

# Café Jitters

*A Collection of Poems*

Richard P. Gabriel

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## Wherever You Go

below me  
now cars whisper rush  
she is there  
she whispers her words are a rush  
of goodbyes and so  
longs my job is to wait  
for her for her  
to walk away across the bridge  
I stand on hoping it is symbol  
above her  
now I whisper pause  
she is there  
she shushes her words pause  
my goodbyes and so  
long as she walks away  
my job is to wait  
until it is over

## Her Eyes and the Beauty of Them

she came up the street in a cart  
to the spot where her beloved was loading  
his brothers onto a wagon bound for the drugstore  
after the shooting to be patched up

to the west the sun was thinking  
of setting after a series of cool breezes  
and purls of gunfire

mountains to the east faced the possibilities  
of echoing stoically & riders going up Turkey Creek  
could not be blamed for pausing and looking back

she was without her bonnet and she  
worried of her reputation  
and the blood on his hands and coat  
there was much here to love

her breathing slowed and her eyes  
opened up with the sun passing out of sight  
as she turned to the east away from him  
and the dead in the dust

she touched the back of his hand  
amid the quiet whispering up and down  
the street and she felt the special thing happening  
we call birth of a romance

## Le RPG Will Be Est Mort

the way people spoke in 1880  
was nicer and how they wrote too  
the order of the words and the structure  
of their sentences moved forward  
lapping on the reader's mind like  
a big dog's hot tongue

just imagine what that dog  
's tongue has been onto

the germs from your sentences  
are being licked onto my brain  
right now

the filth comes from everywhere  
and I don't mean porno  
someone has to love for money

here (hear?) listen to this:

"On his person was found  
five or six dollars in small change,  
which was all his store.[which was all his store—got that?]  
He had no personal effects of any value,  
and but for the kindly remembrance [shhlurp]  
of people of means who knew Norton  
and had business relations with him  
many years ago when he was a citizen  
of substance and standing,  
he would have had a pauper's funeral  
at the city's expense."

-January 11, 1880, no byline

I need to get someone on something  
like that now so that when I croak  
it'll be ready

bring your dog

## No One Can Be Left Behind

let's plan it together  
although the warm swirling breezes  
and the lightning swift touches  
under the precious maple  
hurt like hell the thoughts  
of endings but the advice  
was clear: plan the end at the start  
so goals are in the open  
not under a tree  
not swirling and tenuous hanging  
by threads nor with a blank hole  
around our hearts and heads

important moments we  
are alone because our souls  
are built that way the soul  
needs to be alone to ensure  
the real world is the one  
helping or hurting  
at the crucial times  
and not world of gods

## On TV

what if the most  
beautiful woman in the world...

she is what her skirt entangles

the fires that warm are left  
by the purple in the carpet  
and the shininess of the moon as seen  
through new windows

it has been snowing

what if she  
were the warm fire or the carpet

she is the earth and all that is tight

## Float Free

we are in a mood to float  
first up but then toward the floor  
onto it  
then through it and under  
deep through the soil  
then the clay and sand  
hardpan then bedrock  
past layers filled with water  
to where it is still hot  
we are in the floating mood  
and instead of slowing  
we accelerate

## Cracking

it's all collapsing now  
and my sloth is triggered  
by fear

like little birds  
remarking accidentally  
and songs taking on cries  
of battle and allure  
the 13° and settling snow  
work through infiltration  
and device

the crevices have formed  
from fissures and less  
collapse seems  
what's required



## Round We Go

on the turntable  
3 of us turning the wheel  
using a key with a 10' bar  
round we went and so the bridge  
to let the expensive cruise boat  
pass through  
there was no way to the banks  
should the 100yearold mechanism fail  
and this is the closest I came  
to living my dream which was  
always a nightmare

January 9, 2005

## Lifework & My God

flurry of activity  
light accumulation of results  
blowing winds drift things up  
into ridges  
    with flowing points

January 10, 2005

## **Autonomous**

when the wind blows  
wings stand up  
and the bird notices

## Po Power

synchronize the winds  
and turning pages  
line things up  
so the visual and aural mesh  
let what you think match what you smell  
by coincidence not by reason  
no cognition in the setup  
when everything is in sync  
nothing will be noticed

**Everything**

nothing

January 13, 2005

## Repose

once I heard a pretty song  
behind the barn which smelled of dung  
and nearby fields lent their mown-grass  
smell and breezes would blow it all  
away

now my self is like that  
yes like that

## Lonely Approach

he opens each door  
in her apartment while she sleeps  
quietly opening  
looking  
closing  
going from room to room while outside  
it rains in feminine torrents

behind one door  
a small closet just outside her room  
he was surprised by a mirror  
and he came face to face  
with himself  
with the rain's pounding  
diminishing

## Nothing Better To Do

the room is cold  
just off his mother's bedroom  
it used to be her mother's apartment  
and now it's the band room  
or sometimes the pool room

with a cheap reel-to-reel tape recorder  
(this is 1966)  
with the love song he plays over and over  
with a yearbook picture of her on his lap  
for hours until his mother turns on  
her light and it's time for him  
to head to his room and read the book  
he reads over and over

40 years later he sits in a cold room  
writing over and over  
while the same song plays in his ears  
through noise canceling headphones  
played from a file on his computer  
the yearbook in the next room  
getting yellow like he is



## Frozen Dead

nights are self-pity  
waking and staying awake  
worried about how the end of our lives will play out  
will it be like my father  
who worked each day in his playful way  
knowing that there was nothing he couldn't fix  
or like my mother  
who after he died  
prayed nothing would break  
because no one but him  
could ever fix it

## Boy in a Barbershop

trips to the barber  
were to a world of men and men's habits  
the drive was to the coast town  
all brick and white clapboards and black trim  
in an industrial/fishing part of town  
where things and food were manufactured

there were two barbers  
men waited reading magazines and talking idle chat  
I recall sitting on a box and in later years not  
the buzzing clipper and snippy scissors  
the hot lather to make the lines on the backsides of my head  
sharp and precise as the razor wiped sharp on leather  
(a thing I never understood)

two things  
the small cut hairs under my collar that itched for hours  
the trip to the small magazine store to browse after  
no three  
the smells like women in an enclosed room  
and how the rough men fancied it  
yes that's the word  
they fancied it

## What Now

let me tell you my vision for the past

explain the future

excuse it

## No One to See It

the fear of the super father  
is not of him but by his acts  
when I put my hand in my life's bag of futures  
the choices permitted him are never  
in my grasp

by being able to take them  
he has denied them to me  
in sacrificing  
himself to the pleasures of his makings'  
expression he forgot I needed them too

and now the fear is like the stranger inside  
who has no hands to hold no eyelids  
to forget with and a black cloth always  
over my heart

## What a Ride is Like

the field overhung  
with fog rising with the setting sun  
the grasses and brambles low and brown  
wind winding its way through them to the road  
where I cycle fastpaced home to get there  
before darkness ascends  
in the copse or perhaps beyond  
a small group (a pack) of coyotes  
yipbarks and whines and as I  
move rapidly past the place  
they seem to follow and I am reminded  
of my sleep interrupted by a nagging  
a haunting a trailing behind but catching up  
of what I've done wrong to what  
I plan to do

## Little One

we followed them  
they in their black Mustang with black  
and yellow plates  
colors we memorized while singing in falsetto  
they were in our town  
first at the ice cream shop  
then the grocery store  
going back and forth and us  
just on bikes trying to follow

gorgeous  
but dark haired  
clarifying in their beauty  
they had driven  
driven  
all the way in that car with the foundation of their sensuousness  
in buckets  
across desert  
plains  
warm wet hardwood forests  
all the way  
here

Boogsie  
Kur'jan  
this was too much for us  
the local beauties would never be enough  
yet another accident of birth  
conspiring against the girls  
not size  
this time  
not shape  
not the lips or eyes  
hair or scent  
the coast  
the wrong one and she's a frump  
the right one  
:  
surfer girl

## On The Shore

they left  
it was still summer after  
the sun set it seems heavily upstream  
we watched the car drive off  
top up  
west  
the girls who wanted us  
though not meaning us  
to love them  
were in their homes nearby  
glad for an absent reason  
knowing things about the sun  
and distance  
therefore hopeful that with their growing sizes and devotion  
they must be  
one day  
loved but did not count on  
how long reverb could ring  
or how long wait could be endured  
or how urgent could be the site of a sun part above  
part below  
the distant line of a red/dark horizon

## We Couldn't Ride

where is the right place  
beneath a telephone line strung up decades ago  
its poles pierced from linemans' pronged footwear  
and grayed by the wind and rain  
the sun with its vague desire  
coming and going  
the road just lies there  
its inescapable details  
the heat it gathers and releases  
fueling two stripes of grass to the horizon  
or the sick streetlight lit alley  
with furtive meetings and cross purposes  
electric lines crossing the sky like black roads  
if there is some heat here it is  
hanging back in the shadowed darkness  
like a cloud of love passing by without rain  
but in both the action is above  
the heat below  
and the slightest things are stretched  
or laid in blackness  
and someone has written a song  
and sung about it



January 24, 2005

## in the night

a cactus takes  
a century to grow a ton

regret is a 5 o'clock shadow  
remembered as lips approach

## Chosen Mission

remote perspective links  
me with the best characters  
like men in the bleachers shouting  
red-foreheaded complaints only  
the pigeons appreciate  
at men sweating in long pants

I sit at my machine and write

words come out noisy and pulverized  
I look for quirks in sound mixtures

it's just me and this room  
and the itch of thoughts  
the keys' scratchings can't end

write faster than those who write better  
write better than those who write faster

## Open Road

the road at night heading toward fall  
the clouds working in the dark covering  
the slutty moon and over the radio I wish  
were made from tubes the women sing  
as if the sadness in the words really happened  
and maybe they did to them to the people in the next farm  
whose lights are early off and whose yard light is fluorescent blue  
or wait maybe to me

## Shall Not

if only the clamor  
of the noisy guitar could foretell  
the passage of hopelessness and sinning  
but instead the sound is clarity over distortion  
and the imposition of the note  
between the sensible pitches  
a rational man would choose

but things ring out  
their sounds are just around the corner  
always  
things fade away  
or are plucked quick and throw down

shall we walk alone

## Sock Hop

the dances were like a string of solaces  
once a month the action  
the girls being women for a night  
the hallways filling with pop  
that the following Monday won't maintain  
I went only to watch never to do  
I wonder did they wonder  
what I saw what I heard  
who was I was a good question too

## Tired/Weary

the story shows that the end of life  
is full of monsters  
some in wet arm jungles  
others in cold blizzards piling up snow  
the question that breaks across all lips  
is is sadness  
a property of space  
or matter  
or energy  
it pervades so  
the ringing of the spheres is a pure blues

## The Anxiety of Bidimensionality

there is a foolish way  
to hook onto the tailgate of life  
be pulled on skates that mimic rational thought  
whose wheels soon wear down or whose  
bearings heat and seize onto a single thought  
too fragmentally and our fingers  
at once velcro and teflon catch and release  
caught onto debris and trinkets  
pulling us along our brains spinning  
trying to keep our feet  
our foundation  
solid yet fluid  
and there is  
a smart way

## Pliny

long ago people died  
in superheated foam  
flash incinerated  
and those who reported it were believed  
insane or kooks because  
nothing like that could happen

the world moved on  
it happens every 2000 years



## Stigmergy 1

carved words  
stretch english  
souped up and tugging at the hems of skirts  
our modern language bangs  
like a bass drum  
and the rhythm of writing  
lumbers on

## Lost

skin like tears  
hair falling like birthday ribbons  
legs and everything between shimmering  
like mirages of the desert  
but for me it's just  
a dream  
only a dream

## Found

## Il Ikey y su Pajaro

we are hoping for the beautiful painting  
to fall from its hooks into our hands  
we can take it home and hang it contentiously  
first in the den then the toilet area  
places of books and reflection surpassing  
the woes of flesh and elimination  
flat painted on flattened metal perhaps  
a fender pounded out and paints from Kelly Moore  
flat not satin

## It Started as a Promenade

we find the way crooked  
as streets are in old places  
once straight but wrinkled with age?  
arthritic from over experience and pummeling uses?  
beside the way are places to stop  
houses or taverns sometimes a small park  
old with long-living grass and shortened trees  
the way is in places  
a road or a street  
showing the particulars of design  
or frustration with the natural or uneven  
and people  
sitting by their doorways  
or stopping to talk on the streets  
selling chickens from barred cages  
and fish on ice and plates

this part goes through a sharp valley  
nothing but ruin along the way  
and down toward a pit it goes  
the sun behind a ridge  
and getting cold  
I am tired but my legs  
carry me faster  
faster with each step

February 5, 2005

## Doggerel

stories of me are fun to read  
packed with facts packed with lies  
the ultimate thing that I regret  
packed away the end unread

## Superbowl Sunday

he would have loved this year in sports  
two of his Boston teams winning championships  
he listened to them almost every night of the year  
and complained in a soft voice  
he listened in the dark  
to the radio rarely tv  
he went to bed disappointed  
most nights each year with his teams  
I miss him

## Not Likely

he listened and swayed  
two hopes neither workable  
his eyesight never improved  
his teams did but without him listening

he would laugh at me for this

## I'm a-Leaving

what does a poem a day mean?  
one per day or one per day  
on average?

is it stupid to write just to write?  
what if I get no better?

tomorrow I leave for Switzerland  
a trip I have hated for months  
as time goes on I like  
staying in one place more and more

is this practice too?

## on a Jet Plane



## Any Time

Bern has its beauties too  
walking around like stuffed sausages  
like food looking to the predators on either side of the street  
things have been here a long time  
and why haven't more things turned to dust  
the beauties do one at a time  
but beauty not not here not any time

## Soon

## On Walking Back from Some Fancy Dinner

the pinnacle of garbage  
bags and boxes a stage of recitation and relief  
beauties in decor decided on to be green  
and drums

we pause picking  
our way through debris and just around the corner  
excitation there must have been great joy here  
on the way to celebrating the joy's of Christ's death  
revealing the lacquered truths of life painted  
as on the porcelain masks on sale in the shut shop

but for us there are papers to read filled with facts  
important beyond the price of the paper and ink  
that makes them up

her tears are painted on  
a tar sticking her emotions to her skin  
the buildings are tagged  
leaning toward the heaviest meanings

one of us slips

## Zurich Lining

so they wear black  
you can see only their faces  
their hair is black and their eyebrows  
they are luscious and I am filled  
by the plates of food they've brought  
she shines her eyes on my hands  
as she places the bill between my hands  
my hands are on a leather wallet  
that she finds irresistible  
that said I pay

February 12, 2005

## Tired & Blue

treated like a child  
the differences belied and underneath  
the place between loving and dying  
lies in incoherence

February 13, 2005

## Last Song She Moves To

she sings in the language of her beauty and youth  
but what of this matters  
only her movements and her colored eyes  
she lights herself on me and says what

her mouth moves unrelated to my thinking  
but her skin is almost like mine when we touch  
and what is there after all  
to say

## You Little Siren

ah you've finally thought to ask  
and the answer you expected  
was revealed as filth  
there is a reason the streets are steep  
and the debris at their feet convalesce  
now you have heard the stories  
and pickled them in a rainy reality  
so much so that the best store  
is across from the least gathering spot  
and absence flows both ways

## Disjunction

with the wings the leftovers  
endure the humiliation of sticky fluid  
we are abandoned and aloof  
surely goodness is around the corner  
embracing with mercy and quick  
we are lagging and the snow  
hasn't gotten around to the ground  
there is a warmth and underneath a tangle  
it is time linger or pray

## Elated Mask

sometimes the sun shines  
after an ordinary night  
sometimes the word is "elated"  
or "mask"

any origami shape can be made  
with folding and a single cut

I find the outline more sufficient  
than is necessary

how many poems are needed to  
solve an open problem?



## Peasant Girl Eating Soup

perhaps she's from where I'm  
narrow face & shapeless tag of hair  
peasant green sweater & olive skin  
& below a black/yellow flowered skirt  
over lavender fuzzy leggings—

in this she sips soup and tears  
bread her book propped on her purse  
here in this crappo coffee shop  
an hour past sunset in Kendall Square  
in February after a west-to-east  
flight from one degree of cold  
to a lower

behind me the asian girls giggle  
reading a book—Big Java—  
reminding me who I am

February 18, 2005

## Diet Right

an overdose  
of backhand love  
time to walk off  
those marriage vows

## Frost Heaves and Heaven

I wish I could show you these roads  
these trees and dead grass—how  
the paths all lead to the thin stones  
standing on end—where Mrs. Betsy  
lies—a relict—

the gravedigger doesn't work for money  
but the sides of his holes are perfectly vertical  
the corners are exactly  $90^\circ$  but  
even if they weren't they would add up  
to your final piece of this earth—

in the time it took me to write this  
a piece of ice the size of one of his holes  
has broken off the shelf by the river  
and has floated on the uneven and uncertain  
current around the bend—a place things go  
when it's time to not be seen

## Elated Visit/Winter Visit

so the temperature  
it was near 0°  
and snow crusted so  
hard it held me as I walked in the circles  
the place demands  
dark things absorbing sunheat  
have made bare earth shadows around those things  
and the one that surprises is the Red Sox banner

I walk a distance  
from one stone to another  
and everywhere I look I see  
“his wife” and only once  
“his relict”—when I see  
my footprints in the topcrust  
the feet are turned out no matter  
how straight I place them

after I crossed the river and the heater  
in my car has toasted the air I remember  
I can still walk away  
and this is the difference  
for now

## Coastal Scene Without the Light You Expect

after I've walked to the crest  
above the waded surf and sat  
on the teak bench I imagine the scene  
from behind me as the water is always restless  
and my silhouette acts like a hole my shape  
in that evermoving water

the meaning of this scene is scratched out  
and replaced by the longing I imagine  
some women must feel when they think  
of the hole I've left in their lives which they share  
with my permanent relics

in the scene grass is waving in a wistful wind  
and it would all be better were it backlit  
but it's the wrong coast you imagine me on  
it's the one from which one dreams  
not the one of which

## Storm Dreams

and so things are neat  
now that the tornados are vaporized  
several homes are settling back down  
though nothing can re-place them  
their anchors split or pulled up

you ask questions of this  
and my answers turn about the issues  
pulling up the roots of your meaning  
and greening the air with them

I like it when the runoff rinses  
all the vegetation off  
into the spillways constructed  
in hope after fear

perhaps our cars will recall  
the dry dust and sand flecks  
and our ambitions to keep their bodies  
perfect the way shiny metal  
and persitent dreams must be

## Not Like This

two poems are printed each day  
a reminder that the hardest writing  
in the world can be done twice  
in a row

## Long Way to Protection

let's break in—there's  
a disaster coming  
coming fast and with bad weather  
certainly we should start fear  
get it going early  
warm it up—break in  
to the reminiscences that are  
like just-pickled cucumbers  
that are little salty  
and a little sour

this combination  
cuts the pleasure  
away from the bone



## What Could Be Better?

surely the play will be over  
before the acting stops  
while the music is beginning to end  
and the birds have their feet extended  
nearby butterflies are popping their wings  
in a 5/4 tempo—temporarily  
setting their beautiful lullabies  
to a distant backdrop of vintage  
optigans and melotrons  
that imply a nostalgic past

## Past In Present

out in the field the hayrake rots  
first the soft parts  
rubber and wood  
then the iron rusting away  
weeds and grass filling up its apparent ribcage  
over by the stonewall it's covered in ivy  
and yellowed by pollen  
its color now time's secret  
we long for the past that includes this machine's prime  
the path here is overgrown  
and not a path at all  
fill my eyes with the thing it once was  
I am the anger of now

## Let's Discuss It

prepare some reports in which  
the pros are compared next to  
the cons

in our discussion let's remark  
on the days when no one was connected  
past the bend in the road  
when the heaviness of the greenery  
acted like a surrounding

in the center they held close  
held me like a baby  
looked surprised by the color  
by the wind that blew his sprig of hair awry

could it be that time was more real  
could be it was just the coincidence of proprietary love  
it all seemed so green in that picture  
this is in my report  
which are the pros which are the cons  
my problem is to find something to which to compare  
this scene so that our discussion can be  
well informed

## In The Front Yard Unexpectedly Caught On Film

he looks little  
in all the pictures I have of him  
and a little sad though he's smiling  
or laughing in all of them  
the place is always too much of some unexpected color  
or he is shorter than it seems he should be by  
those near him

he is surrounded  
uneasy about the next one  
he is faking his way through life  
(I know it)  
and both afraid and exhilarated/exhausted  
by the prospects of its end

## Lesson from a Rainy Night

foolish  
simple as a reformed clown  
filthy  
they thought they  
were not  
but where they park marks  
them and what they eat  
passes through them  
revealing just  
how special they are

## Summer Comes in Like a Comb

March & the snow's melting  
& I'm just a kid with a boat made of a board  
with a 2x4 sawed off and nailed on for its cabin  
& a nail hammered in the front  
I'm pulling it by a piece of bailing twine  
along a stream in a ditch beside the road  
& what I recall are these important things

the stream just 1' wide flowing just a little  
is exactly like the river down the road  
& the pockets of warm air telling me  
summer is here now just  
not uniformly distributed

## Lovely Wish

it is sudden  
suddenly warming up in  
pockets defeated each night by the everdarkening heavens  
meaning what's up and away  
does it mean more to me now  
than 40 years ago when the prospect  
of a humid and lazy summer  
fell from trees like a foreign bird  
just tired to death of the quotidian

or now when every step ahead  
is a step closer to the everdark

## Unsavoury

when a wish is sudden  
its fulfilment is a pleasure delayed



## 2am

driving past apartments at night  
city streets crowded unexpectedly  
one seems dark as we stop  
but through a gap in the blinds a dim light  
over a bed and a picture of lovers  
the frame corner only  
visible and sharp  
there are possibilities here  
opportunities

## Blues

the sky is a clever color  
reflecting contemplation and resignation  
where we give up  
where we bathe and frolic  
the sky contemplates and reflects  
it is what we are  
what we were  
where we long to be

March 7, 2005

## Your Defects Guaranteed

always a caveat  
always a critique  
loneliness is built into  
everything—factory installed

## Hide Your Love Away

when the time comes  
I'll recall the slow songs we played  
with ringing guitars while women  
held onto their partners and themselves  
some of them sang along because they remembered  
something important about the song  
others not dancing not singing  
just looked on from the dark corners  
knowing something real was going on  
something they couldn't participate in  
but in the center the room the black lights  
and red lights labeled the living  
this is the use of light and dark  
ladies and gentlemen

## In A Darkened Room

the music  
reminds me of the office  
large tables in a large room covered with papers  
the windows were covered and each detail  
had become murky

though I was the center of discussion  
no one talked to me  
no one considered the bright sun outside  
and the shades and curtains  
the smell of old pages

the doctor was a maestro  
he would fix my broken eyes  
and make them last 50 years more

he died before I was old enough  
to know seriously about  
thank yous

## Theme Song

funny what a sound will do  
or a smell  
a tape made almost 40 years ago  
recording a room no longer  
available

voices and fingers with no strength  
we gathered there with faulty equipment  
and similar hope  
similar abilities

what was a mess  
counts for nostalgia

no one then imagined that it  
could be propelled into the infosphere  
and persist there maybe forever

no  
back then we thought you needed  
a contract  
not a will

## Discursion

memory makes repetition  
possible as a structuring device  
or else why would hearing an old song you wrote  
and played and recorded in 1967 tear you up  
or why would you make your real band  
play it 30 years later

and record it  
and play it over and over  
late when darkness is so drifted  
down—all the crecents of pink  
categorized and gone—the odors of morning  
taking their shift as evening turns into  
its own memory  
suitable for repetition

## When It Happens to You

the tree  
what pain does it feel  
in its limbs  
they twist  
they boil up each spring  
their youth drops in the fall  
and they become black in the cold

we see no lesson here  
not until it's late



## Surely an Empty Ending

surely there is a spot of hope  
wandering in the midst of trees  
I've found my place by parking  
sporadically and by rivers  
no one wanders with me  
nor is my stopping as frequent  
there is only one way to go  
and it's not a good way  
I've held a pistol  
empty  
but full of promise  
for the quick  
exploding red  
ending

## Admit It

even a common homely woman  
has her beauty if things are not all wrong  
she can stand just right  
her weight balanced to the right curves  
and perhaps her sudden balancing step  
adds small waves to her advantage  
the conversation moves around me  
as my attention drops and my response  
enlivens

she feels awkward speaking to the man in line  
waiting to order something  
sweet he faces her in perfect illumination  
she gazes into the flare behind his thinning hair

my attention—  
I will never regain it  
the love I feel is immense  
all this before a single word

## Then / Again

waking up  
there is no telling how many times  
this has happened and will happen  
when everything is suctioning fear  
and injecting it in me

listening to music was once  
a singular treasure  
waiting for the radio to play a favorite tune  
we were so secondary  
albums were too expensive and finicky  
tapes  
tapes actually made sense  
big reel-to-reel tapes

the sounds of the woods behind the fan pulling air  
into my room and out next room over  
the cool moving mass pulling in the sweet  
tangle of cut grass smell in the air

maybe a flash of heat lightning over by the river

waking up  
no telling how many times

March 16, 2005

## Apology

we have become fools  
ripe for ribbing  
praise us  
for we remain complex

## Heard It

the celebration is winding down/  
and songs are getting slower  
and more ponderous  
the musicians look melancholy  
they sway to the slow beat and their eyes are teary  
perhaps they are lip-syncing  
because the beat is perfect  
the instruments played in a perfect room  
without stray effects and odd reverb

does the fake music give them time  
to feed their moods  
surely the acts of creation cost too much to let the emotions slip out  
or does being fake  
bring on the sadness  
as its own reward

## Countdown/up

time is infinite  
because bug list is  
too

we are here to fix them  
no?

March 19, 2005

## Quick Rant

I am at a loss  
they say love hurts  
for me it is lights through fog on a distant hill  
what if being here  
were the loneliness bonus for short life

## What We See When Dawn Arrives

we are cold as dawn remarks  
unfavorably on night  
the cheerful sun hunkers  
for a few last minutes

clouds bend above eastern hilltops  
—revealing a poet's presence—  
and the few awake pause  
to remark unfavorably on the sudden  
light erupting into their eyes

who can blame those who take note



## A:B as C:?

the restaurant is filled with the fat  
here high in the desert  
sitting in big chairs and smiling  
dumbly at their children  
whom they teach to be fat  
they order fried food and meat  
with lots of side dishes cooked in oils and fat  
they drink beer or sodas  
lots of it to wash down the grease  
they know lots of words  
but not how to use them

## Hierolessons

the desert doesn't  
understand the process  
of diminishment

the desert resists changes  
even as changes carve shapes  
visible only from the air

the desert listens  
only because the sunlight  
blinkers its eyes and promises shade

the desert is under  
interrogation and lying  
just a little each question

the desert lingers  
by the edge of prosperity  
for God us all to value

our own places over all else

## Icy Chests

the desert is a rim  
and the warmth of living  
is the basin  
when we drive out from the unfortunate town  
into the distant exitways  
our way is marked by rising  
dust and rocks crackling up  
into wheelwells

the rain comes  
in a ragged sheet  
and the unholy washes engulf  
the former dust motes

the possibility of dying  
has appeared where the sun will drop past  
we worry only our drinks  
the ice in our chests  
the changed way back  
the sudden storm of our has made

## Palace of Finery

it's a place of dark  
place of sirens  
flashing / revolving  
sound show /&/ sweet liquids  
it's a place of women  
in states of various allure  
place of soul negotiation  
where you find  
your worth if true  
is no more than the perfume  
you smell in the dark  
when dawn catches up  
on your nap

## Upgrade

the trains roll by all evening  
heading from the rising moon  
up the grade toward the great  
cities to the west

the clouds are piling up  
above the mountains  
fractured glass opaque from the cross lighting  
cold descends and the wind reduces

up the street men by trucks break open  
cans of beer and they laugh at the men  
who work the trains all night thinking  
this cold beer on a cold night  
in this little small town is a hot  
alternative

I am here as always in the little park  
sitting by the cholla shading me  
into oblivion

no man  
neither on the train nor by the trucks  
can see me  
they never can

## Blue Chemicals in the Body

it happened  
I found myself sitting in a trailer by the dry river  
behind the 100-year cemetery  
at the base of a dug out copper mine  
as the temperature was dropping

even in a southern desert it gets cold at night  
I thought before knowing the desert  
is always cold even midday

cold because the desert feels no loneliness  
loneliness is our sign of life  
the trailer the final stop

this is how the desert always has it  
for us

## Bisbee-

roads are lonely  
we drive them when everything else is more important  
when we step out of the car by the road  
the heat grabs on  
dust is part of the road  
the sun through a car window will sear your arms and legs  
the road is our comfort  
and horror story

## Riding

long rides  
the thinking  
the near misses  
heavy rain in the mountains changes the perspective  
along a highway in Arizona  
a chubby Mexican rides his bike to work  
while the rest of us grow tense



March 29, 2005

## Rivers

some rivers flow to the sea  
others are secrets  
next to one of them I am with you  
this is where I need to be tonight

## The Red Road

the audio head is worn  
if the poor sounds quality really bugs you  
these can be easily replaced but they are not cheap  
since generic replacements are rarely available  
alignment will then be needed

-->hello nice page  
it downloads very fast  
enjoyed it very much  
take care  
the internet is a great place to showcase art  
increase awareness  
in the variety of excellent work available

we dedicate both  
the newsletter and this webserver  
to keeping the brothers and sisters  
who share our spirit  
informed about current events  
within the lives of those  
who walk the red road

in newer vcrs  
with real-time counters  
the tape will contact the control head lightly  
but wear should not be  
worth worrying about

<--makes you appear to be a bit removed  
from daily reality  
you could be something of a loner  
your head may be in the clouds  
much of the time as you ponder  
some of the deeper issues in life.

## Shady Dell In Fact

the trailer park sits  
between the two-lane  
and a cemetery  
at the base of a hill  
of slag

the trailers are old  
40 years or more  
the guests linger  
over coffee in the trucked-in diner  
while the sun hits the cross  
in the shade of the hill

I was lonely in the trailer  
but my thoughts would  
not admit it

## Call Me Ishmael

-Quux

It was the best of times; it was the worst of times.  
It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a man . . . must be in want of a wife.  
Pick a variable. Call it  $x$ . Bind it to a number. Double it double it double it.  
Is Arthur a grammar yes Arthur is a grammar. Yes. Rose is a rose is a rose is a rose.  
The stone the angel rolled away with tears  
Has been upon thy mouth these two thousand years.

The party of the first part  
And the party of the next  
Were partly participled  
In a parsley-covered text.

Were you partial to a party  
That has parceled out its parts  
To the party that was second  
In your polly-tickle heart?

Then parley all your losings  
On a horse that's running dark.  
With lights out you may triple  
On a homer in the park.

E to the  $x$  du  $dx$ , e to the  $x$   $dx$ .  
Secant, tangent, cosine, sine. Three point one four one five nine.  
Square root, cube root, QED; slipstick, slide rule, MIT!

April 2, 2005

## Her Failure

she will not have a perfect  
time of it

who does

I have prayed that she will

## Failure Returned

nothing smells like failure  
everything disheartening  
about it is like leaves fallen behind a bush  
there is no way around  
no way under  
no practical way over  
and too beautiful  
to cut down

## My Clear Impression

beneath spackled leaves  
walking on splotched paths  
by unfinished water with a boat  
that's just a sweep of white sheets  
the boathouse across the water  
is just a yellow

the pairs of lovers are tonque lickings  
others aren't there at all  
nothing but shadows  
the sky—O the sky / blue / green / puffs — who is really here  
the fence shadows out to two crosses  
it's the only thing Claude made clear

## It Is Always

we can always find  
a reason to cry  
all it takes is a face not laughing  
a phrase of melancholy music  
in the background  
someone walking away as tones vary  
but no melody emerges  
when each of us is gone  
many sad things will happen  
but we can feel them now  
soon birds will fly overhead  
on their ways home  
this is how it will be  
how crying becomes crying out



## Today's Prayer

it's possible to see too much  
to say too much  
lines worth remembering are rarely  
spoken this is the price of beauty  
I'm wishing for a prayer to enter my mind  
a line that can be spoken  
when I hear the words I wonder  
are they too much  
what is their price

## Mysteries Of Sexual Curiosity

in the field  
by a small orchard of pears and stunted apples  
the gnats  
the small flies  
the crawling bugs dwell and further themselves  
it's the cycle that matters  
when the sun heats the browned hay swirled  
into the cool passing by wind

near where a boy lies  
a coffee can filled with a woman's things  
lies buried

## The Play's The Thing

when we write novels  
time is playing dead  
college professors await the publication  
so their tenure fights may resume  
even though the arguments  
are all circular  
the novels begin with just a few words  
perhaps a drunk woman finding her keys  
or a bullet that rings out  
soon the words hassle a loaf  
and structures once sparse  
rotate slow dwell sculpture-like  
play dead

## Lament After Going In (revised)

We've parked and take turns  
holding her urn in the car.  
We face the mountain  
whose peak is classic— a rock cone  
visible all the way  
from this lakeside to heaven.  
To the west a veil of powder-light clouds  
leaks orange color as  
through a gaping door that leads  
to a world of glittering uncommonality.  
The urn has turned gold in the light  
and in our hope

that the way we've admitted  
to sentimentalism will be taken  
as a blessing when she needs  
it most, maybe wants it least,  
but at last it's just our way  
to say goodnight to her  
on the first of her last 2 or 3 nights  
at home before we send her  
closer to where she'll want to be  
one day when she finds herself  
not here.

## Lament After Going In (revised once more)

Beneath the rock-coned-topped mountain  
stubborn to the invasion of onrushing difficulties,  
behind a veil of powder-light clouds  
leaking the setting sun, an orange light otherworldly  
like a gaping door from a world  
of glittering uncommonality into ours,  
we've parked and take turns  
holding her urn in the light behind  
and the sight beneath in hopes

that the way we've admitted  
to sentimentalism will be taken  
as a blessing when she needs  
it most, maybe wants it least,  
but at last it's just our way  
to say goodnight to her  
on the first of her last 2 or 3 nights  
at home before we send her  
closer to where she'll want to be  
one day when she finds herself  
not here.

## Lament In A Car

we sat by the lake that afternoon  
the sun was setting behind some clouds  
and it looked like a door that the sun  
had gone through with orange light  
coming back in streaks painting waving arms  
in the lake otherwise mostly calm

to the north a bit the mountain was lit  
its rock cone white above blackening sides  
down to the lakeshore  
many times I had climbed up there  
over those rocks  
to the top but no more will I do  
no not the way it happened before

we held her urn there and then  
as way of showing  
we knew what she loved best  
the light that deepens to become  
night and the peak above the lake  
that some call perfection

we've admitted  
to sentimentalism and hope  
it will be taken  
as a blessing when she needs  
it most maybe wants it least  
but at last it's just our way  
to say goodnight to her  
on the first of her last 2 or 3 nights  
at home before we send her  
closer to where she'll want to be  
one day when she finds herself  
not here

## Vying Afterall

someplace two things vie  
for your attention  
and the choice isn't up to you  
though it's your attention afterall  
the place for treating things as choices  
is in your dreams where what are ordinarily  
arguments come out as songs

April 13, 2005

## Sitting There

the lapping water  
the strong light  
the weight of the urn on our laps  
—one by one—  
when it all comes down to this  
everything in the space of a small vase  
everything  
everything that made you



## Do You Wish It Would Rain?

for days now the water's  
drained from the hills  
into gullies  
along and across roads  
down into ditches  
down from gutters into drainpipes  
eventually into culverts and then sewers  
the Bay must rise  
the ocean around it must rise  
humankind must rise  
because everything does  
after life is bolstered  
and then washed away  
from a winter of heavy  
heavy hearted  
rain

## It All Leads Back

the band starts up  
outside the cold air hugs the windows  
and inside the cold air falls down the insides  
this is where I lean  
against a sill the length of the cafeteria  
across from the band which plays  
through new Bandmasters some well-off dad  
has bought and a new set of Ludwigs

they play with heavy reverb  
reminding me of memory  
how it repeats without meaning  
repeats without meaning  
until one day its fading away  
becomes profound  
becomes what  
truth?

## Lilacs as Precursor

we bother with the fuss  
to split the time with lilacs

growing beside the old barn  
the purpley smell is masked  
and masks sort of like lemonade  
in warm milk

I lay here with a girl once  
on this small hill built to hold a house  
foundation and I remember it  
being warm

mowing lawns  
we had a lot of them  
and each one big  
and interplanted with trees and bushes and circular areas of flowers  
see my mother valued life

she's dead now  
I remember when her car wouldn't start  
she didn't call anyone  
didn't talk to her neighbors  
until I called her from across the country  
and then I called the mechanic 20 miles away from her  
who towed her car and fixed it  
and she didn't eat the whole week it was gone  
that much did she value life

## Train Scene

with all the sad music in the world  
the two turn and walk to different sides  
of the tracks under low clouds  
and heavy moisture poised to drop

a train is surely on the way  
they stand on opposite sides and practice  
looking down or off to a distant view

the sad music is winding down  
to its crescendo and the tracks  
have begun to quiver  
the two—man and woman—fear  
the hollowing words and the vibrational increase

they wish the tracks were not so steeled  
and shiny  
they wish the train were fleeting

## On Wind

the wind is heavy tonight  
from the west  
high and distending the trees  
I imagine birds and the small  
animals hunkered down

there is a pleasantness to the high winds  
inside looking out  
the fire undisturbed paradoxically

around here we take our cover seriously  
not hunkered in or beneath  
trees

we build a huffing and a puffing  
strong box and lock ourselves  
like doubloons inside

## Inappropriate

who has trouble  
cities pack them in apartments  
by warehouses gathered around burning drums  
along the wharves where luck sometimes  
happens

tourists don't understand  
they are walkers  
they look and talk about them casually

sometimes along with the wind  
a sharp fear brims up

## Rambler

nothing is certain  
and certainly the roles are reviled  
the way to perceive clearly  
is to dance before the music starts  
and linger after the water dries up

most of the way is narrow  
but every three or four skips  
the lines don't narrow  
and the trees whose branches hang  
down to our knees  
waver in their communion

everything that is waking  
is full of the summer of forgetting

## Green Journal

lingering outside  
across the street  
there are trees there to hide under  
behind

she is behind the curtains  
reading or perhaps writing  
something in a green journal

the light is funny  
dim  
flickering and it seems like any minute  
she will interrupt it  
on the curtain

it's dark  
you have figured out  
and you're wondering why I linger  
across the street

as a poet  
you think  
it's my job to tell you  
but you see  
I'm not  
and I won't



## Our Leader

the luck is not with us  
and so we are required to die in pain  
it has been explained that this is normal  
and the price of freedom

## Fullness

numerous phrases  
spoken in all seriousness:  
there are signals flashing  
while cars wait at traffic lights  
and people walk by  
getting cold

## Echo

the ambition behind insects  
is to get beyond it  
to let new DNA take hold  
and change things  
growth is not the only option  
since growth is also change  
the butterfly  
is it two different beasts  
one after the other  
first what you are today  
second what you are tomorrow  
are there enough changes for satisfaction

I am reminded of the minnows  
under the undulating mirror  
and what this says of vanity  
we stop to look at the world  
and it's only us looking back

## Jesus, Mary, and Joseph

churches line the road  
mourners line one side  
revelers the other  
the churches tell the truth  
but no two are alike  
they are all based on the same book  
it's a sad day when two people  
hate each other over how to take  
the word love

April 26, 2005

## The Tiger of Ultimate Remorse

our memories  
the void  
our memories

April 27, 2005

## Long Drive

and so  
the road replies  
it furthers the case  
for intemperance  
of impermanence

## Only One Can Win

she has seen what it means to have  
her worth in doubt  
and how things will not go  
her way in all things  
and I can't make it better  
I just can't

I would take it on  
all the horror and such  
but I can't  
I just can't

## Shuffling the Last Steps

it's like a run down downtown street  
by the restless sea filled with drifters  
looking up alleys and across to the other sidewalk  
it's cold as disappointment  
sort of like what it's like  
to notice that your chances are remote  
get it



## Remember

the stairs are useless  
because down is not significant  
after some time has passed  
we bring tight gifts of misunderstandings  
and lettings go  
why do we estrange ourselves in the hidden emotions?  
how can we remember love?

## Love Is

she is right there in front of me  
speaking of the last flight she made  
and the defined landscape of ancient lands

the lands have been defiled  
destined to be right here  
she made me speak in front of the last  
landscape but what she can't remember  
is love

## That Night

she is so sweet  
excitable and eager  
a dabbler betting a hunch  
she would be so sweet  
but who has heard of the personal dream

she's curled up and  
her foreign song is flat  
accented

she was so sweet  
and this is the proper thing  
the was  
is belongs elsewhere  
is is not mine  
never will be again

May 3, 2005

## She Has

the music is playing low  
and straining  
she is walking away wondering  
about infatuation  
the disease of horny youth

## Fortunate Stance

she is away  
left and sitting quietly  
by the stream she calls my world  
she is seated curled  
she wonders where love is hiding  
her hands are small  
but she calls them her world  
I would want her  
but she is the world

## Note It

not into it  
not into anything like it  
never noticed it  
was surprised I talked about it  
made a big deal of it  
from my point of view it  
was the source of what it  
means to be alone without the slow passage  
from alone to alone

## Finally Together Finally

brave and wonderful  
a celebration  
good news travels like wind  
over the tops of trees  
like the waving of a skirt hanging well  
from the hips of the woman you wish  
to love

speculation is that  
the beech is keeping watch  
that grass is growing well over the spot  
too far from the marker

surely the darkness is no problem  
but only the knowledge they don't have  
of what I've done for them  
finally

## Whatever It Takes

all the prayers won't do it  
they spread slowly from their source  
their words oozing self-pity and the luster of the lost  
my wildest dreams involve the important  
and unlikely equally

above on the bridge we stop  
below the family group is spotted  
upon the driftwood raft  
they hide right there  
you hide right here

it never enters your mind  
the water drifts downstream  
the wind picks up and time is different  
for you than for me

in the end the birds have it right  
they sing pretty songs  
and fall dead where they perch  
never having said one prayer



## This page is Link collection

These home page master take care of me.  
There is the Link collection,  
near Friend,  
I studied relevantly music and et cetera.

If you hope that you want to be "reciprocal link."  
please remit from undermentioned form.

Doesn't it reciprocal link? (^^)  
"Yes, let's do so.!" is to use the following form.

Adult site (chat, bulletin board is contained),  
HP that official order is disturbed,  
Approve it though it is here when it is refused  
in my judgment besides that, please

Let's Music  
Let's study for music!

## Gay Men Are Found to Have Different Scent of Attraction

lies and wow the time is listing  
to the right and it's conclusive  
that a woman is a woman because she chooses  
to be

no dna at work  
it is a choice  
or a lack  
of mistakes by parents

o wow  
the right are right

## Heavy Into Philosophy

heavy wind over the angel of caring  
the baby crying her echoes trapped in the brick surround  
the mother feeling her lust drain  
these are the tactics of anxiety

## Red Eyes / Lost Response

I've found the place  
where she waits  
where she sits while the sun  
seems to move and move  
what seems to become  
is just movement  
when it grows dark  
the dark actually rises  
there is no mystery in her reddened eyes  
she is just waiting  
did I mention the stream  
and the sounds it makes  
did I mention how those sounds  
cover her fractured breathing

## Fortunate to List

painted and lengthy  
the last resort  
deserve  
the words are short  
the meaning lengthy

## lucky for us

the end of lines don't intersect  
that the kiss is less than the frantic ticks  
too many lights are off now  
and the clocks  
hear them  
the clocks are trying their darndest  
to synchronize

May 14, 2005

## End of Justice

I guess it's disappointing  
that justice has become hatred

## The Evil of 1 and l

source code lessens  
our dependence on others  
who would ship us rocks  
to force down our drives  
picket fences with pickets missing  
sometimes just off by one  
and it's all a shambles

so easy to just delete  
what's wrong and patch  
in the new bits  
the process is like waving a red flag  
and watching the bull charge the data  
nothing is as pretty as source code  
in a nice font one in which 1 is not l  
and the code lines up like marvellous  
soldiers

she grins when I get it right  
and the overlapping executions  
end like ballet  
her reflection is metaphysical  
we think about 1  
we think about l



## Forensics & Apologies

inappropriate foreground  
creeping into the line of sight  
tops of buildings where the ground  
should be lowering into a distance  
one of height and perspective  
it's all about light—bright light  
light that never stops  
light always straight above  
looking down and filling every place  
up

a woman walks through all this  
her skirt tells every line  
it makes you wonder what is the purpose  
of language taken lightly

## Leaves and Our Smoke

the smoke is rolling  
up to the ceiling  
outside leaves remember  
how we used to burn leaves in the fall  
the door lets the smoke out  
lets the ideas leaves have in  
perhaps it's just a leaf or two  
dead but reckoning  
that make the artificial  
bow to the natural

## Amazing In Its Consequences

the rain simmers  
on the rock path down to the pond  
by the trees we laid under  
up a rise on a spit of land  
we played there every few weeks  
when it didn't rain  
sometimes another couple would walk by  
out hidey hole and we'd breathe slow  
one of us clothed to distract  
should it come  
to that

the small bugs and all that  
hot weather often humid and everything dripping  
sounds of footsteps making us nervous

that someone would choose me

## Lonely Evening for Walking

she walks across the small bridge  
it's warm out after the sun's been down  
she walks up the stairs to the train station  
where we end up waiting and catching the train but missing our stop  
she walks across the street and up the hill  
it's where we'll eat and I try moving my hand toward hers as we walk  
she walks  
my hand brushes past hers but the night stays the same  
she walks and walks

## On Heaven's Ignoble Front Porch

the lines that lead to my door  
are embattled and fragile  
from people I've known  
taking it hard  
taking it easy  
the dust that gathers there in the late afternoons  
turn to thin mud in the evening dew  
and blow away once dust again  
and the wind comes up past noon  
sitting here on my porch  
are the women I've loved  
with cold drinks and cold eyes  
wondering which version of no  
was on tap and how long before  
it  
happened again

in my dream the exalted stranger  
sat on my lap and my instinct was to wrap  
her waist and lay my head by her chest

later more happened  
but it also did earlier

## Collecting Memories

walls piled high  
with snow a sort of powder  
from the intense cold  
that came before the storm

we stand by the woodstove  
so its upward warmth hits our faces  
the cold air flows in under the door  
and slides down the windows not  
doing their jobs

later we'll pile the opened old  
rectangular sleeping bags on  
top of us the ones my father  
bought for our infrequent overnight  
hikes made the way old pillows were

we'll do things  
later we'll imagine them  
even later they will be routine  
or worn out

the snow piled walls  
near up the eaves of the roof  
this not that I'll  
never forget

## When the End Won't Stop

forget the lists  
and apologies on them  
recall instead the heartless  
fractions telling of successes  
and what's left over  
failures

there are a few  
spoonfulls to go  
before the last of God's meal  
has been eaten

the list empty  
refuses to end

## Manifestation of a Version

which version of you  
is in me

how have I concocted the context  
to convict your innocence

what happened to my teeth  
why are they yours

you don't see it this way  
is this another version

surreal or cryptic does this  
make sense for a me-like person



## Too Fast

the night catches up  
and behind a darkened building  
some music plays just loud  
enough to cause an echo  
she walks not too far away  
and the music passes between us  
in fact the sky is dark  
except for the city lights  
under the high fog  
her sentences are fragmentary  
a kind of controlled stutter  
she is not too far away  
and some fog seems to pass between us  
it was behind us at first  
and soon because of different speeds  
the dark caught us  
and now is leaving us  
behind

## Under Choice

the alley led back home  
it was a shortcut

she pointed it out to me  
then walked down the crowded street

May 26, 2005

## Strange Day / Warm Day

and the wind blew from north to south  
though it was warm  
and in the crevasses up on the mountainside  
the streams were rushing down here

sad day  
warm but threatening

the loneliness of simple words

## Bio 2

lazy and unkempt  
the twined lovers are the same as the sheets  
they're wrapped in  
the idea of sleep and laughter hovers over them  
there might be visitors behind the trunks  
outside their carelessly unlocked front door

after some effort they've organized their lives  
in strict hierarchies  
which may last as long as  
a day

she enjoys her pleasure  
he does too  
this is the mystery of  
original sin  
aka DNA

## Finding Out

seeking / running away  
coming together around the burial spot  
with the music still playing under the canopy of misses  
don't you wish they would speak of you  
in voices loud enough to hear  
but off a bit  
behind the bushes  
beyond the trees  
just loud enough for me to hear  
not so loud that it drowns out  
the world

## At the Bow

you are near and simple  
there is humility looming  
among the horrible scrabble and hardscape  
I've made loneliness and darkness alone  
my métier

my wish is for the woman to walk forward  
from the crowd and with just her eyes  
choose what never has been

## Is It A Goodbye?

is it into the sunset or into the sunrise  
birds  
are they heading back to roost  
or out to claim territory

warming up or cooling down  
as I walk along the tracks heading out of town  
the thoughts of when I'll sleep next  
and where I'll eat shine like the rails crushed  
bright anew with each passing train

I should hop one and head  
where it does  
out over the southwestern desert  
and up onto a high dry plain  
orange and brimming with dusty greens

maybe they'll throw me off but  
I think they'll just sit back and wonder  
at the towns ahead  
the towns behind  
and the towns no tracks reveal

## Seed Lines

what we learn is guided by trees  
so plant them with care  
there is no way to fix the mistake  
30 years on when a tree is off by an inch  
when the rocks it displaces push into your path  
and your path is now in the direction  
of ecstasy and imagined fear  
and the only recourse is the gun  
to the soft upper of your mouth  
and the memories beyond

trees  
place seedlings well



## Eating / Out

yes and the meals  
are tasty and filling  
our ears are filled  
by discussion and comments  
we love stories told in blunt  
phrases

praise  
if you must falsehoods  
that salt the anger  
sweeten the pretense  
but save your praise  
not for the end  
but for the time after that

## Sex Scenes 101

and so and so  
all of a paragraph  
long but conveying the shrill  
importance but is it harder  
to do or speak of

## Ultimate Sex Scene

(darkness)  
(silence)  
(languor)

he cautiously enters  
her bedroom  
she incautiously lifts  
the corner of the comforter with her leg

(lights)  
(camera)  
(action)

## Complainitent

who has time for it  
the snarking  
the lying  
god they're stupid

## Pass Time

it is the fear of modernity's  
passing that frightens those  
hooked on logic  
those who cannot see what to cut  
or where to paste it  
they cannot fathom that truth  
is a quilt made from what's discarded  
they suffer great depressions  
and tremble for fear of downsizing  
their egos and IQs  
sometimes the truth is in Croatian  
or in their language but in a halting accent  
it is the fear of postmodernity's  
passing that frightens those  
hooked on hacking  
because there is nothing  
after it  
after all

## Fishy Fundamentals

take an abstract number and divide  
by 7 fish  
not 7  
7 fish  
assume the number you've taken  
is a multiple of 7 fish  
not 7  
7 fish  
once you've conjured the result  
let's talk about math

## Genesis

alleys and small ways adorn the mind  
the city outside or within  
I have entered one and am halfway down it  
deep within as I can tell from the odors of unfettered living  
behind a dumpster a man is emptying  
contents onto the asphalt  
from a bag or an opening I cannot see  
the alley is deep between two high buildings  
and the light is down—there is a almost a mist  
and where what he removes fall the asphalt  
explodes into green and a wild pantheon of flowers  
nothing seems odd  
this is the work of salty bodies  
minds drunk on making  
and our own local god

## Lament by the Still Waters

along the tracks  
deep into a woods  
into a corridor itching to close over if only  
it would rain enough one spring  
the tracks skirt the hem of a mountain  
small but with a barren cone  
overlooking majestically a primal pair of lakes

when I was young my parents took me to this lake  
and we would swim in the summer because the lake  
was shallow and its bottom dark and the water was warm  
when I was old I held my mother's urn and ashes  
as the sunseting light focused a diffusing pink on a bank of clouds  
just to the south of the mountain's cone  
and though the rail had been abandoned when my mother was rather young  
I thought I heard a train whistle bristling everywhere  
from the cone of the mountain where she and I and my father would climb  
to the heavy overloaded woods and the warm water making its small sounds  
or something—I heard something that sounded far off  
and moving away



## At the Awards Reception

the famous are old  
and hardly recognize each other  
when they do they remark how healthy you look  
they will be dead soon  
and what will their fame have bought them  
an epitaph maybe that says  
here lies a famous person  
who grew old and no one recognized him  
so we wrote this epitaph  
to even things up  
and this is what he's famous for

## Is

the nature of reality  
differs depending on whether  
you're in your bed or  
in a field of timothy

but what about the special  
hotel with a courtesy basket  
of fruit and cheese  
and a vase of flowers to signal great welcome

but random events are not evenly spaced  
and so the once a week coupling  
is not random  
while doing it every night at the special hotel  
is

## Lounging Later

ceremony over  
the audience confused  
by melodic prose &  
people dispersing  
because who wants to talk  
after there is no more fame to rub off  
the place settings are being taken away  
elaborate flowers are heading  
for the dumpsters out back  
we lounge in our room  
just 2 floors up  
the songs we're listening to  
going on and on  
where people's passions lie  
are on the trams outside  
running past the dumpsters  
everything is over

## Default

listening to the words  
nothing with sense  
my rational brain's taking  
the night off

## Infinite Jest

the more words I tell you  
the higher density of truth remains  
because everything said is false  
and what's not said therefore...

but falsehood and truth  
are each infinite  
so saying everything will not be enough  
to leave nothing  
but truth

that is  
taking away any amount of falsehood  
leaves just as much  
and just as much truth

## The Other Kid

I recall hiding  
behind the stone in midfield  
as my father called first  
then my mother  
from across the road from our front yard

he left and I never knew where he went  
she came after he left and called out  
then went in

sunny for a spring day  
the browned grass still matted from the winter  
warmed and warming  
the breeze was cool  
soon the sun would set below tall pines

they wanted to divorce  
and I never knew why  
then later never knew why not

from then on they seemed  
not comfortable  
it makes me wonder who that other kid was in the picture with the both of them and me  
the kid who stood in front of them as if  
he belonged

## Beware Jesus' Smile

Jesus on Hazel  
in front of a church  
peddling ideas of revenge and retribution  
Jesus eyeing everyone  
who walks out smiling

maybe you read  
"peddling ideas of revenge and retribution"  
as what Jesus was  
doing no  
he was there  
to eye and smile  
smile at  
the damned

## Get It Up

others' poems  
sound like ol' folks  
like lessons you'd rather forget  
like too-moist skin  
like soup just a little too cool  
or warm  
like something you think you heard once before  
once too many times  
other peoples' poems  
are just trying too hard



## Story Told Again

too many pains  
the house can feel them  
and maybe it will absorb  
the worst of it

when we visit we can feel  
it still  
other than that there are no signs  
of what happened there

everything involved with the pains  
and the floors that were right there

## Poorly Attended Gig

sway rhythm pushing the darkness  
back from the condensed windows  
what's important are the dancers  
do they know what the guitar means  
and how hard it works to establish  
the parameters of the night  
we labor to get the rhythms right  
and the off harmonies that play off against  
the coolness hearts might feel  
and instead the heat from the tubes' heaters  
makes its way into the hips and loins of the dancers  
and it's time for the song to lapse into its trance  
and for the dancers' sweat to coat the windows

what he sees is the plain lowering into the distance  
the echoes of the amplifiers against the curtain of distance  
flowing up from the horizon  
it was always the direction of his gaze  
and now his fingers point this same way

## Sealand

it really is a no place  
I mean not a place at all  
it's a sunken barge with two hollow posts  
and a platform in 300' of water 6 miles off England  
and it houses the most secure  
servers on the planet  
and  
get this  
the place is more or less its own country

you can see a picture of it  
and the Prince burning old waste engine oil  
in a barrel with the West Cardinal Buoy in the background

oh what a twin-posted thing it is  
and the hope of freedom from chagrin

## Last Waving

o the twinning  
the twining  
the missed understandings  
high winds in narrow alleys  
the loneliness of the knife under anesthetic

## Food Item Description

this is just like "Garlic Butter"  
but without the garlic butter

## Under the Wing that Makes Us Us

out of the restaurant onto the sidewalk  
we are cooled by the onslaught of  
the single-minded nature of the sun  
nothing if not elegant  
in its going down and I swear  
the clouds could be turquoise

our conversation amounts to nothing  
but it is extensive and alarming  
it takes place under the sky  
that care nothing of it  
but makes it into everything

## Food For

nothing is more  
than acrylic on canvas  
representing the famous needs  
of shade and light blue eyes

while we eat  
after we eat  
we talk too much  
we retreat

but the sky reveals  
an occasional breeze  
unconcerned with goals and directions

she says there are ways  
to uncover  
but the night is for walking  
I am holding her  
to this

## Tossing Riots

a place made only of rocks  
makes for perfect riots  
a boy will pick one up for comfort  
the assurance of place  
to wish to warm it  
and then passion—it's thrown in  
then thrown toward  
soon everyone is throwing  
and the infinite supply of stones  
is the confluence of opinions



## Desert Prayer

sophisticate the sounds  
to go with the heat sunset can't cure  
long for some breeze but that takes  
a change somewhere  
only the sun's changing  
only 4 colors now: red rock  
turquoise sky sage green  
clay white  
both on the ground  
being the cliffs  
onto the sky

listen to the voice God  
puts in music  
each sliding slurred sound  
is what He declares  
not the words  
but the off-scale interleavings

know Him by 4 things  
sound heat breeze change

## Desert Lesson

frightening in its scope  
alone among many  
the stones piled throughout  
the desert arrayed beside the highway  
are symbols  
each one is  
of faith gone bad  
I mean of faith undeserved  
it makes us wonder  
where the hardness of crystals  
comes from  
the facts we know don't explain it  
but there is always faith  
faith is hard  
stones are hard  
stones are everywhere but scattered

## Endings

we labor through our days  
there are only simple things to love  
every now and then  
there are many things to love  
but few of us take the time  
few of those things are available  
soon the days seem to pass more quickly  
and opportunities are more rare  
or the time for them is

it's time to wonder where to sleep

## Women / Love Diverges

sure there are  
women I've been with  
and some who've loved me some  
but love's no sure thing  
and many're not loved ever  
though the math says it might work  
the little nuggets of potential love  
operate on rules not fairness  
and even the biggest blunder of all  
—friendship leads to love—  
has few good effects

remember when the pines above  
listed in the wind and the whispers  
you thought you heard foretold  
of the secrets of nights under blankets  
: it was just pines  
: just wind in the needles  
: the cold under the pine matt is the fact  
you need to accommodate

behind the barn  
in the rocky fields  
by the turgid stream  
find what you need there

## Visited on Me

I got it from my mother  
among the frailties and ill behaviors  
the temper idioms and unlovable eyes  
—also the hunching over while reading  
and dislike of common foods—  
but the hair waves and settles pretty  
just this one thing

## Faded Essentials

buildings with names  
painted on  
letters faded making mysteries  
easy to walk past  
this is part of the charm  
of abandoned main streets  
and escapes to cities or the woods

I noticed two women stopped  
looking at the perforated name on a building  
standing while a cold wind bends  
small branches nearby stripped of leaves  
the wind passing through the trees  
thoughts running through their minds  
where some of their memories have faded

what they think is not significant  
since they turn and walk arm in arm  
upwind in the direction of forgetting

## One is Like Voodoo, More is Like Booze

many trips are lined up  
because the season of heat is on  
we propose a solution to this dilemma  
and it is sometimes a fog and sometimes  
a haze that covers the hillside scenes  
and makes secret rendezvous a blast

I am suspicious of nouns  
whose plurals are spelled the same  
but are pronounced differently  
how much can we expect of lovers  
away on a trip seeking a hazed-overt  
hillside—can we expect the usual?

## Last Song

I play  
she dances  
no other connection is possible

because sound is a flood  
we don't need an interface  
music is it

soft music and the urge  
to sharpen the guitar's edge  
helps her drop down and use her legs

she plays  
I refuse  
no connection to the other



## No One Says We Should

earned life  
there is no such thing  
since life is eating its way through the hearts  
eager to pop in or the other way around  
and the chair where I would sit  
has no one in it

along the river bank lovers  
waltz their way into the mating bed  
or to sleep

there is no such thing  
as the happily lived life  
we are given masks  
and wear them

## Listen Again

summer has a duty  
to track for months  
and spray heat like lacquer  
on the pavement

wonder about the leaves and the push  
to grow cut short  
by the nights colder each day  
and the snows readying to blanket

the moves to contrast  
reckon to disturb the common course  
and make the usual more usual  
"he said ironically"

time goes  
"someone said"  
and I believed it

## Lazy Writing

we love the words  
like the obvious songs  
repeating like a machine is in charge

but poetry doesn't figure  
into the picture when the words  
are flat and the talent lacking

sure I can use all the dictionaries  
and googlish searching tools to find  
the cleverest phrases and strangest

words but I want to talk to you  
always have but growing up alone  
has puddled fear in my brainpan

and our love of words  
buries summer beneath an obvious  
pile of words for green oh

and blue skies thunderclaps  
and bolts

## Art Imitates Nature (and Probably TV Too)

the river awaits doing  
its boring back-and-forth thing  
while people living near its banks

tune their tvs to the funniest shows  
which means the cheapest to produce  
which means one more small cut

in the death of small cuts for the arts  
and another thing there are no good restaurants  
nearby even with the river and ocean and all

why I want to be there is unknowable  
like why the salmon (long dead)  
used to run up the river after years at sea

at sea I am at sea and I know it because  
I rock back and forth to the music I play  
when I write each line back and forth

boring  
really  
boring

## Tasty

Skip's changes  
the clouds made it cooler than I expected  
and the burgers were less crisp

this time the mosquitos were out  
and I was the only one outside at the picnic benches

## Though

## A Lesson

how close to life does death get?  
consider the groundhog  
sir who channels through sandy dirt  
to get to his/her/their living quarters  
piling up a mound 1-2 ft high  
against the old (1944) headstone

my my guess who's coming to dinner

## I Suspect

## Storyline #1

let's imagine a world  
and our life within it  
let's not just imagine it  
let's build it  
in fact let's make it pretty and not typical  
let's make choices real  
let's allow people to decide everything about themselves  
let's enable people to create exactly the corner of the world they will inhabit  
let's make them smarter than they otherwise would be  
let's permit them to live on their own terms  
without butting into others  
let's make this imaginary world  
real

## At Cruise Night

do they know—  
the thickets of people moving jerkily  
from car to car in the cruise night field  
gazing like lovers on the chrome pipes and headers  
manifolds exposed and germinating under the midday  
sun

nearby they buy and eat small burgers and spiral fries  
drinking traditional drinks and putting on hats  
before lurching into the sunlight to view the cars  
lined up like schoolchildren for testy inspections  
and in fact there is a contest for the best car  
—as they walk from car to car without panty lines  
that their smooth asses are driving men to love their cars  
more as part of a DNA-etched ritual to make more  
of me

while in their minds it's just the fashion of pantylinelessness  
and good taste

not the ruination / temptation / vilification / glorification  
of a species



## Why Do It?

let's dream  
perhaps lines of sight will clear up  
but the chills that prevent me from getting up to pee  
or the sweats that keep me partly delirious  
argue against it

my dreams are just repeatables  
the same scenes and arguments  
simply restarted and running  
to the same point

rivers can do this  
tidal ones  
am I the tide between rationality and the dream

I am lopsided with despair and anger  
filled with a battle of bodies and beliefs  
women can't bear my affronts

## On The Day I Found Him

we went there and found the gap  
but the coordinates testified  
we were in the right place  
the worker smiled in the way  
workers do when the bereaved ask  
them questions they know how to  
but don't want to  
answer

the gap was wide and full in the sun  
with no shade around and it shows  
a lack of love or an active force  
begetting forgetting

there was nothing to see  
and not much more to feel

we drove away through light but annoying traffic  
everything was filled with heavy sunlight  
the day passed by  
as any other would

July 13, 2005

## Another's Grave

buried in someone else's grave  
along with a 1 year old buried there  
15 years earlier  
and now I can't do anything  
—headstone or move—  
without a difficult search or court order  
will anything go right in this

## At Rocks Village Bridge

the journey home  
starts with memories layering on  
green leaves overgrowing a riverbank  
the point being to deepen  
the river's channel

the river will silt up  
given time enough and hills enough  
many trips or permanence are required  
to shore things up

no one notices the bridge is not symmetrical  
or that it was designed by different people at different times  
they just drive across without any hint  
of the fear the bridge demands  
its resentment stored up  
awaiting a suitable victim

## July, New England, 1937

pungent pines  
the blistering ammoniac of combined  
urine and manure  
the blunt lilacs by the house  
horsey sweat and from the cows too  
salad of smells from the cut grass  
some fresh some drying or dried in the fields  
from the south and west the polluted assault  
from an industrial river  
from the east brine and brackish strands leftover  
from the onshore around dawn  
somewhere down the road woodsmoke and fat burning in a pan  
all these smells in combination as if some god-sized spoon  
paddled them together into today's living and human broth

the doors of the barn are open to let wind pass through  
and too the hay-wagon pulled by two large but not draft  
horses this is the setting  
for change  
extravagant change

## Ahead

what was easy  
is now a story in the past  
all the ones who are capable  
are away

the barn still stands  
with all its outbuildings  
and the chicken coops too  
there are cows to milk and feed  
chickens and pigs  
a dog to pet  
two horses  
one a killer  
and only two women  
in mid-July  
in a heat wave  
with the most work just ahead  
and everyone waiting  
for the pickings

## It Is Empty Always

dark around Boston  
even the lightest days fell short  
of clear and the winters  
and low unlifted clouds  
sometimes dropping icy drizzle  
trees hang over roads and fields are squeezed  
in close and you'd think  
the narrow spaces would become cozy  
but it's as if the coldness  
had the most lasting lease on the place  
close by dark cold  
what happens when it warms up

## Trip Interrupted

the bridge is low most of the way  
but has a high overpass where boats pass under  
it was 2 hours past sunset and I was heading west  
clouds or fog really hung low and it obscured the moon  
which was changing sides  
to the north a city was glaring under the low fast moving fog  
and it seemed like the end was closing in  
at that point traffic bloomed and my fantasies  
were blown aside and then my exit came along  
I was nearly home  
(I thought)



## Considerable Questions of Heat and Pressure

all in all  
the heat from pavement is not worth  
the shoe leather it cooks  
asphalt flows in all temperatures  
animal hide cooks one way or another  
the twain always meet

## In A Country Near Nightfall

she is bathed in red  
it reflects from sandied bluffs  
and even the sky  
(which is blue even at noon)  
adds to the red by asserting  
its contrasting assent  
her skin doesn't work well  
with it being even more  
than the heat that makes the sky  
a coverlet as the day wanes  
and her desires are left unchecked  
as the red turns pinker and then translucent

downvalley a train starts clanging  
from start to finish as the time comes  
for everyone on it to move on

## More News From The Front

soon the sounds of birds will stop  
and the light settle up like a dodge  
I am certain the light is not failing  
but just wheeling around to take another swipe  
in another part of the world  
someone is doing her laundry  
when a missed problem should be being  
solved by her intended mind  
and instead  
she paints pictures of herself  
to make another her for the other world

someday she'll put on those clothes  
and we'll meet in the old part of an old  
city built for red light in the mornings  
and we will drink hot drinks as the heat  
intensifies up or until one of us  
looks down

## And Even the Heat

he mowed the timothy  
and let it dry flat  
by fixing the roof  
while summer worked

he raked it into rows  
to fluff the hay to dry even more dry  
the raked it more to dry it more

one day the farmer with the bailer  
came and made round bails  
from a tall loud machine pulled by a tractor

and was it a favor or a job  
was he a friend or a businessman  
what of the sun?

July 23, 2005

## Boy and Girl Near Death in Parked Machine

then they were called machines  
until their status overtook them  
and they became real themselves  
not just an abstract sort of thing  
we called them cars only once lovers  
started killing themselves in them

## Overlooking

by the Clyde as clouds  
come up from the west near sunset  
sun lines angled to the north  
and rain lines vertical  
birds pelting the sky for last cover

even though it's like a bad 19<sup>th</sup> century painting  
out there sodium lights are coming on and the river  
keeps up its work of pumping up  
the Irish sea

all the boats are docked  
as the metaphor says they should be

## By the Clyde

no where more so than in the dark  
I'm happy for the graffiti lunching on the wall  
the walk home is my apprehension and her tension  
we like the smells or urbanity  
one or the other  
someone clicks a hand mic and shhs go and come  
we cross the train bridge with lights flashing everywhere  
around and sporadic  
I will not have her tonight  
train's pulled out

## At The Expense

she's a talker  
her accent tight around her words  
her skirt the same on her hips  
speaking loudly  
hesitating every few words  
she probably has a broken heart tucked  
down her blouse  
I'm ready to heave my sorrows  
down there too



## Stupidity Turns Language into Words

cold tams held at bay  
north sea salmon smashed yet cold  
rage for Jo's not here

rage is smashed  
cold repeated  
tam o'shanter's held at bay  
salmon in the bay  
north rage Jo's not  
is here  
we love poems with typos

## At the Silly Scientists' Conference

birds flying underground  
under the railroad station in abandoned  
track tubes  
part of the entertainment  
for the conference not used  
to the physical  
volunteers humiliated  
but cheered  
the birds  
predators all  
watched their audience  
hungrily  
angrily

July 29, 2005

## Edinburgh Castle

rain all day  
the castle bursting  
with wedding guests  
rings and rumbles  
with the sounds of cannonfire  
and pipes

## Train to Edinburgh

boats running down  
the firth making big noises  
and spreading waves out  
to the banks where sheep are preparing  
and grain is preparing  
lots of manual work is left to do  
and the rain keeps coming down

## Love & the Gunslinger

images and imagination  
the spell of rain is dowed upon us  
and the cold seeps inward  
binding an ill health to our hearts  
I thought of you but when I looked  
you didn't look back

instead I designed some headstones  
though no actual customers really cared  
I liked to make them sound more  
interesting dead than they ever were  
alive

too bad you left

## Not

they said you were there  
but the twilight wouldn't reveal  
perhaps your hair was the hair  
I saw bouncing away toward the red smear  
that night and the sounds of your feet along the gravelly  
path by the river became the river sounds past  
the rockwall that makes the channel

perhaps you're across the river  
sitting watching for me  
but the swingbridge is stuck open  
for the night to let boats pass  
and not me while the workers  
celebrate a wedding

from the city behind me  
(I stand with my arms on the railing  
above the blood-dark water)  
a song with tight minor chords  
and a melody that follows them  
choose one then another street  
to come down phasing it to melancholy  
the light fades  
you are there across the river waiting  
maybe

## Bad Photography

in the rained on darkened city  
I walked all twilight hoping  
you would appear to me  
behind a window drinking coffee  
(such a city demands coffee)  
or perhaps something stronger  
in many people I thought I saw you  
some parts they had that were yours  
too—the redbrown hair the greyblue eyes  
— but you were separated from me  
by salt water so great was the space  
you put between us

now the rain and dark are in control  
my steps seem random but their purpose  
is apparent from an angle people normally  
can't see—I know you are drinking coffee  
as I walk and the window I need to look through  
is not a window at all

## Uninvited Invitation

I know it's dark  
now where you are  
you are asleep wrapped  
in young arms

language has made us stupid  
broken our feelings into words  
carved our words into cars on the autobahn  
accompanied by synths and rhythms

someone has asked me to be near you  
doing what I do  
but this time there will be no heels  
kickkickkicking the hem of you longcoat  
on the path to a cold park

everything is in a wrong direction  
it's dark here now



August 4, 2005

## After Writing an Emergency Award Endorsement

among us  
walking  
choosing  
who lives  
who not

## Himself

the outlier  
the pomposity  
further along than a manacle  
the disruptor is at it again  
walking like the condemned  
armed with technical details  
he was read nothing  
because everything is unimportant  
but one thing

guess

## In Malden

one of the hot days  
turns liquid or has been  
and the gases released from trees and grass  
ferment my nostalgia  
I've stumbled across a gap  
in a field of stones  
the gap is very important to me  
because the gap has been filled  
but there are no marks  
signifying anything  
well I just stand  
in the day and in the gap  
wondering who put them  
here for me to find

## July 8, 1937

what could she have thought  
the day her dad died  
after his advice  
and his instructions on what to tell the police  
so the horses would not be taken and shot  
did their burning house flicker on the window out the corner of her eye  
as he left her and her mother alone  
it would have made no sense because the house was not burning  
though it would in 5 years  
right before she met the man she believed would restore  
the world

the roads outside the hospital window were dirt  
the lot was dirt where she had parked the sedan  
hot—it was hot and had been for weeks  
Amelia was still missing—and the wealth of water  
flowing down the river rising off the ocean  
exuding from trees and grass  
filled the air making the hay dry slow  
and there was more to pack in the barn for winter  
but now the funeral was next and the cows  
and chickens would not wait

when did she cry for him  
then  
years later  
as she lay dying herself in the lightning striking all around  
all her fears in one night  
what picture am I in  
then or ever

## Delayed Alignment

spotlight on the spot  
rain like popsicles cool and calming  
I'm by them again  
we were like a pod of prey  
facing out to the world  
now my back is uncovered  
my choice is to find a wall to back up to  
but facing front my odds are poor  
just a few more steps now

## West and More West

the darkness encrusts the stairs  
the worktable and the chair  
the place where I write is white and blue  
every color in fact  
outside the faint clouds are sprayed onto the porcelain sky  
a place I care about is fully dark  
and cloudy  
I am so far from there  
and not sure what to do

## **guy steele is available here**

guy steele is the definitive book on the language  
guy steele is the originator of the phrase "lambda"  
guy steele is one of its inventors  
guy steele is available in both hardcopy

guy steele is a much better book imo  
guy steele is a smart man and may have been able to significantly trim the search in ways I didn't realize  
guy steele is now available electronically

richard gabriel is one of the latter  
richard gabriel is one of my favorite richards  
richard gabriel is so spare in his prose that I must cite quite a bit of him in order to convey what gabriel says  
richard gabriel is among many who make a powerful argument for the impact of physical exhaustion  
caused by extended periods of sympathy

guy steele is well aware of these issues

## See?

quit anyway?  
it asks  
quit eventhough is the question  
perhaps I've forgotten (it thinks)  
it won't do what I wish straight away  
but asks  
quit anyway?  
anyway  
anyhow  
it is not a haphazard thing  
done whateverly  
anyway  
I'm through with this  
and even if you're reading on hoping for something else I will  
quit anyway



## Marriage Flare

dinner on the porch  
mosquito candles flaring then smoking  
above the perseids have started  
streaking red above the clouds  
the discussion is esoteric  
but the food is basic  
and the occasion is a wedding  
taking place the next day when an old woman  
would marry an old man but tonight the parents  
and I talk while the lovebirds chirp and twitter  
over the details to come

## Double Booking

the wedding went on  
with a hitch  
the park site double booked  
the company picnic complete with kids in strollers  
not swayed by the thought of matrimony  
besides corporate america is worth every distraction  
and who is interested in two retired people marrying  
for the first time  
living as paupers nesting by their garden  
fully in love and ready for commitment  
when the morale of the working  
is needed for the sake of the shareholders  
and ceo who hopes to retire himself [no sic]  
soon on a pension of investment income  
of \$1m a day  
but  
the wedding went on

## Killed with Admiration

kitchen filled with ants  
swarmed around a chicken carcass left in the trash  
over a long weekend  
we hate them and kill them and seal off their entrance hole  
but admire how with

- a.) random search
- b.) a tendency to follow pheromone trails

only

they can home in on a carcass 10,000 times  
the length of their bodies away from the nest

are we like that?

## Life Does Not Go On

cops shows and csi  
show the '60's was right  
cops are pigs  
they can't wait  
rudeness is cool

solving crimes is the most important thing  
read about it in the bible

## Walking

rivers all around  
named different names  
pushing the humidity  
up and into the sky  
which pushes it down

he runners pause at corners  
they say to avoid the cars  
but the cars are insane  
with the heat and need no  
excuses to stay at home

## Rejuvenating

we fell by the wayside  
the car empty  
the road empty  
the sky open and a foreskin of cloud cover  
pushing in from the horizon

I wonder  
really  
who have made the most of their days  
and this day is done and already empty

## Café Jitters

showing off her profile  
cicadas making up their lives  
we walk without passion  
to the car—old and soulful—  
we have parked around the corner  
from a favorite cafe  
we know that the rivers  
have nothing to say tonight  
nor the moon leaping upward  
from behind the raven hill  
when the first possibility for love  
evacuates

well we drive off  
and the girl with the profile  
seems lucky  
stays behind  
perhaps lingers

## Airport Romance

in the other security line—  
my god to be the guard that pats her down—  
she is thin but extravagant perfectly  
she moves ahead and I take my time with my shoes  
but at the train to the gates she strolls up  
while my train pulls out

at the head to two tall escalators  
I put my bags down to wait  
and soon she comes up and walks past  
like a spy I stand a minute looking past  
where she came then turn grabbing my bags  
to follow her to the Godiva shop where she waits  
in line while I walk past to the bookstore  
then she heads down concourse B  
without chocolate

she can't get past me where I sit now  
except for the times I glance at this page  
I need to do it every few words  
but these are the times she can sneak by  
otherwise she will disappear into thin air  
as will I soon enough



## Before Leaving

the heat stresses  
the shapes of women in skirts  
I've noticed Pittsburgh is always well dressed

along the river a trace of ozone adds a ping  
to the voice of the air  
as we drive over the bridge toward the tunnel  
a train sweeps through the trees and bushes  
along the river

I notice the clouds seem sprayed onto the sky  
and the clash of thunder seems not far away

after I've parked the street fills with the warmth  
of women walking by some slowly some  
as if to rid themselves of me immediately  
this thought crosses my mind then  
I shut the door slowly and quietly

## JRST 4,

the story is funny  
but it's based on lies  
every word is a lie  
because precision is a prayer  
we believe in

false hopes and circularities  
as if we could pick ourselves up by our belts  
and fly

## Skype

I talked to her over the computer  
not typing like this  
or email  
but voip her voice darker than I recall  
even with packet-based sideband distortion  
she sounded like dusk over a still ocean  
with just the smallest breeze enough to get the mind at attention  
but the senses at peace

}

we yearn for the envelope  
the ending bracing the beginning  
with irrelevant time and events between  
but these events aren't irrelevant because  
they turn the naive left brace into the wise and melancholy  
right just as we learned from Menard  
Author of *The Quixote*

## Wow?

just talk  
word after word  
only two at a time related

speaker—largely  
toothless with a doubled up  
tongue

wow—that's ...  
wow...words escape me  
...righteous?

## Summer / Merrimac / Storm

disturbances on the radio  
static in the songs  
every one or two

wind in the oaks / in the hickories  
acorns and nuts falling on the lawn  
rain heavy as nuts pinging the pavement  
which is just oil and sand compressed by cars

we count between the strikes and the sounds  
every 5 a mile or so  
we have closed the windows to the west  
opened them to the east  
the dog is under the table and we're in the middle of the room

when 5 just does it  
we head to the garage / into the car  
thinking we will be safe  
at least the sound is less  
hands on laps / we wait

every one or two  
static in the songs  
disturbances on the radio

## Storms & Storms

here there are no storms  
to match those east of here  
we don't get to savor the fear of the strikes and rumbles  
the way it rushes toward us no matter what we try  
and takes our house and does what it wants

she would rock in her chair  
to the wind and crushing rain  
and widen her eyes when the lightning came  
years and years she had practiced this  
and the day would come / I think /  
when it would kill her

## Rebut All

we think thinking  
is root / reveals design  
because everything we do is controlled thought  
yet what of letting go  
unbinding ourselves to thought

just a thought



## Reaction To Air

thunder is the same everywhere  
wind / rain  
a soul unhinged from its resting place  
grass pushing against the cut  
how waterproof is the vault  
the urns / the plastic sealed bag I put my essay in  
echoes are the basis of memory and creation  
thunder is nothing / but echoes  
about 100' away a spigot drips  
made a hole in the ground  
each life does that / echoes dribbling out  
digging in

## Filling / Filing

special places  
we lumber to them unaware of their tendernesses  
I am sure of truth / I am ignorances  
we can't come back to them once  
we leave  
we don't know when we leave  
places cannot be  
known / our minds are a place  
one / rendezvous  
we use our legs and feet to get there  
everything is underneath  
imagine if on the way  
we were to drop something

August 30, 2005

## V.True

the place where smart people  
learn / where they work  
the river that is wide and is their lives  
the trees along its banks are v.green  
the flowers off to the sides of the trees are v.colorful  
and smell like forever and wonderful lotions

ah but not every one is

## Dominus Tecum

dip your fingers in the water  
watch the waves bounce  
from the center to the sides  
to the center / bring them to your forehead  
and make a sign

behind you there are stones  
and bright colors  
there is smoke corkscrewing  
from candles

it is damp here  
it is quiet here

many wish everything would happen here  
but they don't see the stories on the walls  
in the windows  
this is important property

## Field Study

ok, so a field  
even though it's been plowed for centuries still  
there are stones to pull out and pile up  
ok, so the wall is not even  
since someone's (like me) taken some out to  
make rustic fireplaces and stoops  
ok, a big one in the middle  
plowed around / mowed around  
for centuries / ok, but just barely maybe  
I mean the time thing  
this rock / big & buried  
deep and maybe digging could put some space beneath it  
ok, but why worry horses  
you know my mother  
saw it too when she was a girl  
ok, I mean the time thing

## Monkey's Uncle?

they cringed when they opened  
the door on me / they fell to their knees  
and prayed though it sounded like  
they didn't know how  
I was there to beg  
food and old clothes  
but they knew me as someone else  
I asked to come in and they cried out  
I asked for soup and they wailed and pulled their hair  
I asked for an old pair of pants and they fell upon the floor

who could know that there is not  
just one but the job rotates  
some would say I left them for dead  
but they / after the praying  
the falling the wailing and crying out / they all  
came with me

## Desperate Word Slums

the city is filled with waiters  
they are watchers  
they listen  
they smell / sense / apprehend  
the facts just happen and the relevance is elsewhere

we never see them  
because our thoughts are selfish  
our thoughts are trained when we are alone  
and they can only be turned to themselves  
and maybe us if they have time

crying is our version of wind  
a storm has come between us  
we cannot speak / you and I / because you are consumed by yourself  
your thoughts spin into themselves  
my thoughts and yours can never meet  
words are for times like this  
but everything is told in the spaces  
the rest just blocks out possibilities  
with as many of them gone as language  
allows / we make out guesses  
like leaves on wind

wait / watch / listen / be the words

## Indifference to Indifference

the field's been plowed a hundred times  
and the rock never removed though the time  
it took to go around it added up to enough  
time to dig it out

stone importance  
some places take their  
distractions as gospel



## Criticism 102

speaking of it  
plainly like perfection  
the word is out  
that the time to pray is now  
there is no clarity of thought  
expression is a mess  
the world shouts for a clear  
explanation but it's all fractal and buried deep  
in the thicket of contradictions  
I am vexed and words turn prayer  
to fighting words and worse

## Vanishing Point

simple lines  
on a page  
brown on white  
we can read them  
we can locate them  
if there is perspective the image will form  
not many lines are needed  
because our nature is to complete them  
fill them in  
add them  
it helps if the image can be recognized  
we are not made for abstraction  
that which is abstract  
vanishes as we turn away

## On A Way

the light  
smoky or yellowed  
low through tall tangled trees and bushes  
it's the wooded parts of Illinois  
green spackled orange and yellow but low light  
just before the sun has given up  
I'm driving there  
hopeful of the outcome  
hopeful despite this spiteful light

## Is It Love or a Poet?

rocking  
jumping  
clapping  
rubbing  
oscillating  
smelling  
squinting  
licking  
mouthing  
biting & spitting  
facial grimacing  
tapping teeth  
rapid eye blinking  
touching head to table  
tongue noises  
looking out from the corners of the eyes  
holding arms rigid either above the head or out in front  
squeezing with fingers and hands  
head weaving  
flipping or snapping the fingers on the palm  
flicking the fingers in front of the eyes  
pating or twirling of the hands or spinning or waving  
covering parts of the face with the hands  
the pressing of objects  
masturbation  
whirling in circles  
pelvic thrusting  
shaking of the leg  
body quivers  
bouncing of the legs or feet maybe with legs crossed  
pawing the ground with the feet  
toe walking  
arm & hand flapping  
unusual body posturing  
quick darting movement  
palm staring  
feeling the edges of objects / scraping & tasting them  
undifferentiated verbalizations

## Slope / Downslope

garden walled by hedges  
conversation lined with hedges  
the sky is yellowed maybe  
from the age of the long days growing  
autumn tired  
the pond—the green pond's—water flows  
on a slight downslope in one end out  
the other  
the words bounce back from you to me  
the love shifted to the downslope side  
on the edge of the spillway  
will join the Sangamon  
down bigger rivers and bigger rivers  
until nothing is other than  
water water penned by walls  
it is all written

## Ed's

she is not beautiful  
she shows no discomfit  
no lack of pleasure  
she grinds her thonged ass into some-his crotch  
closes her eyes  
he holds her not narrow hipbones  
every man wants her  
she wants cash  
she is in control

## I Saw Her the Next Day in a Coffee Shop

they are older than they look  
the black lights  
makeup  
the dark corners  
workout routines and toning before coming out  
she wants to bring him to the point  
she rubs / grinds / rubs her bare ass on him  
and lean back into him  
she cups her breasts  
from 30' away  
(remember it's dark)  
I think she enjoys this  
she does it over and over  
first a fat man  
next a dark man  
next an old man  
later her man  
(I suppose)  
she has little beauty save sensuality  
she is (ultimately) chubby  
but judging by the line  
of men before her  
she is the local  
(local to this dark place)  
goddess

## Afterwards

we walked away chatting  
of what we saw  
who we caressed  
all they care about is money  
Ed said  
he might be right  
since he's 80 and owns the place

some people believe money is the only meaning  
like the 500 people in the world who "make"  
more than 420 million others

when those 500 read words shaped like this  
the jelly of their brains  
turns sour

women are not like that



## Revelation

it's the dead who forgive  
God has other things to do

September 14, 2005

## Club of Want

what you see  
she pities you  
you pay her  
love notes  
on the tip rail

## Drive He Said / Consing Up A Soul

—Brian Foote

Tactile and olfactory...  
intense, primal, Hannibal Lechter...  
Naked, short on humor, largely  
devoid of irony.  
Smitten with the brash  
juxtapositions of adjective / noun pairs.  
Power Noun. Noun Shouts.

Is this soul an ostentation?  
Are they all?  
Poetry is plumage.  
We are fledged for a reason.

I'm reminded of Miles Davis.  
More Miles Davis than Charlie Parker.  
There is little whimsy here.  
This is world that is stark and  
cold. So cold. A soul that lives  
in the moons of Neptune.  
The author's voice suggests Charles Bukowski  
and James Dickey, gruff and earthy.  
Often sullen. No narrow fellow  
in the grass. He's Butch,  
but not Spartan.

For a long time I couldn't listen  
to Miles Davis. His was a dark, brooding,  
gorgeous, foreboding journey to a place  
I wasn't sure I wanted to go.

I don't read poetry.  
I don't read fiction either.  
I prefer to live my own instead.

This is not an indifferent soul.  
Its not an uncaring soul.  
He just knows this cold dominion  
is his home, the only one he'll ever know. The only one  
he has any use for? It's not that bad of a place,  
and he's used to it by now.

I'm a lot of people on any given day.  
These souls emerge in concert  
with the others they touch day to say.  
None is more true than any other.  
I used to think that was not so.  
No more. We are all one out of many.  
E Pluribus Unum.

Laments? They're a polite strain of  
kvetching for goyem, right?

He is the author  
of thousands more poems  
that no lips have ever spoken,  
nor ears ever heard.

This is offered up for the author's  
amusement. Do I really believe any of it?  
Do I really believe anything?

A G-string snaps  
he is forced to improvise.  
So What?

## Attached / Once

alone but awake  
I don't know who you really are  
or who you are really  
you are new and strange  
all I recall: the sun on the lip of the ocean  
behind you as you slept  
the cold wind from the ocean  
making of you a persuasion  
a sink for warming hands  
your face familiar by type but not details  
everything made the same as everyone  
but particulars peculiar  
what to you are movements of familiarity  
are jerks and spasms to me  
the way you sleep is loneliness  
your intoxication / your perfumed body and hair  
fading / my choice is to lurk and stare

when you finally awake  
you will say what I have  
my silhouette before the sun  
grows small

## Rag Filled Lines

simple as plums  
too ripe and fallen to the pavement  
we lay into our work  
as if building a community  
from the shade of an apple tree  
our batteries have run down  
and the forest is folding up

I have written a program to find  
the most obscure set of lines  
of all and you will love  
them and me together  
like in an *orgy*

## Long Time / Long Day

my eyes watered all afternoon  
from the sun or dust or stress of living  
the light from the lowering sun  
seemed to skim off every surface  
when I opened the window at the toll booth  
the water-chilled air made the oddly color buoys  
look to me like seals

even now my eyes are not the same  
they can't be after each day of seeing  
the living and dying in their current poses  
I grow small in your eyes my face to the sun  
my back to my shadow and you  
heading that way

## Lost

it was time for the final computation  
the one that tells me whether I won  
but you know I didn't  
everyone knows I didn't  
because everyone knows I couldn't  
won / won't  
such ironies are petty poems made of



## Melody Lies

soon enough  
the sour song  
will curdle into the top  
folds of the animated mind  
if I come back alive  
I will be unable to think  
the same way again  
like spare change in a broken jar  
the weight of it breaks  
the heart

## A Good Story

sometimes there is no good reason  
for a story to start  
some will hear its start  
savor its progression  
then bask in its meaning and effect  
others will join the story late  
piece it together like a half-forgotten puzzle  
this leaves us to wonder about the worst  
is it those who hear its start  
and depart in the middle  
or those who hear neither  
its start middle or end  
I know what I think

I will be all those people  
won't you join me

## Remember

and so the story is told  
over and over  
each word is part of stichery  
and the order we learn  
details weaves the nature of sound and sight  
into a canopy of refurbished memories  
*remember this*  
*remember this*  
*remember this*  
only this order  
and the impression we had then  
are the ingredients of imagination

## Story

we find the angles  
sight along them  
feel better when we think we've learned  
but it's only a small perturbation  
in our quest for fun  
and a short but ending-quenching  
story

## September In Illinois

what sort of visit is it  
staying inside and talking  
or reading email  
outside the air is making a soup  
of the afternoon  
wings are working  
and what to us is nothing  
is like a 3d road  
duckweed on the surface  
green growth  
behind me the sky is an impossible blue

in town later in the week  
the streets seemed to have narrowed  
and become dust covered  
instead we grab a coffee  
at the Paradiso  
and drink slowly  
while we watch the girls make more

the smells are sophisticated

## Fan Above

for a day the ideas go round and round  
a ceiling fan overhead shows the way  
moving ineffectually the stale air  
I swanee the place is home more to bugs than me  
the swamp's not far away / a bayou away  
since it's all a circle the sounds I hear  
must be repeats / must be echoes  
like the wet in the stale air reprised  
from a day long ago when the guitars echoed  
the singing was in falsetto and the girls who  
danced have sunk and drooped  
O I loved them so much  
I still ache

September 26, 2005

## After Thinking

she is calm  
the heat is not giving up  
this time I'll take her a drink  
and act like a good son should

## Fire Under the Pine

cold day  
a little windy  
I had built a small ladder  
which were slats nailed to the trunk  
the lowest branches were 10' up  
it was a pine tree surrounded by needles  
6" deep / I built a fire in a hole  
I dug & surrounded by stone wall rocks  
when the wind picked up  
I doused it from a pretend canteen  
I climbed up / about 50'  
the branches were like stairs  
& I was above the other trees  
I could see the house  
the barn / the fields stretching  
around this island of pines and frail maples

that's what I wanted to do  
that day & others  
only the fire  
I never doused it but watched it closely  
tended it past dark  
I used my memory to work  
my way home



## Flame / Memory

after a time the little fire  
shrinks below the size of a match flame  
even the embers are weak in the cold air  
snowflakes are starting to buzz around my head  
uncovered until a moment ago  
the woods look like a bad tv signal  
that's how it looked and how I remember it

after a while / the fire revived after renewed fuel  
and my back to the wind before it  
my eyes started to water from smoke  
and a memory that I still quiver over today  
a memory that reminded me of the stone  
in the little clearing and how it  
anchored the scene whether  
I was there or not

## At The Casa Guadalajara

the family was young and loud  
Mexican based on many things  
they called over the mariachi  
and asked them to play loud songs  
and sad songs and songs of the triumph  
of loudness over sadness  
they paid in 5s and 10s  
the mariachi was 2 violins  
a bass a uke-like guitar or mandolin  
and a trumpet  
they all sang / really loud  
I loved the family who spoke loudly  
and happily in Spanish now / in English now  
depending on  
nothing I could discern  
I sat right next to them  
the trumpet aimed at my head while I ate  
and watched the red smear  
/outside the window at the far end of the restaurant/  
of the sun's going and gone down  
the highway was up on a bridge  
and for the one pane  
the cars would sprint by  
and they looked like shuttlecocks from a game  
and oneway badminton

the young wife never stopped smiling  
even while her husband ordered a plate of  
avocados and limes to line his tacos with  
the slices of avocado doused in squeezed limejuice  
and all they while he read the texts on his cell  
switched from Spanish to English  
sang with his not-fully-toothed mouth wide  
and I watched the cars like insects  
brush by and by

## Climbing Out / In

sometimes the sky is different  
like tonight as we took off  
fog and odd clouds mixed with smoke  
from big fires / we climbed out over the ocean  
and the sunset and ocean  
turned everything into shades of two colors  
gunmetal grey and gunmetal pink  
gunmetal meaning nothing natural  
and filled with the potential to kill  
there was a sheen on the water  
and over the water  
it was a metallic look everywhere  
even though there were some puffy grey clouds  
the clouds and fog and shiny parts  
were all in layers / we flew up through them  
and each time everything changed  
below some of the clouds  
dark strings hung  
I was afraid while this all unfolded  
even though the sun set and it became dark everywhere  
I am still afraid

## Love Hails

really the day is over  
we have nothing to say  
you read / I read  
the pages make little finger sounds  
just before we turn them  
we are interested in the thoughts  
of others not each other  
is this better than surfing the web  
or emailing strangers  
just the same

## Loss as Love

cold weather coming  
wind down the river valley  
the bridge readies itself for ice floes  
green is becoming more rare  
it's time to sit by the river  
listen for the fish to jump  
to taste the cold air to see when winter will arrive  
I'm alone listening to music over and over  
the same song again  
repeats are all the rage  
winter proves it  
spring can't become summer  
without it

## Essence of Faith

follow where I lead  
down the hallway  
down the road  
you are lonesome as always  
but near the border someone is always  
looking to kill  
for fun / for money / for love  
kill sometimes is metaphorical  
as in the death of loneliness  
we fear death but it is part of the welcome swath  
that we pass over in continuous steps  
remember the killing is near the border  
so stay away until it's time to approach  
I am here to lead  
when you are ready at last

## Hoarding is Fun

the rich do it all the time  
(in fact  
what else *do* they do?)  
hoarding is the way  
to get to hell the fastest  
(the Bible  
teaches me that)  
the rich love to talk about the Bible  
because it's a way to make the faithful  
obligingly humble and poor  
and where else can all that wealth go  
if not to the rich  
hoarding lies  
is the way to do it

## Rivers of Gleeful Singing

we sway down to the river  
where the fish wait then  
swim upstream  
like people who wait  
to learn of you  
maybe learn to love you  
then linger a beat too long  
before angling away  
we wind our ways through  
the things called our lives  
like singers on a stage  
lit to blindness  
we never know whether anyone watches  
but if we stop singing  
the booing will start



## Cold Where You Are

it must be cold where you are  
wet streets from steady rain  
the wet caught on your shoes  
now on your living room floor  
the window becomes a character  
in your flat / rain beads outside  
and steam from your cooking inside

all these things speak of us  
the way it's night here and day there  
no need for curtains because  
nature—our's—is enough

## All and Everything at Sea

all it takes is one strong rain  
starting in the western part  
of town and migrating within  
minutes to the other side  
a sheet in other words  
the direction the squall pushes  
determines the order in which  
what's left of the broken hearts  
is swept into the storm drains  
then into the concrete ditches  
that take those things to the rivers  
to the sea where the individual problems  
mingle with the rest and it seems  
worse and worse but it's really  
better and better because  
well  
it's just water  
ya know

## Lessons / Night / Snow / Everything

outside by fogged over  
windows a truck has driven  
and its sharp tread impressions  
are filling up with the light snow  
that's falling / there is no idea  
of strolling down to the park  
or riding out to the docks  
tonight

it's one of those nights  
when newspapers from cities  
far away make sense  
or / and candles instead of hard lights  
and / or whiskey in coffee or tequilla in tea  
some razorlike in something hot  
to go down the throat and stifle conversation

the snow outside  
falling heavier as the cold air picks up  
moisture from upriver  
acts like a mute so even sharp sounds  
loud ones engage us like love talk  
head by head on our pillow

the truck tracks are filled  
the little impressions that're left  
are only a hint of the past  
that things pass  
loud or soft  
they still pass

## Swarm 1

a line of ants runs  
from a nest in the brush  
to the corner of the house  
a little at a time the line  
extends up the wall  
they are like an algorithm  
that always eventually works  
but eventually is sooner than you expect  
but it took great minds  
some trained at MIT  
to figure this out

## Design Nothing Fancy

the place is awake  
or post-doze / I don't know  
or my mind is wandering  
I am designing something new  
the songs I play to create in front of  
must be melancholy  
must remind me of where I'm from  
and how much I am never enough  
best of all is a fake piano  
electric based on hammers and plates  
nothing fancy being played  
slow fingers are enough  
the design of the song / though /  
is angled to make the most  
from the least  
did I mention that the place  
is awake

?

## Prayer On Noise

it makes me cry  
the way they rise up  
through thin air  
the way in their wake  
the whip seems to crack  
and below windows won't rest  
with the sun setting off to the left  
in front of them and clouds forming  
off their wingtips / it makes me cry  
when the F15Es turn on the noise  
on their way to rip some country  
apart

## Sweeping Advice

look up  
when sweeping be aware  
of where you are and what  
the situation is at all times  
sweeping without a slider on  
can be more effective  
since it allows both feet to "dig in"  
to get the job done.  
dust shots / also clean the line of delivery before every shot  
stay with the rock  
until it comes to a complete stop  
be prepared for alternate shot  
calls from the skip  
watch rock placement stop  
sweeping if the rock is curling too  
much a long guard is better  
than a close rock  
that is not guarding  
anything

October 13, 2005

## Autumn etc

it's happening again  
cold coming on but  
today it's 85° / buffed sun  
but the nights grow  
deeply chilled and the ground  
is hardening / things in the ground  
are growing wary and reticent  
it will happen to you too



October 14, 2005

## Underneath

leaves cover the area  
strong light and its heat  
never stain the ground  
just sparse grass  
your idea of love

## Futile

long walk home  
who's there  
long walk back

October 16, 2005

## We Lounge

by the pool  
water up on the concrete  
slapping flippers on rude boys  
a quiet conversation  
never starts / in fact  
cannot be contemplated

## After A Discouraging Exercise

the line of squalls leads nowhere  
though the stone cobbles are slick  
people have fallen and hurt themselves badly  
but others stare like acolytes at the rainbows  
their faces wetted and melancholy  
some of the people have learned they  
are quite stupid but they  
remain exhilarated by  
their disdain and uncaring why  
they are ecstatic and holy

October 18, 2005

## South—

nights make  
no sense  
girls scared  
of desire

October 19, 2005

Nil—

the story  
told & told  
gains truth

the truth  
told & told  
gains nil

## The Truth at Twelve Stories

fearful night  
no goodbye kisses  
no smudges to wipe away  
no overlooks to look over  
or planes to watch descend with care over lovers at work  
instead your going  
is a rumor overheard at the party  
then more and more until  
it is like us / nothing

## Air Lines

you have no passion  
nor romance and never  
a quiet word

you spout / not talk  
you blurt / neither languor  
you step in wide long steps / no caution

airplanes have done this  
to us / there once was a time  
a fortunate time



## At The Stranger's Restaurant

she is demure  
selecting wine  
looking up furtively from the list  
to see what he thinks  
she never smiles but she is filled  
with love and hope / she has captured and will again  
she wears no makeup  
and her glasses / frameless almost / makes  
her more / including desirable

I would love her  
but it's time to head home  
to (be on) my own

## On a Lost Sunday

plans made exfoliate  
like leaves in fall  
they blanket green ground with yellows etc  
after a while the ground turns  
the leaves dried or decaying  
form a blanket or blow away  
the blanket warms the ground or changes its chemistry  
or the blown leaves gather at the bases of trees or cover  
the pond then sink

notice how each or expands and the disorder and symmetry  
of it becomes apparent  
anyhow it's winter that's gaining on everything  
even as balance operates elsewhere

and on the drizzled on street  
the cute and rich shop  
and prepare

## Unlucky

uncanny likeness  
to a New England fall day  
here on the coast above Santa Barbara  
dark bottoms and cold mist  
waves hit the shore hard  
we feel it in our feet as we walk  
cold and alone  
though we walk side by side  
this day is ours

## 1 Act / 1 Man

actor / stage  
fiction / fact  
the lighting is disruptive  
especially when levels change  
the surface of the curved passage  
is evocative of metaphor  
without taking the plunge

## Unexplained Things

swamps behind the house  
wet all summer  
in winter ice forms a layer over air  
I've wondered where the water has gone  
there can be no evaporation  
the ground below is frozen  
but the ice marks a high point  
perhaps summer's peak  
a memory / an awakening  
I walked along the edge of the swamp  
one day when the insects were quiet  
and birds gathered at the far end of the woods  
there was no sound except for a slight cracking  
not like leaves or trees bending in a light wind  
but like something you'd hear  
in the deep end of winter

## On Paper

first the thinking comes a little harder  
certain kinds require heavy lifting  
of a sort one can be unused to  
like leaves fallen on the ground  
unused to the heavy touch  
of the earth / used to instead  
the touch of air almost all around

next the reluctance to strap it on  
to approach the knot  
pulled tight and soaked

finally just watching  
and putting it down

## Too Easy to Find

the perfect woman is not hard  
to find / she is right over there  
and there / walking away  
in a too-tight skirt  
or something that makes it all clear

my desire is useless  
because there is nothing for  
my decisions to do  
so I sit and read  
looking up at them  
as they walk by  
or sit down nearby

I love them all  
but they  
but they  
but they have their own thoughts  
on this

## Odd Looking Prayer

too many people come  
then go without comment  
I'm muffled and muffling  
wrapped like cardboard box  
packing material all packed  
up in a cardboard box  
hunched in / crunched in  
there is a cold wind  
trying to blow  
out all the light in the world  
we should mourn  
and quicken our step  
with every candle  
that flutters



## Again Once More

let's celebrate the snow  
falling in puffy clumps  
and it's time to wonder what it's like where you are  
this weather that you are used to  
I've nowhere near as usual  
you've concluded I've abandoned you  
but the barren beech beside you beckons  
and the river is biding its time  
waiting for my return

why do we return  
how do we know the right time  
it's no mystery how we know  
the right place

## On Passing Birthdays

so many years ago  
two days I remember in particular  
dreams pop in on those days  
even when I don't think about those days  
don't reflect on the events that triggered the dreams  
nights up in an old bed / springs not up  
to it anymore and I slept in it years later  
my fave books / an old (even then)  
tube radio / an old (even then)  
tv / I was afraid there / could hear them  
argue sometimes / sometimes about me  
the night wind on my face each summer  
night / it seemed things would never end  
end they did / everything will  
oh my why does it have to end this way

## At The Beach / Nothing Special

nothing is like it  
no one knows the half of it  
the convertibles are trying to raise the roof  
but their trunks won't let go  
and the rain is about to hit

we've camped on the coast  
awaiting the storm  
that will never come  
I asked  
you responded  
but nothing was special  
about just about  
every aspect of a love  
that was destined for nothing

now I'm proven right  
right again  
to no good purpose

## Holcomb Once More

the expanse from morning edge to night  
horrifies the observer used  
to the narrow / the tall over the very wide  
imagine you're standing next to a field  
of wheat that as it disappears  
toward the west signifies the end of civility  
or of safety / for toward the east  
death has visited in the form of 4 shotgun  
blasts / creating a story where  
once lives lived

## Last To See Them

visitors to the house  
are by invitation only  
cars come partway down the lane  
before hesitating  
and then backing slowly out

visitors to the graves  
need to find them

yes read that again  
because the dead never rest  
alone

## Great / Plain

the dream of being in the midst  
of the Great Plains with someone  
strange and new / to be anonymous  
while the stormdrains of fame  
are still emptying

we stand beneath the cottonwoods  
by a dry stream hoping for a pensive  
moment as the sun empties its heat  
into the lost air

in this dream our hands are fused  
the heat of us is turning from green  
like the aspens' leaves we cannot see  
only her back is clear to me  
and the curves in her hands

in my dream many wish  
the know / only  
two don't

## Oh, Frank

swarms of frogs eat flies furiously  
the dog's ears are folded forward  
in a show of the opposite of rage  
pines kneel in the light breeze effected by afternoon  
we have taken to napping immediately  
on waking / nothing like ultra sleeping  
when the world is crazy so is its opposite

## Valley Days

weather getting worse  
coming down the river  
heading for the cold ocean  
trees have started their bending  
acknowledgement / encouragement  
tomorrow it will clear and warm  
turn to sticking my shirt  
to my back / the routine  
will start afresh  
weather getting better



## Wearing Our Meaning

there are thoughts  
whisking from mind to mind  
on the wings of whispers  
on the wrists of words  
which reach to each other  
tweaking the hints  
that writing makes

## Hadley Road

in the fields  
by the edge of woods  
along a road  
sometimes lined with coins  
stone walls making their way  
into the past  
the rain making small puddles  
in the road / the road curving down and away  
or down and into the distance  
this was my place  
my place / they sold it away  
and now it's carved up  
I wish for it once more  
again

## Seeing Ends

the secret's out  
I've lost  
the map of the end of my life is plain  
to live alone / just two of us / writing the one last book  
in a place with not many expenses  
and a lingering disease / a painful death  
not long / not yet / but not long

## An Area Granite

I am going to do a little of slapdash economy  
combined with cheap psychology to explain tardanza  
using two principles that of course are not mios

people always leave everything for morning  
unless they have something  
to win or to lose in the short term with it  
this is because as says to Richard Gabriel  
“the evolution is the tendency to preserve  
what it works and to change the accessory”

if there is an opportunity of short term business  
then everything goes rolling but otherwise  
already you can in vain be left the heart trying  
that the partners put nor an area granite

## Is Anything Unknown?

mediocre  
words can't capture it  
too lazy / too stupid  
good enough to make people notice  
not good enough to make it

in pain / alone  
this is how it will end  
that's how it was with her

## Combat Burial

we dig a hole  
kick him in  
pile on the dirt  
stack stones  
tie a cross with horsehide  
spike in over his head  
from where you stand we're backlit  
we mean as much as him

## Fragrance Meets Torture on a Windy Day

two things on the tube

...a top White House official refused to rule  
out the use of torture...

...quickly fills the room with fragrance...

how can we listen  
who can listen

picture a child in a green dress  
carrying an ornament to a green tree  
rooted in a stand  
and frosted with silver and glass  
the thought of good smells  
too good  
too important  
too appropriate

we forget lives need joy  
and joy is simple  
not torturous

## Will Never

the elm lane  
the house tremendous  
in the post-green-sky dusk  
a warm mid-afternoon  
chilling to near freezing  
when the car drives up  
and they begin to wait  
to their left the lights come on  
go off  
come on  
go off

when hours later  
they leave  
the highways will never be the same  
the hotels will never feature  
hospitality  
writers will always  
look over their shoulders  
in case the muse is carrying



## After the Murders

when it was discovered  
many people gathered  
to clean up  
how could they leave the mess  
it was their Christian duty  
to clean it up  
and to forgive

## Square

suspense itself  
suspended from a tree  
whose roots are variable  
in their depth and discursion  
filled with suspense  
a radical thought

## What's In Your Wallet?

when you purchase  
the wrong brand  
you are taking an unacceptable  
risk with your capital

some people never take these risks  
they collapse poetry instead

that's the 0-sum of it  
something has to go  
the money or the beauty

## Unlikely Attitude

possible outcomes  
resting like leaves or gulls  
on the tops of trees  
by a bay by the bye  
fluttering after the outcome  
is cashed in  
full income  
soon birds flap away

in my case  
I check into a motel  
set on a slant  
just before night each day  
the gull gather and raise their gullwings  
saluting the leaves that have left  
and I fall into a doze  
to celebrate a dozen  
autumns at the beach  
on a slant

ill / ill will / I will

## Likening

of the numerous things  
things like our names  
that are given to us  
not earned

our faces distort  
into our own

## Unrandom

projecting me on you  
leads to conclusions  
wide and vague  
like onions being sliced in a warm kitchen  
tears flow down the drain  
no one is flush with care  
I knew it would come to this one day

the rush outdoors is unbent  
let's finagle our way into the projection  
and become like the wind in the leaves  
in the blend of air and light

## Toggled and Told

she can't get it  
it's my job to help  
looking at the options results  
in pained expressions  
and outward looking  
I'm not able to single  
out the passions  
the logic of gypsies  
is helping the lunatics  
escape reason  
my nose is active  
designing a new automobile  
using scratch and green toads  
I'm lonely about the tree  
cut down when I was four

## Wintering Nearby

in the woods  
we wonder  
when will it snow  
under the pines  
right by the trunks  
there is a cylinder of warmth  
where the body against  
the needles on the ground  
make a tent of comfort  
above the flakes the clouds  
shelter us crouching here  
a small fire of twigs between us  
a stout stone in position to shield any wind  
is just inside the ring of snow  
that makes this deep winter  
we are as in a cave  
we are in the woods  
wondering about the snow  
wondering how to reach one hand  
into another



## Floating Under

there is a culvert  
under the road  
it is made of stone  
because it was made a long time ago  
looking through it  
I see the water  
or is it the future  
flowing from the field  
and passing into the woods as swamp

## Leader

so small minded  
from a good school and proud of his bad ideas  
he has it all and talks about it  
is he worth the effort to think about

## Lament Under Determination

filled with faith  
his head shaved and recently entered  
his speech slowed but filled  
with longing and distress  
from too much determination  
he smiles and asks me to pray  
for him and the chemistry  
killing the fastest growing  
things in him / not  
things like hope or belief  
filled with life  
he waits for the chance  
to meet someone  
he relishes who will fill him  
after the world has been emptied  
of him / and further filled by faith

## On Going Home

does it sound trite  
the call to prayer and attention to small  
details of language  
are there interpretations  
or is it just the way it sounds

I'll never understand  
there is a plainness to his message  
like a cemetery with flat stones  
that never conceal a view or intrude  
where to understand a life  
you must bow completely  
the place is like a garden  
he is like a garden  
to understand him  
bow all the way

## Roads / Directions

the road past our house  
leads east toward the sea  
and west toward the nearest large town  
then on toward the west of my dreams  
Fuddlike interpretations aside  
this is where they have been  
the sun lowering / chipping off  
windwaves in the low lake  
offset from the hills by little slopes  
looking westward I see little  
from eyeglare

I recall the bikerides every day  
to reinforce my listless love  
and now I clip in / head downwind  
south toward home  
where my legs will unwind

## Unhappy? What Do You Think?

by a favorite river  
under the weeping tree  
gangly / branches dipping  
into the calming waves  
my friend is by me  
in the corner of my head  
recessed behind sentiment  
he is smiling to himself  
and the stones at the bottom of the coursing  
stream nearest us  
soon he'll pass away  
replaced by a song he liked  
and me too / just the two  
of us and a gangly tree  
weeping for us both

## Public Acts

the bridge  
a long span to serve two banks  
a lot of work for common good  
who for greed would do this  
who but those for whom greed  
is their belief system  
they will be comfortable  
while I starve and read

## All Over Yellow

night yellow lights struggling  
across the waving-water river  
mills felled by the banks  
knee-bound and shards from wired windows  
calling to the current divided  
into streams some close som far  
from shore

we're in the car / you're telling  
me a story of your life which is no  
story but the frame beneath a day  
of your days

we say so infrequently  
that your stories are all the same ones  
because who remembers beginnings  
any more

your voice against the window  
the lights in squiggles just the usual  
for them but puzzles for us  
the exit is coming up and soon  
I'll be getting out  
you'll be moving on  
and we'll be all over



## Perfect Colors

the lights in the room  
are programmed to cast  
candle yellow light  
on the cream walls and copied art  
built for two  
all the rooms I stay in  
it's me just  
me every time  
the knock at the door  
is no one I know  
just that old black dog  
back again for our restless  
night together

## You and Me

## Accosted / Assured

assembled / assumed  
a different brain operates  
in the night after we wake  
and can't resleep  
the worst become sharp  
the best distant and enraptured

like the constructed / imagined / mashed together  
sets for the making of King Kong  
the dulled brilliance of the downing sun  
the distant hills  
the enclosing woods  
forsaken field  
the timid stone wall  
and you  
form planes my thoughts may rest on  
washed out to washed up  
from sentiment to sentimentality  
dream or waking / what's the diff?

such times the sheets bear witness  
through wetness  
of the rolling / roiling thinking / tossing  
then the narcotic dictation of hormonal migration  
to ... almost said normal  
but I meant sleep or maybe daylight

## Cheeselist

talleggio / italy / cow / washed rind  
onetik brebis / spain / basque / goat and sheep  
burrata / italy / buffalo milk

## Roads and Beyond

certain traits of the gravel  
beside the road compell  
care in bicycling  
the bicycle designed with people  
in mind and people required  
like planes or other industrial  
contrivances / think of it this way  
brains needed for motor control  
bikes waver and gravel is ready  
to cave in stability / make scrap of it  
render unto the seizer what is messed up

well / the end of the road is a lint trap  
but near the river and cool with bugs and mist  
there is mud but beneath are ancient forests  
and maybe-still/growing grass  
how many glances to the side are needed  
to make it here with all those graveled  
sides beckoning

## Micro Work

library work  
scanning the past  
the signal a rock might  
send / more complex  
than a simple line  
the randomness of nothing  
that matters

December 6, 2005

## At Guck's

sensible parties  
dancing in red light downstairs  
you can never tell who will play the piano  
to gain attention  
but it's the holding that counts

## Dancing Queen

first the boat founders  
and then the waves become outlandish  
standing on the prow  
I can watch it all  
it reminds me of the sock hop  
and trying to dance slowly with some girls  
they didn't all know how to say no  
so some did  
the water crashed over them  
they were ships stuck on shore  
dancing with me  
because they couldn't get away

## Homegoing

under the bridge  
ice floes gather stuck  
against piers and cracking up

downriver the pieces  
are small and fill what seems  
like rivers apexed at the piers  
piercing the sheet of ice  
moving downriver

after I've stood here  
looking down  
for half of winter  
I can't figure the best way  
off this bridge and down the road  
where someone tells me  
there are people I love



## White Sky

there is this  
beneath a high sun features  
are too white hot  
eyes cannot fall on pages  
pavement is liquid black  
tackling tires and bootsoles  
lifting air lifting hope  
we want it  
the rest is waiting

## Left Behind

he passed me  
up a slight hill  
his bike better than mine  
his body more lithe  
but my legs are stronger than his  
through heavy squats and crazy lifting  
I catch him / hang back just behind him  
he doesn't realize I have matched him  
birds alight on branches in the breeze  
as we work past  
as long as I ignore my pain  
I keep up / but like anyone  
who thinks of living  
I let my legs talk back  
and I begin to drop back  
birds are up again  
I can almost see him  
while I move ahead  
it's like this in everything

## Down River

behind a fence  
holes large as doorways  
a slope up to a perch  
where people sleep  
in bags / water bottles within reach  
backpacks of clothes  
things / maybe books or photos  
they eat what's left  
drink to feel less  
some of us are surprised  
to learn they're human almost  
like us

## Mountain View

edge of woods  
mist hangs there  
turns the white of birches  
snow is drifted over the trail  
so we've come up here  
found this warm place  
in late spring not quite  
above tree level  
behind you I've reached around  
feel the flickers of life  
smell the perfume your brushed  
into your hair  
as we look forward  
the grey band of rain  
is just upon us

## Weary of Roads

can you count the roads  
the streets in a city  
there are too many paved roads  
to ever travel them all  
imagine all the tires it would take  
all the road novels and tapes of music  
all the coffee spilled on tight turns  
the consumption of gas and oil and chemicals  
in general / to travel them all  
each made for important reasons  
by people with no time to waste

## Cold Beneath the Mountain

not late afternoon  
but leaden with clouds  
in places rubbed rouge  
by the painted face of disrepair  
lead is the color of coldness  
of distance and heavy relapses  
this darkened sight reminds me  
of the evenings we spent beneath  
cheap sleeping bags / rectangular  
filled with cotton  
skin near skin / fire in the woodstove  
just feet away  
rouge is the color of about to happen  
boundaries or is it borders  
about to / just  
it seems like kissing  
but around the edges I feel the cold  
outside / the cold  
the hot stove / the heavy bags  
this is not late afternoon

## Caught Half In / Half Out

the door opened  
I've stooped to grab the paper  
but the road is showing  
a provocation of dark hair  
and disbelieving mouth and eyes—  
she has seen me  
I'm sure  
I'd duck back in but  
what for

behind me the air doesn't move much  
an old place  
an important place

## Unconnected Stream

below the rock in the clearing  
a small pool  
bitter with fall leaves  
it has no source  
but begins a small stream  
that picks up from no further sources  
in 15 years I followed it downstream  
only 100 yards  
I imagine where it comes out near the road  
as a torrent / rushing current  
where in a side pool I'd fish  
never catching anything  
not making the connection



## Invented Beauty

the piquant scent of piñón wood  
in the clear night air  
red / green chilis  
posole / tamales  
blue corn tortillas / bizcochitos  
an enveloping garland of warmth extends  
from faux-brick hearths in doublewides  
to sculptured kiva fireplaces  
in the corners of art galleries  
in the ghetto of art galleries  
during the farolito walk  
/on that evening/  
in the biting cold  
cars verboten  
electric street lights turned off  
the pulse of modern life grows faint  
while locals descend on Acequia Madre  
we have no way to know  
how many dogs are slinking through  
the square in the pueblo  
invented beauty  
in single-digit temperatures

## Rock and Trees

trees / how many have we cut  
up on the hill and dragged back  
it's easy to count / but counting  
puts a limit on things / hides  
the beauty of the indefinite  
we're taught knowing is superior  
a wide field and every blade is known  
every small thing / that reminds me of the stone  
in the center of the field / the day I hid  
behind it while each of them called  
out / I didn't call back  
these stories are linked through them  
they liked blue lights on the tree  
in the window / just a deep blue  
a hint of void / how many are there  
is there a way to miss them

## From You

wash it's far  
may Crusty a got a.  
give a fly a work but her  
or when it keep may too may put  
it's round a just not ran try.  
do be cut see once ! clean it white  
some came may found on.  
before try are a too in would may.  
Waffle iron ! then it Grunion  
but bring try red it read , as on go , know on here a its but.  
gave and them the upon  
and Corn ! we be could but slow or.  
Monkey + (anything)  
see again or did try of be.  
keep and Broccoli may him  
a open , warm ! are in wash and too ! pretty  
but once a Crusty but.  
would some yes , for some  
much a wash a after may wish the.

## Linwood

let's talk about green  
color of life when it pushes up  
from ground wet from downpours  
or morning mist / morning dew/  
any sort of cliché  
color of death when it covers the vault  
things inside  
so imagine a blue splotched sky  
padded with white  
backdropping the green blips  
of tree branches in early spring

it's a place I've visited before  
stood in this place before  
much shorter than I am now  
let's talk about repetition

## Just Blind

remember the year we got  
6' of snow in February  
it was the year I couldn't see  
/ just had my operation /  
the second and I was not allowed  
to see bright lights / but when  
they brought me home  
with my dark dark sunglasses on  
I could see the snow piled high  
with pathways dug deep into it  
driveway / path from there to the front door  
from there to the path from the road  
to the side door / a path to the back  
from the cellardoor to the drying lines  
where in the summer my mother would hang clothes  
every day / all this as I rushed from the car  
to the garage door / not all of it visible  
so I must have imagined some of it  
my eyes could not see in bright light  
I remember the snow had blue edges  
still do

## Story

the cascades  
water picking up the bitterness  
of stones in its way  
—or is it the right word—  
there is no continuous thing  
that is water  
water is a swarm  
a friendly one  
we know it by its mass behavior  
and statistics / stuff working with stuff  
there is no story that leads from letters or sounds  
to stories and beyond

## 1973, When We Believed

anniversary / 32 years  
it would have been  
but one of us  
couldn't make it beyond 10  
many I love were alive then  
love meant something different  
my father played the organ poorly  
but he played  
my mother watched  
all believed  
but me

## Snowed In By Meaning

some times  
the lights are off  
I sit in front  
of a window  
watching snow drop past  
the yellow lights  
of streetlights  
watching the snow make black  
pavement white  
some times  
a truck goes past  
while I sit  
watching and the snow  
is made packed  
in the shape of tires

after a while these  
sharp tracks are softened  
the yellow lights are softened  
the snow falls harder  
this hardness speeds the softening  
meaning is back in vogue



## Flyover Observer

up here  
high but low  
enough to see the stitches  
of streetlights leading toward  
a city where the crisscrossing  
streets and slow-moving headlights  
are highlighted by the contrasting  
dark ribbon of a river running variously  
through it / far away on a road  
not marked by lights a car  
is moving away from the city  
if we could see it up close  
we'd see that the car was slowing  
then speeding up / hesitating  
as if the urge to run away  
were running away

## Movie Not Missed

funny worry  
first time for me  
last?—unlikely  
to be able to see something  
before I die  
suppose I didn't?  
I would miss seeing it  
because there would something  
to do the missing  
we are thus  
so sentimental about  
ourselves

## Real Poet

poetry contests are rigged  
I know dozens of poets  
some of whom judge contests  
I never won a thing  
am I real?

## Question of Tactics / The Moral of the Story

well consider the rain  
again the chalice of the streetlamp  
holds the tingling cold rain drops  
headed like bulbs bursting  
to the pavement to pool in puddles  
it's an old story  
older than streetlamps and pavement  
this rain / it asks just one question  
once for every drop that falls  
we have heard it for so long  
we don't hear it again  
each drop that falls to the ground asks  
are we saved

## Rain Leaves

recall the rain  
weather that makes more of a difference  
than mood / we fall when rain falls  
roads become beautiful  
the car ads tell us so  
sound is never as close  
as when it is rain on the roof  
or blowing against the windows  
in the night after we are wakened  
it becomes a miracle  
whenever it feels like it  
its makes the earth we tread upon  
(that in its bulk keeps us grounded and not spaced)  
mud / a short ways to what we know best  
recall the leaves

## Partial Installation

my response in all cases  
the correct response may be  
a dialog appears  
expert install you will be  
pace and fast internet access  
read this or visit Gerben

## Of Noise

time to write  
dialog of broken half-words  
half-spoken in a kitchen  
of whole power

at the kitchen table  
I read the book containing  
a poem like this one  
while she fries onions  
and smokes

no one is ready for her outbursts  
herself included  
because they are a switch flipping

on New Year's we watch the Rose Parade  
in snowy b&w and order  
through a magazine  
an 8mm movie of the floats  
and watch it 3 months later  
with the same enthusiasm

time to write of the trips  
through the woods  
of grandparents sleeping somewhere  
in the house I can't recall  
the smell of clothes  
stored most months  
in closets filled with mothballs

those times feel important still  
even as part only of my faded  
memory like a TV set with no antenna  
striving to make a picture clear  
from a source made only  
of noise