
Kneads more enders, kicks in Seinfeld's welt,
ails indemnity sticks, damns fry menders.
Under Bs vaguely, en-Gorgon stealthed.

Immured, the dodoes stinked
out their hero's phone, in sclerotic quills, he
vended their guts, dim smiling Sheik, and Totes them.

Un-sworded new Zardo, alarming Angie's Thames,
"unda's lame urban pits," (Seinfeld's shell), he
outed Dem's Schillery instinct.

AFTERWORD

This book contains poems that I created, or co-created, between the years 1989 and about 2002.

The earliest poem, a translation from Virgil, is the only one included from before the time I was diagnosed with diabetes on October 30th, 1989 (just my luck, Ezra Pound's birthday) when I was twenty. But again, as luck would have it, my disease—and complete inability to pick up from where I had left off at Bard College—forced me to spend an extra year in school, which is why I had the opportunity to take classes with John Ashbery, whose influence is absurdly apparent in several of these poems.

The sections are not in chronological order. “Juvenilia” is, obviously, the earliest writing, though it overlaps with the section titled “New York School.” I wrote the translations for example (except for the Virgil) after Ashbery had arrived at Bard. “Little Orphan Animal” was written after I'd moved to New York while I was living in Chelsea in Section 8 housing (I don't know how I got this) in 1993. “Fact's Bird” was written largely in Astoria where I'd moved in 1994. After Astoria, I moved back to my house in New Jersey to save money while attending the CUNY Graduate Center, and spent most of my student loans on publishing two issues of my poetry journal, *Arras*. I never graduated.

The “Collaborations” range from the late 90s to the early 00s, as do the sections titled “Streams and Stanzas” and “Strange Booty.” I don’t date my work, much of which I first draft on a typewriter, so I organized these sections in terms of some aesthetic or conceptual coherence. I have no idea when I wrote the series of homophonic translations (i.e. transcriptions of the sounds of the German words into English regardless of the meaning) of Rilke, but it was certainly the 90s. He was another poet I tried to translate in college, but at some point I must have grown frustrated and vomited out this set.

The two sections titled “Furniture Music” are derived from pages I found in my boxes of typewritten drafts from my last years in New York. I must not have been very impressed with these poems then—they didn’t push for a new way to write, but I was also not confident that what I was doing mattered much (yes, depression) since I never tried to publish any of them. When conceiving of *Versuche*, I found there was a lot of material from this time—a line, a stanza, but not quite a “poem”—that I could organize into a longish, meandering, again Ashberian thing: that became “Furniture Music.” The sequence “Furniture Music I” is just shorter poems from the same mass of papers that I think stand up on their own.

Any of my friends who have some knowledge of American poetry from, say, the 10s to the 90s will see what I’m working through here: Pound, Williams, Stevens, Moore, Eliot, Creeley, O’Hara, Ashbery,

Schuyler, Duncan, Wieners, Baraka, Ceravolo, Coolidge, Bernstein, Andrews, Hejinian and Mackey are the most salient. Among the British: Raworth, Prynne and—from a little longer ago—Donne, Coleridge, Hopkins, Auden, and to a very great deal an Irishman, Yeats. These are just the perpetrators who come to mind as I write this; they are hardly the only poets I've ever admired or sought to imitate, just the ones who I've most stolen from in this selection.

I really thought I'd "made it" in a sense when several of my poems appeared in Jennifer Moxley's journal *The Impercipient* in the mid-90s—finally, poems that I liked being read by people I admire! I can't thank her enough. Even earlier poems finally appeared in *First Intensity* in 1996—the Araki Yasusada issue, fittingly (Google it). I've occasionally (unwisely) published poems long after their composition dates, often because I was asked for material and had nothing I was happy with, but occasionally because I thought a poem I'd passed up in an earlier book deserved a *hearing*. For the record, here's a list of journals (not including school journals) where the bits included in this collection have previously appeared:

580 Split [2008]: "Cheqw!"

Asian Pacific American Journal [1996]: "Calypso," "Author Photo," "Diary Entry"

Callaloo [2000]: "Sisters of Charity," "Les Assis," "Suburban Night," "Fact's Bird"

dANDelion [2003]: "Mao's Gift to Nixon"

- Drunken Boat* [2015]: “Countering the Luddite Itch with a Tin Switch”
- First Intensity* [1996]: “Free To Be Yu and Mee,” “China-town,” “Poem 33”
- The Impercipient* [1994, 1995]: “Now, o sweet question...,” “Thank the gales...,” “Scattered Norm.”
- Interlope* [c. 1998]: “The Cosmopolitans”
- Jacket* [1999]: “Pastoral Disposal,” “The Apple Generation”
- Kenning* [2000]: “Seven Year Old Poets”
- Model Homes* [c. 2000]: “Postlude: the appropriation of peach,” “Before Odilon Redon”
- Object* [1999]: “Thermosaging Wayne”
- Ocho* [2008]: “White Sestina,” “Complaint of Pierrot”
- Premonitions: The Kaya Anthology of New North Asian American Poetry* [1995]: “Verl.”
- “US” Poets Foreign Poets: A Computationally Assembled Anthology* [2019]: “Walkabout”

I’ve occasionally dropped a few of the earlier poems into my proper books. “Landscape for Two or Tree,” “Seven-Year Old Poets,” “Sisters of Charity,” and “Holiday” appeared in *Angry Penguins* [2000]. “Les Assis,” “Verl” and “The History of Wiggling” appeared in *What is Said to the Poet Concerning Flowers* [2006]. I made a big blunder, largely due to depression, when editing *“Viva Miscegenation”: New Poems* [2012] by including a section titled “Strange Booty” which included “Picasso Fish,” “Lines On Your Head,” “Complaint of Pierrot,” “The Apple Generation,” “Aver,” “Abstract Internationalism,” “Carnival Barks,” “Be-

fore Odilon Redon” and “The Royal Life (As Told To...)” You should just rip out those poems (and probably a few others) from the book if you have a copy—it makes it much better!

I should note that the translation of Rimbaud’s “Seven Year Old Poets” in this volume is not the one that appears in my recent book *Festivals of Patience: The Verse Poems of Rimbaud* (Kenning, 2021); the version here is from my last year in college. “Zeppelins” is an earlier draft of a poem with the same title in *Gulf* (in the *Gulf* version, the phrases are organized in reverse alphabetical order). “Mao’s Gift to Nixon,” a collaboration with Jeff Derksen, is the first version published in *dANDelion*; Jeff later revised it and included it in his book *Transnational Muscle Cars* [2003]. I don’t know which one is worse [winky emoticon], but this poem, along with the other collaborations, are to me a testament to the warm, exciting friendships I had.

Much as I worked and reworked several of my poems in high school, be thankful that none of the poems from that time are included here. There is, however, one small bit—my first “published” poem—that I’d like to throw at you. Here it is:

LITTLE GOVERNMENTS

little governments
are her attractive blue eyes—
sapphire confusion

Cute! In a sense, it was an attempt to employ Symbolist poetics (i.e. Rimbaud) in haiku form. The ultimate model would have to be Pound's short poems from his Imagist phase which I loved. "Pagani's, November 8" runs in its entirety: "Suddenly discovering in the eyes of the very beautiful / Normande cocotte / The eyes of the very learned British Museum assistant." "L'Art," a somewhat inscrutable statement on aesthetics, runs: "Green arsenic smeared on an egg-white cloth, / Crushed strawberries! Come, let us feast our eyes." I think, in my poem, the turn on the word "governments," not to mention the use of the word "sapphire," quite a stretch for me then, shows that I had learned something, if only how to pantomime the cosmopolitan Pound.

I wrote my first sestinas in high school, inspired again by Pound. I never particularly liked his "Sestina: Altaforte" in terms of its content—just another "stale cream puff" from his troubadour phase—but I was fascinated by its form. I didn't, however, realize that the words appeared in a particular order, so my first sestinas simply repeated the end words capriciously. However, the computer programmer in me (I'd coded quite a bit as a 12-year-or-so old on a Vic-20) not to mention my taste for the baroque led me, in a sense, to *reinvent* the sestina: I unwittingly started organizing the end words in the same mathematical pattern that the troubadours used! I've since often returned to the form to test whatever poetic idiom I was working in at the time. The sestinas in this book are, in order of

composition: “Jazz,” “White Sestina,” “Free to be Yu and Mee” and “Landscape for Two or Tree.”

I should explain why I titled this book “Versuche (Tries).” Another of my lights, the German poet and playwright Bertolt Brecht, published a series of volumes, essentially his collected works, toward the end of his life which he titled “Versuche.” I believe, however, that he first employed the term in relationship to his “Lehrstücke,” or teaching plays, written after he had become a committed Communist and which were intended to inculcate, in the years just before the rise of the Nazis, leftist, revolutionary principles. The one I know best is “Der Jasager” (“The Yes-sayer”) through its manifestation as a “Schuloper” (“school-opera”), primarily sung by children, with music by Kurt Weill. Another Lehrstück, “Der Ozeanflug” (“The Flight Across The Ocean”), concerning Charles Lindbergh’s first transatlantic flight, was also intended to be a short opera with a score by Paul Hindemith though the two didn’t get along, primarily for ideological reasons and, in fact, grew to loathe each other (Weill finished the score). I don’t exactly know why Brecht called his plays “Versuche,” but I love the idea of titling works “attempts” or “tries,” and given that this collection is of early work from when I was aspiring, and often failing, to achieve something in poetry that was new to me, if not to others, I thought the title fitting.

Notes for readers: if you have little or no experience with “avant-garde” tactics in poetry, I suggest you start with the “New York School” section as it’s the most

lyrical, or at least the most fluid—I think Debussy was my musical muse for a number of these. The “Juvenilia” section is also very accessible, and after that “Little Orphan Animal,” which is more herky-jerky, like O’Hara crammed into the pipeworks of Williams’s line sense. I think “Furniture Music I” is also fun along those lines, but only if you’ve acquired an appetite for Surrealism. For readers looking for more “avant-garde” work: much of “Streams and Stanzas” and all of “Fact’s Bird,” “Collaborations” (which are largely silly), “Strange Booty” and “Mutter Tongue” should be your first stops.

This collection is a chart of “influences,” but I think of this as a book of friendships as well. Stacy Doris, Michael Gizzi and Kevin Killian first come to mind as people I’ve loved, admired, and who have passed too soon. In no sensible order: Robert Kelly, Ann Lauterbach, John Yau, Tim Davis, Drew Gardner, Walter K. Lew, Bruce Andrews, Steve McCaffery, James Sherry (my first book publisher), Bob Perelman, Jackson Mac Low, Stephen Rodefer, Judith Goldman, Sianne Ngai, Miles Champion, Tim Atkins, Dan Farrell, Kevin Davies, Jordan Davis, Nada Gordon, Gary Sullivan, Rod Smith, Caroline Bergvall, Jennifer Moxley, Juliana Spahr, Bill Luoma, Michael Scharf, Lytle Shaw, Anselm Berrigan, Edmund Berrigan, Elizabeth Fodaski, Lee Ann Brown, Kim Rosenfield, Alan Gilbert, Mark Wallace, Kristin Prevallet, Rodrigo Toscano, Laura Elrick, Rob Fitterman, Melanie Neilson, Craig Dworkin, Darren Wershler and a host of others were part of my life then and provided me sustenance—I’m

sure I'm missing names! Tim Davis, who I'd known since Bard, and Miles Champion, who I first met around 1997 or so, were my closest friends, both of them very different from me in character, but who taught me more about art, music and poetry than any school could (we had fun, too). My "decade" was the 90s, and as much as I've derided it (playfully) in poems since then, for me it's still an undiscovered country—not one I ever wish to explore, I'm just saying.

My dedication to Charles Bernstein should say it all. Who has more made you feel like you are part of the great narrative of something important—*poetry*—than he has since the 1970s? As an "Ezra Pound fan girl" (as one of my students at UCLA described me in a poem she had submitted to workshop!), I know that it was Charles who really dragged me out of my *passeism* at Bard and gave me a sense of possibility—meaning, toward where experimentation lies, past an exhaustion of method. I was *taken* by poetry, as a very skeptical Christian in a Jesuit high school, where (yes) we were encouraged, even pressured, to act in favor of the dispossessed, the despised, the poor and needy—I felt terrible turning my back on these lofty priorities when turning to art! I've always needed some confirmation that poems—meaning, the poems that I could or would write—were more than products for a cultural elite or mere aesthetic bonbons, which isn't to say that I needed to feel that my poems confirmed some identity, or articulated a field of concerns, in the agora of "social justice," just that I needed to feel that the po-

ems *are*—that they were *objects* in the world, and as such, a *disconfirmation*. Well, it goes on from there.

I'm glad that Charles is now a friend, even as we see each other only occasionally, living on different coasts as we do. To be able to be frank with a person I genuinely admire—a great artist and essayist, for so long a real role model, and one of the greats—is a rare pleasure (and relief). Even when I didn't really know him personally, essays like “Pounding Fascism” (look it up!) helped me to work through my thoughts when the awfulness of Pound's politics and activities during WWII really dawned on, and started to really trouble, me. I think of myself as a (Hugh) Kenner Poundian prior to that, someone only concerned with the aesthetics and experimentation, bracketing the politics (*The Pound Era*, which I consider a prose masterpiece, was something I reread several times in high school).

My two sisters and I, through my parents and Korean uncles and aunts, and through photographs (my father was a journalist in Korea) and stories told at the dinner table, naturally thought the Korean War was about as deep as the shit pit got—but I'm really just making excuses for my utter lack of a *felt* knowledge of history when I was a teenager. Part of my affection for Charles, and also to Bruce Andrews, was that, of all the poets, young and old, who I knew and pestered at the time, only they seemed to recognize the abomination of what had happened in Korea (Bruce's writings on the Vietnam War were important to me), even if largely through a general sense of the poet's imperative to take

on the burden of global politics (not just of local, American concerns). It's one thing to have a *theory* for why war and genocide happens, it's another to have a visceral, and guiding, sense of the stakes for largely marginal individuals when these sorts of catastrophes occur, as they never cease to do.

Charles has also stepped in to help me a few times during my (not particularly illustrious) academic career and, more informally, with my poetic one: he's invited me to a few great parties in his apartment where I cavorted with a number of eccentric, brilliant luminaries, and has nudged an editor or organizer here or there to consider me for this or that. His mark is all over this book, and I'm not embarrassed about it. It's with love, Charles.

Los Angeles, July 31, 2021

This is a slightly altered edition of a version of this book dated July 31, 2021 of which 10 copies were printed and numbered. This version corrects formatting errors, switches the places of two poems, and has a slight revision to “Scansion.”

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