

Metaphor Police

A Collection of Poems from 2007

Richard P. Gabriel

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How to Recall

the writing has started
the diagrams starting to be put together
in this way / by bits and pieces
the remembering starts
the explaining
the stories within / on top of / besides stories
all other stories fight their nonlinearity
this one doesn't
even though one word like this one
is followed by exactly 0 or 1 others
sequence is not story
and it's not linearity
it's a pacing and the traces
of the web being painted

Roughing It

building a cabin
alone / filming yourself
building everything by hand
even spoons and bowls from dried stumpwood
building an outhouse
and a cache up on stilts
a vault underground as an icebox
(permafrost)
all the furniture
a fireplace
and then to live up in Alaska
alone for decades
recording everything
caribou / bear / moose / wolverines / ptarmigans / rabbits / magpies
trout / salmon / sheep / wolves
all the players but could it be you
could you live this way
could you live this way
cold / alone / writing it all down
filming it
there are questions that come to mind

Travel Date

alone again in a hotel room
tired from long flights and bad food
bleary from getting up early to make the flight
in a time zone where getting enough sleep
means trying to sleep too early
and then getting up too late after not sleeping much
then required to be smart
all day / eating bad again
no exercise / bad light / coffee all day
this is why I am who I am

Blame for Life

who is guilty
the taxi driver who drops us out of town
then comes back after dinner to get us
is he guilty
the pizza was good
but too sweet
too mild
too aromatic in a nonpizza fashion
but upscale no doubt
narrow waisted women
so young they look 12
even though I was there only
for an hour I feel
I will miss them

I Felt the Cold Hand Last Night

the story takes shape
the taxi stops on the ramp exiting the bridge
that goes along the river then across
it's 50 years old or more
painted yellow
but needs it again
with rusted hex bolt heads
looking oldschool industrial
or military / rain sets the mood
this bridgework was built in the days
of the story and I've vowed to recall this
scene as I write others in that story
and why not / why not
make it like it was

Old Things In Mind

side delivery
making wind rows in the direction of travel
sulky rake
making wind rows perpendicular to the direction of travel
one was simpler
but when row balers came along
it was necessary to make wind rows in spirals
so the pick-up baler could work without stopping

these things
are the totems of the past
they ask to be stories
they say their meanings quietly

the barn for example
holds what we put in it
all winter / it is built
for many purposes
including a toilet
a workshop
a coop
cow stalls
doors on either end
space and space for hay
everything about it is dangerous
even the memory of it

Long Hours

after work
I'm in the midst of traffic
that is red in front of me
and white behind
my apartment is uneven
and leaks warm air
everything I have is cheap
what I dream of is just more
above my roof the sky blackens
mirroring me
the stars are like my dreams
everything about it is a cliché
it's a big city
if I drove for 3 hours
everything could be different

Teach Nothing

poets write of fiction
randomness and indeterminacy
as if they read mathematics
and understand statistical reasoning
like Bayes's theorem or neural nets
but it's just a way to justify
incoherence and narrative disruption
as if a poem about nothing
can be justified through an appeal
to what is not known
they speak of the theory of language
as if it weren't a system that works
well enough to have built one hell of a world
of course theories of language have also given us
senseless writing as if the two were related
so here is what it all amounts to
teach a man to fish
and you feed him for a lifetime
give him ramen noodles
and you don't have to teach him anything

Just In Case

have you noticed
that some cities
at night are bitter
that their lights illuminate
the disappointments
the woman who whispers sweetheart
as he walks into the kitchen from the bedroom
the man who watches her walk away
after a short conversation of regret
they are still friends
they think to themselves and say to each other
but the streetlights
the lights in the offices above
and homes up in the hills
and the lights invisible in the streets around them
know lies when they shuffle past
he will think of her many times
when the lights are again like this
and she too will think of him
but neither will know
will ever know
what small things only had to be done differently
what extra things had to be said
what small things had to not be said
for example how he should have surrounded her with himself that one night
it rained
but that is not why
for the city to stop being black in the night
and for the sun to rise
and for her red hair to slowly turn brown
until facing the sunset they finally knew
what love is

Up Coast

down by the ocean
in a house brand new and modern
too done but with the taste that comes from a single mind
the window that faces the breakers
is paned for the wind
and this is the window he stands in front of
as the rain slants down into the firs and sand
the wind heaves at him
trying to shoulder him aside
as the dark figures how to last longer
but even while he looks out at all this
holding a glass and chewing without purpose
his eyes are on her
a thousand miles away
where the sun never seems
to stop

Another Night of Lights and Her

she doesn't understand what I mean
when I watch her when she's not watching back
she is not used to the dark and artificial light
her color is not good under these circumstances
she loves sentences like the one I just wrote
but she doesn't know it doesn't = poetry 
but she doesn't care about things referred to by \blacktriangleright this word / see
she cares mostly about how shiny her hair is
in this light
how dark her hair looks and how long it is as I watch it/her sway
while she walks away in the cold air
she likes how her hip width and the way she steps
makes the view of her from his point of view intriguing
other things she ignores
like who she is
and what she pictures for herself
or what she likes to eat when she's alone
what I mean is that all of these observations are about
what is deserved / do I deserve this
does she
what about him \leftrightarrow her

Does This Matter

when girls
(sometimes men)
are physically capable
of separating their butt cheeks
and shaking them
there is no movement
in any other body part
not the legs or lower back
just simply the booty
it's crazyyy

Street Scenery

the perfect woman
can get any man she wants
everything about her
is heartbreaking
I watch her standing on the corner
waiting for the traffic to subside
waiting for the sky to clear
waiting for her heart to settle
on what she sees as difficult choices

but the choices she has
come so easy that they pile up
and it's abundance she faces
the cars that seem to come from everywhere
just when she's ready to make her move

instead it begins to snow
her shoulders are becoming coated
the dark deepens
I can only stand here
watching her
growing heartbroken

Does Science Change the Past

the sentry of this place
is a pillar by the gate
it is a falling leaf lying on a stone step
nearby
the first thing in the morning is the sunlight
lasering
funny word for something natural
the leaf and just after
the stone
the sentry of this place
is less than truthful about the meaning
of the task
sometimes the sentry is a bit of wind carrying
the faint scent left over from a long time ago
when this happens the birds and insects
in the trees and on the leaves of grass
pause for a second and if they could think
they would think of what that past meant
to the sunlight back then
when there was no such thing
as lasering

Both Hands Off the Wheel

I've been walking around
the edges of a cemetery
not far from the Mexico border
in Bisbee / there are trees all around
but none in the cemetery
the headstones seem about to fall
apart / there is just sandy dirt everywhere
there are small roads through it
even though it is not a place of warmth
it is hot at this hour / I feel a pull
an urge to walk the roads but
the road south beckons
or to the north there's a straight road
on the way to Tombstone
and beside it is a handmade marker
covered in plastic flowers
and shape like a cross with a star in its heart
around it are pictures of the deceased
the best time to view it
is right around sundown
there's time to head south and make it there in time
just in time for the slanted sun to make it hard
to see well
but that's the right way to pay respects
better than looking in at the roads
from the edges / better to do it
in the fading light and rising cold

This Device Again

inside this little device
the thoughts that lead to sadness
recoil / they respond to inputs
from all sides like an all-seeing eye
what is this device you ask
it is small
it is invented by a genius
it is manufactured by minds
under an influence
which can be detected
by another little device

Stop For Refreshment

picture of Amboy as seen driving west
Route 66 runs straight into Amboy in the distance
even further beyond the railroad
is the Amboy crater

the shoe tree in the foreground
is growing next to Route 66
and provides some extremely rare
shadow in the desert
a bit further on the right is Roy's

picture of Amboy as seen looking west
on the left you see the Amboy crater in the distance
on the right is Roy's

picture of Roy's as seen from the east
in the heyday of Route 66
this would have been a chance to get gas
and stop for a refreshment
or even a night sleep in one of the cabins

shoe tree in Amboy
the shoe tree grows on the south side of Route 66
tourists throw used shoes
in the tree to leave a not
so permanent mark

beyond the shoe tree is the railroad
it's a busy railroad out in the lonely desert

note the shoes that fell off the tree
the tree hides the crater in the distance
and grows next to a construction best described
as a dry channel

Late Late Late Late Late

being late
seeming to be late
some shadows seeming longer
make me nervous that I'm late
my sense is that I'm not
late but the feeling of being late
never comes late

Nowhere In a Car

I'm stopped at a stop
light on a desert road
at a crossroads puzzling
in its positioning and I see
no reason for it to be here
the desert in winter is combinations
of brown and yellow
the materials don't matter
just the colors like the red
of the light that keeps me sitting
here idly while my car idles
and no one comes down the road
from the right and no one comes
down the road from the left
oddly an empty can of coke
rolls by / I knew neither that
the wind was blowing nor that coke
cans were prevalent around these parts

eventually the light changed
and I moved on

Oh Stories

looking at maps on the net
seeing places where someone
I know had lived before I was born
I feel the pull / I can almost smell
the place / the lakes and seas nearby
are warmth in water and I can nearly
feel it / but now what's left is only
half remembered memories held together
by stories from no one knows where
the result is a nostalgia with no origins

be good and you will be lonely
the chief danger in life
is that you may take too many precautions
there is nothing worth the wear of winning
but laughter and the love of friends

Inappropriately Famous

those who look down
shall be looked down upon
they have no knack for tilting
as the wind dictates
they stay in one stance
which makes it easy
to look down on them

Pictures, Small Ones

the pictures
who took them
Nana maybe
but they look well composed
although my parents are too
close to the center
for it to be an artist
but they are not silly
the pictures aren't
the backgrounds are more important than my parents
I know how they looked
and what they felt
but the barn
the buildings
the milk shed
the house being built
the piano
the table set for dinner
the duffel I recall
from when I was a kid
these are the important things
because it's about the place
always about the place

Unproven

she is a flurry
of ideas and thrilled movement
she dances and makes light of serious
things / I have fallen for her
despite her being too other
but I'll just hover around
nothing dangerous
just her

What An Animal

the arc of the story
bends around the curve
of my skull and it's impossible
to feel any sense of personal divinity
when you realize you have one

Odd Thought

despite all their differences
the people on the sidewalks
of this block are nearly identical
same size / same hair / same noses
all moving like ballet people
like soldiers / like can-can dancers
like synchronized swimmers
cut loose from the juice
with all the sameness
what makes the mind flit
from one to another

Bottle Hunt

my girlfriend and me
hunting empty bottles
of wine in trash bins and heaps
in a town history rattled by long ago
beside a river polluted to death
fish heaped up on its banks when the tide
goes out that close to the sea was it
all / typically
we hunted in winter
bitter air rasping off the water
propelled down the main street parallel
to the river by some quirkiness of physics
and the standing of buildings
sometimes this preposterous wind
would grab a wrapper and thrust
it down the street and against a wall
if it was a newspaper we'd go over
and read it quivering by the wind
we'd hold the tremors inside our hearts
so they wouldn't bust out
and scramble the words into a poem
of rapture / later we'd pull bags of bottles
to the liquor store for redemption
yes do you hear me now
for redemption

Thoughts on Love Like Mud in a River

tired of the old
tired of new
the banks of the river
are loose and failing
black mud at low tide
(tidal river)
we parked there once
she gave me an oblong kiss
one way or another the river flowed
the sun setting might have been romantic
but there was too much happening
of a personal nature
we were all over ourselves
to protect our innocence
in the eyes the pious
I'm sure music was playing
because I noticed the radio
was on later when I started the car
again / when we backed out
onto the road it was all/most dark
the fireflies were syncing up
around the bend in the river
the green bridge glowed from the heat
of the day / the tide turned
it seemed to stop / a river dead
in its tracks / I took her home
we were both tired
of the new and the old
I noticed the river was full
of mud / hard imagine
in all that dark

For Anything

can old things
represent what's real
the first invention
hitting the mark closer
the sidewalk for example
made for living
today it's
just driving that counts

Counterexample

I saw match point on TV
McEnroe over Connors
Wimbledon and I knew
McEnroe won except
the TV camera broke on that point
and what I saw was last year's
match point

I knew the truth
I was justified in my belief
but Plato was wrong
I didn't know nothing

Simple Minds

truth leaks
lies inflate
the use of the mind
is as a patch
is as a pin

Warning

when you can't sleep
you can't dream
be careful operating machinery
watch out for drowsiness
for dizziness
for evidence of odd karma
and unfashionable bedsheets
when you can't dream
you can't have nightmares
you have no way to operate machinery

Tracings

art is a mess
paint all over
tables / floors / walls
drawn from life
using dead charcoal
a silhouette traced
light aimed straight at the heart
art has a next day
it's the day when the painter and painted
pass on the street / she in her tight skirt
and happy slip and it's up to the poets
to guess who if anyone recognizes whom

Again

nothing likes to work
when time is short
always the restart
the restart

Revision Experiment No. 1

writing is filled with hardship
writing is filled with difficulty
writing is achieved with difficulty
good writing is achieved with difficulty
good writing is achieved with much difficulty
good writing is achieved with more difficulty than is warranted
good writing is achieved with more difficulty than is worth it
good writing takes more effort than is worth doing
good writing takes more effort than it's worth my doing
good writing is not worth my doing
good writing is sometimes worth my doing
writing is sometimes worth my doing well
writing is always worth my doing well
writing is always worth doing well
writing is worth doing well
writing is worth doing
writing is doing

I Might Know Her

she works randomly
lives in Queens
with her cat and husband
or is it cat/husband
she writes poetry about plants
and cats
she believes that green things
bright lights
slinky shadows
and impending dark
are important beyond thought
flowers and birds too
and bees
cutting and gently cooking vegetables
especially tomatoes
her poetry inspires anger
in people who don't like plants
green things
flowers and all that stuff
but especially and pointedly cats

True Enough

thinking about tomorrow
tonight though
is in the way
nights these days
whisper badly in an ear
that doesn't work enough
the night is for wandering
rest is never the goal
just getting through it
then tomorrow hits
you in the face

After Hearing

wish to return
to the fog
it obscures
covers
hides
but in this it is
at least
the truth

Bridge Along

the argument
is no place like home
people come together as stories
for a reason in a place
unlike anything you've ever experienced
just like you do
their past no longer matters
this place is different
it's right here
so real
I'd let the fear in for 5 seconds
then forget it
I'm not a leader
but he is smart
we can either live together
or die alone

Gubbish

days just drop by
everyone is making
suggestions
when something frightening
makes its way to the scene
the results are undecidable
what this reminds me of
are the simple semi-groups
that pretend to be all there
when they are just filled
with holes

LA Skyline in my Best Pants

the changing colors
around sunset smears
the lost sky
between the highrises
if you look at time
the right way
or you take your time about it
the way I look at it
the way the skies are laid out
throughout the year
a dusk like this
is just one of the gang
later it's the lights
again and again
car and buildings
streetlights
the tangle of them all
dense with little meaning
or none

Sharpened Points

sentences arranged
to tell you things

sentences in crowds
sentences running
for the doors

compact in their form
they have dispersal nozzles
to enjoin the weakest understanding

when we spout mixing meaning
with spit we join the angels
on the head of a pin
where the ultimate
paradoxicals dance on their toes

the smallest marks don't mean much alone
but piled up their contributions
are lotion on dried curiosity

it takes a long time
to learn what a sentence is

at least we still
have that

On a Jet Plane

nothing open
cheap burgers / now I know why they're cheap
no stores
the country road turns into a divided highway
no way to turn around for miles and miles
the chair in room's back is broken
but I am connected
online
mailing to beat the bland
the blahs
cold / near 0
another long trip
get it

Problem Page

one-armed men rule
songs / movies / tv shows
Springsteen / Sneaker Pimps
Lynch / a list of dadaists
making time and fabulous babes
acting / dying grab a hold of nothing
like your one-armed man

Wrong Food

sick
bad gut feeling
bent over typing
head not able to make poetry
perhaps it's the big white bus tonight
not to mention the snow
sleet freezing rain
a wintry mix's all

As A Dog

all night up to the bathroom
releasing liquids my body had made
of the bad food from the nearby restaurant
and all day asleep to gather some strength
the storm was an annoyance
I had to go out to get food and something for the trip
tomorrow / still tired I hope to sleep most of the way
does this happen too often
some have said so
some who care I suppose

Another Day Waiting

damn the airlines
they try to remedy their failures
by trying more of them
they believe that scarcity
brings abundance
it is so easy to hate them
don't they know that

Here No More

clear today
I hope to return home
will my hatred of this trip
ruin my job
will I be sitting on the plane
finally
or will I just go back to Boston
to wait there
indefinitely stuck here
what a hell

Tube at the Edge of Forever

imagine keeling
over while watching
Lost and 2 years later
being discovered a mummy
the tube still running
in Queens / but why would
no one come earlier
why are you mummified
and not dessicated or rotted
and most importantly
what are 4 8 15
16 23 42

Seeming

when all the suffering is over
does it all feel good
or simply over

who would want their last minutes
to come down to a question
like that

at dinnertime the 6:05 comes down off
Tehachapi into the yards with 5 in front
and 2 in the middle / something similar would be true
at 6:20

high desert at midnight
cool not cold
in February
trains here too every 5 minutes

suffering is being sent
by boxcar / flatcar / container car
everywhere

Change of Luck

about those trains
obvious in their heavy humming
you feel their engines
need to explode
if they were people they would have blown
a gasket long ago
here the cool air amplifies the effort
the ascent grips the imagination
the weight shocks the hotel room
where the page lies on the table
laden to inspiration
maybe next time I'll pile up a quarter/penny/quarter stack
just beyond the crossing and see what the train
makes of it

Anniversary

later tonight
a year ago the worst happened
to her and her family
no one was ready for it
I stood there and everyone
but one
must have thought I was helping
but like them I
was helpless

Trains on 66

more trains
again an incline
a train town
horns because a crossing is nearby
I am worried as usual
the trip
the job
what I am able to do
though high up / snow in patches all around
the air tonight is not harsh
I am snug in a hotel by the tracks again
and as they pass by
I understand the places I could be

Tired & Rocky

up on the rock encrusted
Second Mesa again
the hotel is just barely a place to stay
we drove to Keams Canyon
for dinner because the power was off up here
the café there had a painting of itself
on its wall complete with a picture of itself
the joys of recursion / a heavy meal
including fry bread

few Hopi left though some long
for righteousness / even the divorced
we could not find the man making Joe's belt
but Joe is willing to make it charity

High Desert

exhausted
too much travel
high altitude and the dry
is getting to my throat and nose
the days go by quickly
the nights slowly
I want to sleep / sleep / sleep
so much to do when I get back
and a long drive between here and there

Caged

among the watchers
the watched watch
this is the nature of intimidation
and resistance
but the cage is a handicap
though the watchers don't know
they are less free than their arrogance tells them
when you watch back hard
all tables are turned
beware your choice

Trip Changes

you will drive far today
from light to light
from desert to bay
we can tell you what we might hate
we will be up and down all trip
joshua tree / sage / piñon / palos verde
this trip won't change the world
but the world will continue
to render its own

Kingman

except we didn't
we all broke down
we are stuck in a Podunk
awaiting parts from NY
at least 3 more days till we can leave
if everything goes well
or longer
or longer
or more
or more
my congestion got worse and may be on the way to better
this is all a version of hell I'm sure
and even Strindberg would be unusually
depressed over this

Quote This

the fountains weren't running today
"the fountains weren't running today"
I learned this at the restaurant last night
while eating a carne asada burrito which was not
too bad / the top sign said
pay phones
"pay phones"
this way
and the bottom one said
restrooms
"restrooms"
mens and womens restrooms
this way
investigators stood at the sink area
in the bathroom
and observed only those women
who entered the restroom alone
the control in this was the availability
of at least one open sink
soap
paper towels
water
only 40% of women
washed their hands

Black Mountains

most dangerous section
of 66 over a pass
hairpin turns
steep inclines
declines and handbuilt stone retaining walls
holding up the low side of the road
at the top a turnout
with an added loop that must
have been a lovers' lane
today many shrines are there
1923–1946 / dates of birth
in pairs
gone now
this was their place
now it's just a place
where love once dripped
where the view downvalley opened up hearts
where the danger multiplied
into / what else to call it /
love

10 Hours

long drive
after an expensive repair
the car stinks
from the burned out clutch
perhaps tomorrow I'll have the car washed
top and underneath
to rid it of the bad vibes
from the last 3 weeks
and I'm so tired
so weary
so out of it

Drive Around Day

slow day
all the cool air could do is waft about
errands and slow moving
the sun breaking
the bright windows
into shards of transparency
the end of the day fell slowly
early March
odors coming up
I wondered many times today
when was the last time I had
a really good sleep

In the Bonds of Life

the story happened
traces were left in the world
that I could find with enough
patience / time / luck
one good idea is that what
I believed was the opposite of truth
that her family was rich
that his was poor
from these small facts and knowing
those I know I must piece it together
to explain
understand

Communicating Integration

currently the effects of technology
are apparent to all of us
integration
although a lengthy process
the transition is least in our privileged
neck of the woods
taking this course console
giggle stick ling cod
twenty-three purple perches four lives
a technology this pervasive must surely be adopted
by the essence
convenience and efficiency
are the driving force for produce
a cleaner more precise product
in a fraction of the time
although the service has
automatic translation of different languages
for users of the make a difference I guess
I like seeing it work though
in explanation for this
I can't understand how people can rely so
pass by children will lose touch of reality
communicating

Titanic Discovery

the question of the tomb
is asked

statistics based on names
taken in clusters forms part of the reasoning
on faith

and DNA applied to prove
no relation

consistency with
is taken as evidence for

nothing is wrong
so it must be right

and then the curious symbol
a curved peaked inverted V with a circle within
does it mean a thing

and so what if God turns out to be a man
didn't we think that all along

Fear Itself Fear

one thing leads to another
tonight it's fatigue
leading to fear of travel
it will only become worse
as the hours go by
good bye

Lineman

a day in the air
music bubbling away the hours
threat of snow drives me to undivulged paranoia
the light on landing is the deepest part of twilight
trees dark and complex against the thin layer of snow
someplaces there are whitebarked trees
with extravagant crowns and explorations
next to me on the plane a man was trying
to write a poem called SF
short and clipped phrasing
it looked naïve when viewed naïvely
without a turn of the head
while looking into the bright white
sun on clouds over Wichita

Blame Is For...

I blame life for it
the turns behind
the forgery of truth
that people could
believe so deeply
in things made of sharp edged marks
on a page over
the pingpong colors
of a spraypainted night scene
illuminated by a ring of halogens
I blame life for inventing abstraction
in the creases of our brains
my god which species was it
that invented this
and gave it to us

By the Way

Ron Goldman and Richard P Gabriel
have published some articles
(principally original wharfside jn
price range wharfsider nj price range research
wharfside nj preice range wharfside nj price
ange finding, wharfside nj price reange)
but there was an unintended side-effect

Writing on the Wall

when the city fails
its goal of making things new
at the same time it wears out
itself and its denizens
the city is defined by its potholes
repairs and patches are about rest
the poster doesn't reveal
more than a line in a play
no more than the small music
behind the heavy static
little more than the heat of graffiti
the chick in Oakland

Low Flying Black After White

nothing like it
first warm day
(suddenly) buds appear
leaves bop up
grass on speed
instead of this
workload of allday variety
do you remember the time
two ravens chased the egret
none were panicked
but it was
nonetheless
hot pursuit
in slow motion

Look Close Down

big house
not worth much now
faulty / falling down
dream of it / what else
the songs trickling through the tubes right now
remind me of the warmth of the sun
in early spring even with the ground
still frozen / and it's all frozen
to me now / no going back
no telling who the unsatisfied girls
might want but I can tell you
this / not me / not ever again
the past is a train of cliffs
falling over one all you can do
is fall over the next
from space it all looks green
till you look close

South Boston

this part of the city
is vaguely familiar
on Thanksgivings
we would go there to eat
the food was cooked on a coal stove
I spent many hours sitting
at the front bay window
or at the kitchen table
looking down from the third floor
where on usually cold days
nothing at all happens
there is nothing on tv
the apartment is small
there is nothing to see
nothing to do
and dinner always seems
hours away
I wish I could go back for just one day
with a camera and a scanner
to learn

Really So Slight Stupidity

not much point
really
in spending time on these poems
so slight
and beside the point in their blunt
stupidity
there is no beauty of language here just
plainness
nothing here to win contests
or even
be published for real
no
not for real

Thunder and 1965

rain in virtue wipes
down the windowsides
wind trying to twirl the candlepines
leaks through the storm windows
lightning surprise then we count
every 5 we count a mile
3 miles or less and we begin hard fear
this can mean we sit in the car
our secret
sitting in the car in the garage
mother me and snooks
1 of these three has programmed
the fear in the other 2
subsiding the storm has produced
a green lingering odor
in the fields and lawns
the oaks are relieved

A Kind of Blind Art

something off on the colors
the ocean a blackened blue
it's hard to imagine it's
the same ocean
the sand is the color of ripened wheat
carrying darker wells of water receding in waves
up the slight slope of the shore
odd bolts of ice all snow colored
but one that in the light which is low on the horizon
is of the form of a thick shard of glass
behind a brown breakwater
across the exiting river
a lowlying spit of land echoing the wheat
and a white block building with red roof
a flag and tall antennas
the sky is egg robin w/ faded cherry low clouds
a picture I took when young and discovered
again after being discovered again
I look at it now and think
I once looked at it then

Pray for a Rerun

what do you do
when movies from 10 years ago
show love much more than now
my answer
just watch them

Greatness Never Ends (Supposed)

the great man is losing
his mind bit by bit
a bit of irony for someone
famous for trying to turn
computers into faithful servants
of human brilliance
we had met 3 times
and I am memorable
but he remembered nothing of me
when we had dinner
he and I and 3 others
he divided his attention
the little left I suppose
between the salmon and a little girl
outside his window
making finger puppets for her
and moving the food rapidly into his mouth
the great man knows it's over
except for the dinners
bought for him for being great

Float Off

the writing's on
the wall is crumbling
down the hall annie
waits and shimmers
like sparkling dish detergent
a substance used to enhance
the cleansing action of water
a detergent is an emulsifier
which penetrates and breaks up
the oil film that binds dirt particles
and a wetting agent
which helps them to float off

Un-Heard Of

it's a form of tourette's
provides out-of-the-box
functionality appropriate
for most scenarios
then they raise their salaries
because they've been soooo
busy awwww!

Not Only Quick But Lousy Too

they are all versions
unheard of diversions
someone wrote today
poetry is about rhyme
well it's about time
that's what I say

More Like Woods

there were three fields
the large one
more than 10 acres
in front
then a stonewall fence with 1 gate
the second shaped like an L
for a reason I never knew
then a short road through a pine woods
through a gully usually wet that drained
a fourth field to the north
into the third field
abandoned before I was born
and so partly filled and filling
with saplings / birch and such
this field was sandy and the most congenial
it's where we buried our dog
after my father put her to sleep with ether
I was upstairs in my room in bed that afternoon
he was down by the door to the cellar
and I heard the struggle
the dog I'd known since I was 3 or 4
now she was 15 or so
I helped him carry her across the street and through those fields I described
I helped him dig a pit in that sandy field near the back
a few weeks later I went back there and she was gone
even after that short time
the field had shrunk
and had become more like woods

No North No South

funny what you don't notice
looking out from the living room window
across the street and toward the big field
at dusk the remnants of sunset
which I took to be the glow of California
was down behind the tall oaks and pines
but not until just the other day did I stop to think
that therefore the street / the road really /
was a north-south affair
as if those directions didn't exist
or exist enough to make a difference
in any thought I had
only looking at a map did I realize it
was half the world not important
to me then
and if so why

Walking It Is

“I made it on about the eighth of October ‘38.”

“I was fixin’ a puncture on a car.

I had been mistreated by a girl.

I just felt blue, and the song fell into my mind
and it come to me just like that and I started singing.”

“There’s been some blues played like that.”

“This song comes from the cotton field
and a boy once put a record out—Robert Johnson.

He put it out as named ‘Walkin’ Blues.’

I heard the tune before I heard it on the record.

I learned it from Son House.”

Dynamic Languages Thomas

rage rage against the dying of the snake
do not go gaga into that good lake
their frail o-line might have danced in green bay
because their coding had forked no emacs
rage rage against the buying of the cake
do not go go go near that clam bake

Carla Curtis

waiting for the reply
eager to write right back
it is always a woman
who might as well be the muse
of the day or week month or year
when you cannot reach the hers
any other way but the written word
the invention of email and the technology
means all that / remember Carla
Carla Curtis who moved away by the 9th
to Maine and I would watch her direction
on the drive north to our place
I wrote to her before she left
did she never know it was me
did the fact it was words mean
just that little to her that it made her
think / made her wonder
now I see she moved from Maine
to just near her
kept her name and had a daughter
and died just 2 years ago
I wish I could write her once more
only once is all I'd need now

Temporal Madness Through the Same Old Things

not that sickening beauty again
how often do we need to read
of the saplings and blossoms
or dough rising or the seeds
of tomatoes smeared across the counter
or the vegetables that spring up each spring
in the compost heap
the slick water sliding over slime smooth rocks
or through the bitterly green moss
down to the western sea where the sky
seems to plaster the reddening sun
yup I see all that stuff
and so did the great poets once
and the old lady ones just down the street
baking doughy cookies and eating only salads
while listening to Mozart because that's art
not that sickening beauty again

Because Explained

the passion leaks out
like the last of the water
from a split rock in the red desert
beneath other rocks bugs love
and the desert goes on
this is the essence of by cause

Restaurant Scene After an Expensive Meal

they ate quietly all evening
in the thickwalled asian restaurant
mussels lychee drinks pineapple prawns satay
quietly and she was not pretty but something
more vital than that to him
as we ordered dessert he moved his chair next to her
by the time we stood up after paying
he was unaware

Quux Reads As He Was Asked To Do

while quux read from his bible
and the warm ... hot actually ...
light breeze rustled through the beech's leaves
above where the 12 of us stood
listening but not paying attention
the men who would fill in the small
open hole stood by about 100' away
waiting with all the politeness many
decades command

the reading complete the grandchildren
lowered the urns into the square hole
and the papers we read from were placed
there for the reverent ones who might find this place
one day

the 12 of us dispersed and most have not
met since

12: a jury sized group
not counting the two men
who worked
but not hard
after we left for burgers and ice cream
after the bible reading
the ordinary returned

66 Tears

the road winds upwards
narrowing toward the top
skirting rocks
the old old 66
between Kingman and Needles
going through Oatman
where people live who cannot be allergic
to silence and heat
where there are only two things to do all day
play dominoes and eat great stuff
like cold canned peaches and sauerkraut on ice

the time
the place
the night
the guitar
the beer

once I paused for a second on the instrument
and Glenn blew a massive beer fart out onto the wind
I followed it up with a hoarse rendition
of "Blue Moon of Kentucky"

at the top of the hill there's a turnout
where many crosses have been placed
and other remembrances
I make it signs of love

after dinner
and a bath
and a few beers in the bathtub
the sun is down
and the stars are out
and I can lay back
and look at the satellites going by

great stuff

Out North

he's away on business
his wife is out all day at work
I'm guessing neither of them
has much of a clue
of the right way to go about it
any more than I do really

in our past parking deal
Out North agreed not
to have events on Sunday
so that churchgoers could use our lot
during daytime and evening services
now that this agreement is no
longer in effect we will look at
adding Sunday events
our first will be this Sunday
with local band Stubb's Crack Co.
headlining a concert of work by young musicians
as part of our Alaska Artist Access
program

<http://justin.tv>

10:45 omagah: yay
10:45 omagah: !!
10:45 foshoman: <http://www.Proxyture.com>
10:45 omagah: PPg
10:45 estebansjo: VALENTIN DE DONDE ES?
10:45 foshoman: USE A PROXY to come to Justin.tv <http://www.proxyture.com>
10:45 estebansjo: SOY DE TAIWAN
10:45 valentin: YO DE JON CON
10:45 ppg: :]
10:45 ppg: pipe
10:45 ppg: hehe
10:45 omagah: haha
10:45 omagah: powerpuff girl
10:45 ppg: yo were both green
10:45 omagah: XD
10:45 ppg: NEON!
10:45 omagah: =O
10:45 ppg: i dont hear ghetto music.
10:45 ppg: -hmp-
10:45 valentin: Y Q HACES EN TAIWAN ESTEBANSJO?
10:45 omagah: well it's over
10:45 ppg: DAMN.
10:45 zuzi: that bitch needs to shut up
10:45 estebansjo: SOY TAIWANNES
10:45 foshoman: got some hot bitches here
10:45 foshoman: haha
10:45 foshoman: nice
10:45 megaone: love some feedback on the song Old School at <http://www.myspace.com/moontrent>
10:45 valentin: TE FELICITO
10:45 valentin: CONGRATULATIONS ESTEBANSJO
10:45 shoobedoo: wOOo
10:45 valentin: HEY EBERYBODY
10:45 estebansjo: COMO?
10:45 valentin: ESTEBANSJO WAS FATEHR
10:45 omagah: who saw i NY?
10:45 omagah: lmao
10:45 collin: hey
10:45 valentin: HEY COLLIN
10:45 zuzi: hey collin
10:45 zuzi: asl?
10:45 valentin: Q TE PARECE EL EXPERIMENTO ESTEBANSJO?
10:45 collin: whats up valentin and zuzi
10:45 valentin: LOL COLLIN
10:45 estebansjo: EXPERIMENTO DE QUE?
10:45 zuzi: watin for someone interesting to come on here

10:45 jakemarsh: <http://entercourse.tv>
10:45 valentin: THIS IS A SOCIOLOGICAL EXPERIMENT ESTEBANSJO
10:45 megaone: <http://www.myspace.com/moontrent>
10:45 zuzi: how old are you
10:45 valentin: (YO PARTICIPE EN EL DISEÑO)
10:45 bigjoe: <>?:"!@#\$\$%^&*(>?:"
10:45 bigjoe: <>?:"!@#\$\$%^&*(>?:"
10:45 bigjoe: <>?:"!@#\$\$%^&*(>?:"
10:45 bigjoe: <>?:"!@#\$\$%^&*(>?:"
10:45 collin: read abt justin from the papers in singapore
10:45 bigjoe: <>?:"!@#\$\$%^&*(>?:"
10:45 zuzi: cool
10:45 valentin: ESTA PATROCINADO POR EL DEPARTAMENTO DE POLICIA DE NY
10:45 zuzi: how old r ya and where u from collin
10:46 estebansjo: PERDON....
10:46 bigjoe: speaky speaky english
10:46 collin: 30 and from singapore
10:46 omagah: lol
10:46 valentin: EN EL FUTURO UN POLICIA USARA LA GORRA DE JUSTIN
10:46 valentin: A VER Q SUCEDE
10:46 zuzi: finally another adult
10:46 zuzi: to many fucking children
10:46 collin: yourself zuzi
10:46 valentin: YOU UNDERSTAND ESTEBANSJO?
10:46 foshoman: hot female adults ROCK!!!!
10:47 zuzi: they seem to all be annoying ass 14 yr old
10:47 estebansjo: SI
10:47 aaron: 1:43 aaron: you all need to watch this if you did not see it live. Justin got kicked out of the gap.
It was funny! <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oekjf9cy0IU>
10:47 valentin: OK
10:47 zuzi: im 22 from mo
10:47 ppg: IM BORED
10:47 artielange: VOTE FOR SANJAYA
10:47 valentin: ME TOO

Impress People With Symbolism

I don't try to impress people
with symbolism
and unlike other poets
I don't use ants and flowers either
though I once did because that's what they taught me
I am writing this because I just read this
"Ants have razed the paradise of the pear"
this is from a real poem hailed as pretty good
on a website of pretty good poems
I have never had one printed there
and now you know why
a well-known writer wrote of the writer
above that he "is using all kinds
of poetic arms
to convey a complex
ambivalent vision
spun between the joy
of an afternoon in Greece
and the dying of a cat
why is it always cats
and haven't we heard plenty
about the afternoons in Greece
maybe if there were more car accidents
in them
or
oh
something

ignore

~~~~~ Our noisy mobile phone spits.  
Her daughters white sony snores.  
Any bluish small beautiful book is on fire  
and perhaps any given white boot calculates.  
Any noisy bicycle is on fire  
as soon as our children's purple mp3 player smiles.  
Our children's green mp3 player is thinking;  
however, his brother's well-crafted round-shaped camera stands-still.  
His shining soda calculates.  
Any bluish soft bra sleeps.  
His silver bottle looks around.  
Our red carpet smells.  
His smart expensive bra show its value or  
maybe our red exam book adheres.  
Their golden mp3 player falls.  
A given beautiful tall glove adheres.  
Their silver eraser adheres and still  
whose little green little small cat snores?  
Whose bluish t-shirt falls.  
Our soft sofa sleeps while my sloppy boat is thinking.  
Their hairy dog smiles or her bluish umbrella stares at the same  
time a green beautiful bra calculates the place that our hairy forge smells.  
A given hairy cat is thinking.  
Her daughter's small bottle is angry however,  
the round dog is angry.  
A sloppy mouse is thinking.  
A smart small eraser lies.  
My red shining silver mobile phone falls.  
The shining forge is angry.  
Any noisy glove smiles.  
A given odd shaped dog is thinking.  
Their stupid mouse calculates  
as soon as our children's silver bottle calculates.  
Our white camera got an idea.  
My odd shaped mp3 player show its value.  
Her fancy shining tv snores however, a given golden umbrella smiles.  
His well-crafted door arrives.  
The white book makes sound.

## Changing Font Size

testing the limits of silliness  
programs written by people who  
I don't know  
I mean I don't know the people  
and I don't know why they are so clueless  
clueless and how wow

## How Much Suffer

“Here is an entire life  
distilled to a lovely  
celebratory essence”  
wrote Ted Kooser  
of a book of poems  
73 one for each year of the poet’s life  
how can it be  
a life worth only the time  
it takes to write 73 poems  
or read them  
or is this longer  
deeper than the water  
dripping off a plastic topped table  
out of a glass broken on impact  
after a short fall as something  
hard grips the heart

## Scrapyard Hustle

fire crept through the tangle  
of discarded parts and undriveable reminders  
of thrills hardened to form the past  
smoke found the wind that had just whistled  
through the wind gap coming from the open sea  
where memories sink  
smoke as remains flew downvalley  
where the resting were awakened  
and the fire itself had its way with the past

viewed from above all that is visible  
is the fog smudged through the gap then downvalley  
where it thickens and blackens  
and spreads becoming the general haze and clouds  
that chill the anticipated afternoons  
just another day  
at the scrapyard changing  
today into yesterday

## Emergency Hah Call The Doctor

there are many ways to characterize  
love / metaphors say like the warm  
room with dusky light smoking off  
a candle by the mirror  
or like irc i<3u  
or like a story  
of opening a can of cool peaches  
on a hot day to share  
but I used your uncle's old navy  
opener and sliced my hand  
but you <3'd me so much  
you drove me to the emergency room  
instead of punching 911

## Light Remarks

she is never sultry  
walks quick or jerky  
even with the tropical asian  
air blending with her dark dark hair  
she is a geek but can have something  
picture her with an armload of flowers  
walking back to her flat  
from the market  
half maze half skyscraper  
the day rains  
haze but not too warm  
cars drive by white and halogen headlights pointing ahead  
red in retreat  
communication  
it is my feeling  
is essential

## That Never Thought of Place

sometimes I live in dreams  
like last night  
she came around  
strange town far away  
the streets were lightly snowed upon  
and only the night trucks  
put down their imprints  
crisp / it was that kind of snow  
that kind of temperature  
she came around and I  
not expecting her  
thought through a new thought  
what if I didn't aim for her lips  
but between her jaw and ear  
so anatomic  
but these are the words  
in my thinking mind  
my planning mind  
I saw the place  
saw her faint hair  
the hair on her face that all women have but faintly  
and looked just behind  
there  
there I thought as if in a sentence  
but at the same time I moved toward her there  
and she relaxed  
and I did too thinking it worked  
and why hadn't I thought of this before  
when I was young and it could have made a difference

## Did It Snow?

I recall a day it snowed  
it started early in the morning  
and built  
I went into the woods under a rough  
circle of old pines  
an oasis of autumn  
a warm barren circle  
of needles with a granite stone  
just off its center  
I lit a small fire in a fire  
pit I dug last summer  
but went back into my room  
to read when the snow picked up  
my looking-forward mind  
imagined the digging out  
the trip to the big hill  
the snow day off from school

next morning all was barren again  
the air had warmed and snow became rain  
it started upvalley and the rain softened  
and grew steady all night  
while I slept  
while I dreamed  
when I woke all was barren again  
as if the day of snow never happened  
except for the ashes I left behind  
in that little fire pit  
I saw them and for a minute I thought  
the day had happened

## New Bum

sitting on the bums' usual bench  
waiting for the guys to show  
it felt good for 20 minutes  
to a bum / just watching the draining day  
the casual lovers / the other bums  
suspicious of the new guy the  
slightly  
well-dressed new bum

## Webcam Rearrangement

viewing the webcam  
that looks most nearly  
at my favorite's apartment  
I notice another woman  
approaching in jumps  
to another apartment  
and since her hair jogs  
one frame to the next  
in the best possible way  
I am now viewing the webcam  
that looks exactly  
at her apartment

## Faint Echo

the false hope of fair weather  
that light winds and sharp skies  
have something to do  
with fleeing failure  
today the gracious green  
of spring is beginning  
to brown / tomorrow the sample  
size will grow  
the wind may pick up

## Road as Road

this town is about traffic  
slowing to merge  
speeding up to merge  
the offramps are blackened by rubber  
the sky rarely adds contrast  
to encourage autoists to stare down the road  
when I drive here I am wary but eager  
the roads are concrete but not everything  
can be perfect  
without luck it will be sunny  
but not bright  
this is the beauty of LA

## Saturation Under the Influence

extra color  
film or maybe some digital hack thing  
especially blue  
the water  
and yellow  
the hot sun  
these are Miami  
there is no point to this movie  
just these colors  
just Miami  
just a hazed but stunning vision  
where have I heard that before

## For A While

many hundreds in line  
they are from the group  
I am with  
it's cooling in LA  
as the sun does its  
going down thing  
they will wait for nearly an hour  
to load onto buses  
go to a theme park to eat  
for an hour  
then come back  
taking hours  
for now they don't move  
because they are too many  
and the buses are weak  
in their numbers  
there is no point to it  
in the end  
so it's the veined river  
instead for me  
running down to join  
the sun for a while

## A Little Nothing

nothing like the truth  
to paint an underpicture  
I feel alone in this  
but the facts in the newspaper  
say no no no no  
somewhere the r.gourmet is saying  
yeah yeah yeah yeah

## Learning Center

the hard wallop when I heard  
nothing prepared me for it  
I can imagine harder songs to hear  
all that time lived and it ends  
and without grace  
probably  
there is nothing for me to judge that by  
only stories told by people  
who are trained to be careful  
where can I get trained

## Yet

with satellite photos  
anyone can see the fields  
the woods / even probably  
the very spot  
technology as noggin nudger  
seeing even the barest outline of the farm  
ravaged by suburbanization  
the whatifs  
the lasting longings  
the words not on the page

## Belied Strangeness

if I were the view  
I would cover my eyes  
if I were the crowded halls  
of a new and exciting but dingy school  
I would retreat beyond ignorance  
if I were the child of parents who never spoke  
would I never speak  
or only speak  
if I were to pick a new life  
I would select a dozen  
if I were to speak only  
I would be careful  
to be careless  
in my choice of words  
and that way I would  
appear wise and poetic  
then I would duck

## World Away / 2

in her town  
right now the streelights are lit and most sleep  
here it is that uncertain hour of unfathomed dusk  
when skycolors are invented for fractions  
of seconds & the clouds and possibilities  
of rain engage muses like her  
she has no time for sleep for all that  
yet she sleeps each night deeply and all  
the way through to afterdawn  
it is this way via denial  
she does her best work  
for instance she's told  
me to never speak to her again  
is there anything more dangerous

## More to the Story

no one tells the story  
like the one who was run  
over by the story  
not the protagonist  
not the antagonist  
none of those  
the one who was hit in the back  
by the story  
the one who fell flat on her face  
the one the story never noticed



## Different Times

sometimes there is a hanging breath  
left in the air when the talking stops  
sometimes the look is turned off  
rather than delayed by an extra breath  
mostly the skin of breathing life  
in the field is about to be flaked off  
by an overzealous raking  
mostly the look of beauty is for someone else  
because every time you deserved it  
you were looking away or in the mirror  
always the last two words you say  
are the least important and it's the third  
from the end that counts

## This Is About Deserving

blonde and blackhair asian  
two women at our elbows  
at the highstool overflow tables  
eating slowly and with light lifts  
food to mouth and eye to eye conversation  
but eating heavily and heartily  
more so than us each  
twice the size of each  
of them / sometimes they would  
look our way one at a time  
and wanly smile

## Road Badness

under fire  
the road wavers not the tiniest bit  
cars move with bravery  
not knowing that though the road  
sits firm the destination is wagging

## After Reading Another Shepherd Poem

like a breeze after sunset on a hot day  
like two cool drinks in a row after a long run  
like only the first time can be  
like fishing off a boat over a blue patch  
like licking the warmest thing on a cold night  
memories are not more than  $1/3$  the truth  
and the rest is debris  
people who think like machines resist this thought  
they rarely remember it  
they are like the sheep under the watchful shepherd  
who are puzzled each time by the road

## Reality Versus Truth

the truth is that poetry as reported on a daily basis  
is going down the drain  
hardly anyone puts in the little edge that would make the poems fine  
instead it's all word noise and faint praise and reference to the woods and lakes

read this

“As a girl I learned your metals  
by heart: copper from Isle Royale, iron ore  
staining the harbor red.”

was this a schoolgirl letter to the local paper  
plainspoken is fine  
but really  
really

## Abstraction Again

modular scalable seamlessly integrated  
characteristics of insect bodies  
and human made (artificial) bolt-ons  
all of it dictated by our elders from Europe  
now we're screwed

## Little but not Nothing

little point to it  
the machinations that result  
in the day to day  
extending to the month to month  
or more and more  
nothing special need happen  
no great deeds or statements  
no great loves or even meals  
tending to the routine  
naturally no one learns of these things  
quiet is quiet  
quiet is quite  
quiet is not quit

## Surprised Probably

once or twice the bell has rung  
and no one has woken  
this is not surprising  
but it's improbable  
much needs to be explained to reconcile  
the math with the facts  
in cases like this  
I find this surprising

## Art Not Hard to Master

there are no standards for dingy  
thinking / for varying degrees of oil slick  
unlike the view outside my window  
of the art museum and the dark seductiveness  
of Montréal wrestling itself out of winter  
into France filled with women hoping for warmth  
but dressing for winter to stave off the disillusion  
unlike the view outside my window  
I was saying  
unlike the view

lost that thought

## Tonight and Speaking

what is the circumference  
of your pie  
silly phrases mixing realms  
bring us food  
now

## Is What I Heard Tonight

tonight  
watching from the other  
side of the room  
it learned that the hooded  
evening dropping and encumbrance  
are not happenstance  
nor hearsay  
I am not anything  
it was said by the quicklydarting eyes  
I am not the object  
it was gestured by the falling in front hair  
I am not

## Waiting in the Bar for the World to End

what's changed is the unchanged  
unchangeable / the topic is influenceable  
or sometimes influenced by the tide of the talking  
as I watch from her in formless purple  
to him in green / this experiment is right  
up her alley / right up the wrong train of thought  
we fought overly hard  
opposition is stiff / the path from tonight  
to yesterday is familiar but erases itself  
she will disappear and our connection  
is words alone / marks untidy  
as they are for being

## View from Out and Above the Sea

left behind  
the fx of the days are fixed  
who is allowed to know what it meant  
will finally handle  
the stinging fairy

## No Moon Rising

she of course never feels  
it the shower of emotion never falling  
on her plain she is drier than Atacama  
she never feels  
let alone it  
she is now part of the disappeared  
she is like a poof  
in a sidewalk magician's act  
she is like the moon which is high here  
but nowhere near up  
where she is

## Walk One Night

the walk was short in life scale  
cool night but underpowered  
narrow streets but carrying heavy loads  
in one second story apartment  
in the window up there as we walked by it  
a woman sat typing in front of her screen  
talking to someone on the other side of the world  
that person call him a he was no doubt  
in a sunny warm place while here it was cool dark  
she was here she was just up there she could have easily  
turned to her window opened it and spoken down to me  
instead those around me kept walking without speaking  
heading for a place well defined but unknown and unknowable  
soon the woman was left behind she is still typing

## Gutter Life

regular way to watch  
working girls walk by  
lean against the wall and wait  
listen to the gutter scratch of leaves  
go by  
imagine the man two streets over  
leaning and watching  
he is waiting for the revelation  
that animates and calms  
this is regular  
unregulated  
unrepentant

## **B Woman**

sitting beside me  
6 hours plus  
bos to sfo  
she tapes her receipts to pages  
fills in spreadsheets  
moves neatly lined up files on her desktop  
into interior folders  
afterward she puts on makeup and walks briskly  
to baggage claim where in the heat  
and waiting her makeup runs

## Notes / Notes

notes she might have sent  
might be drifting down  
the lightwinded streets  
might be making their way  
to gutters which might take them  
down storm drains to the listless  
stream that joins the river that eventually  
rages toward then broadens to gently enter  
the sea which is like the blood running  
through her right now as she does something  
other than send me notes

## Important Things

the sunset that illuminates  
the river from behind the hill  
behind the clouds  
this is what to look  
forward to from the day  
you're born  
nothing is more important than waiting to see it  
nothing can compare to its frightening truths  
it really means nothing  
we both know that  
but it's equally true nothing is more important than it  
or was it the sunset tomorrow

## Love on the Run

no one is ever  
far away enough  
from themselves  
and the things they make  
no one wants the sign to point one way  
but no one wants the choice  
I've fought for the distance  
the distance between her walking ahead  
and me behind toward the cold river  
following / almost falling to the sea  
if one of us fell in there  
it would be like the first kiss  
that suddenly ends the romance

## Outrage Given Color

nothing more than the odd shade  
of lavender or pink on the ripple of river  
at the time of the setting of the sun  
the contribution of that color to the beauty  
and stillness of that scene is no more nor less  
than the contribution of the extra words  
in line three to line three

## Three Places

take us there  
to the outraged passion of the new  
the ideas that plate the hardest ground  
the ground pounded into dust  
under the trees whose leaves are the dust  
take us near there  
to the soft grass long after the last rain  
but before the contemplation of brown  
find the insects who like us lying there  
to the logs of their youth  
take us to a place like that one  
where with the addition of the sentiment  
of our war songs we can remake it to the real one  
with only an extra dab of storytelling  
or forgetfulness  
take us there  
is the war cry of those who have abandoned  
their own interiors

## Crossing Boundaries

the trip looms  
to places that expand  
with fear into my sense  
of destiny  
with this trip I miss  
what's grown as favorite  
will this be the end of imagination  
will the strange leaves fall  
strangely down on my inquisition  
hard to know  
but I'm paying for it

## For Marianne

poems for trees and flowers  
birds and cats  
tomatoes shriveling on the counter  
seed sprouting unexpectedly  
(but what **did** you expect?)  
yep old ladies writing poetry  
and the girlimen who teach them  
my o my how they labor over those syllables  
counting them  
or slapping their knees to understand the rhythm  
vis-à-vis what they were taught  
their poems are brave  
when they speak of real people  
who could be relatives or lovers  
especially when death is hovering  
what blowers  
bagbiters  
but then  
this is a poem for old ladies  
and their teachers

## Cry Along

tonight is a night  
before a trip  
this one long  
not just to another part of the country  
not just to another country  
but to the other side of the world  
in a way I've not done before  
I'll be with a close friend the whole  
way once in Chicago  
but even that doesn't calm me down  
I love to be places  
but I hate to travel  
what does this mean about how  
happy I was as a child  
it's the being alone I'm sure that  
starts it  
like the time my mother dropped me at Steve Kimbrell's  
for us to walk the 3 blocks to dance class in 5th grade  
and he wasn't there  
how hard I cried until she magically appeared  
somehow knowing something was wrong  
what does this mean about  
happy I am with myself  
I remember that twilight walk alone like  
I remember the line above that starts I remember

## At the Pizzeria

engaged  
just graduated  
whether from highschool or college I couldn't tell  
she looked so young in a blue wrap over a beige blouse  
and black pants  
when she leaned into him for a self-administered  
photo the curve of her hip opened up  
lit from the side by a light coming in from the window  
I hadn't noticed before  
her friend two over half the time made  
her comments in song  
pop musicals  
she sang quietly but engaging each listener  
Haley was quiet this her day  
the gift she received was a painting sheep  
with a poem on the back speaking of their journey  
it all happened in St Paul while the sun should have been setting  
but was hovering instead like the sun does in northern plains  
later after eating I stood outside the window  
watching without sound  
as the sun dropped  
and her smile went along with it

## Lit Building

plain buildings with celebratory lights  
pointed upward to hint surprise  
near the top the well-off live  
large windows looking toward the river  
what they do there  
what turns them on  
no one cares but them  
from my room I can see those lights  
green at the bottom of their range  
lighter upward and white at the top  
very pretty they might seem  
but all around know better

## On It

night before a long trip  
and the edginess sharpens  
there are things to fear  
work to do  
I am ready to quit and write hard  
as it is  
writing is free

## Cloudy Prospects

cloudy / windy probably  
perhaps I won't make it  
prepared for it as best I can be  
I await the time to flee to the airport  
while waiting I've been thinking about  
writing without vowels  
t crtnly frcs ppl t thnk dffrntly  
bt wht thy rd nd wrt

## My Bed of Solitude

here in Sao Paulo  
the crux was out  
and I followed the markers to the south  
the moon shadow was reversed  
the north was in the warm part of the sky  
tonight is the coldest night of the year here  
and I am alone again in my room  
writing / listening to the sad songs  
and tearing up from a sad story  
sadly alone

## Choro

after the concert  
at the urinal  
done peeing  
turning around  
I see the woman  
washing her hands  
as if pants were skirts

## Porto de Galinhas

the roads are barely paved  
the streets join in Ys  
the same dog is everywhere in 2s and 3s  
the rain stops everything when it starts  
they say the sharks are here for revenge  
they rarely kill but bite in records  
the mass is covered live in a horn-covered blast engine  
the priest is whispering inside the church but here we cover our ears  
the smell near the icecream stand wrenches flavor from our mouths  
the night time is rain once again

## Southern Cross

the moonlight hitting the puffed clouds wrong  
the ocean sanding down the beach  
the frogs gulping behind us  
a breeze unheard of by the green atlantic  
she walked slowly toward her room  
glimpsing back sometimes  
he didn't notice

## Dressed For

beneath her cotton white dress  
loosely wrapped and almost formless  
she wore turquoise thin and shaped  
in a feminine Y  
visible to the male mind  
not perfect  
though every urge was directly engaged  
her face shined in the image of a child  
her dress  
her walk  
her ignorance of glances  
she never looked back  
but I was just one turn behind  
her when the door lock clicked

## Yes Her

not the usual  
fruit drink tart and bitter  
meat salted and thinly sliced  
the warm sea from the East  
off the Atlantic  
at home the new moon  
here full  
there was this woman here  
whose shape was like a pear  
but when she walked  
when she walked by  
when she walked away  
the white night clouds stopped shifting  
the sea breeze froze

## Samba Club

undoubtedly beautiful  
young but not too  
she moves well even though a mother  
she is disquieted by the thought of questions  
but she makes half her fee  
she is not the one I want  
that one is more sensual and like  
the older woman on my favorite tv show  
but she is too beautiful and the temptation  
would be too great

now back at the hotel it sets in  
how far away from a life like this I am  
and how different are the lives of girls  
like these / and these are how they think  
of themselves / I miss her already  
and maybe I should have paid  
perhaps we could have just been here in this cold  
and darkened room together just clasping at  
each other in basic fright of the looming darkness  
and the bitter cold that each of us and everything faces  
regardless of our morality

## Paula in the Car

we picked her up  
and she was intimate right away  
happy to be away from the club  
in the streetlights she was less pretty  
but pretty / I sat next to her like a shy boy  
sitting next to his father's date  
she wore less makeup but good clothes  
she went into the hotel with my friend  
while I went up and lingered face up  
on the bed until the night took its toll

## Leaving Brazil

so now she's gone  
forever and wondering  
I suppose what it all meant  
the educated talk and unimpressive  
passion / she of course has her kid  
and occupation which occupies her  
I suppose day and night  
I can see why some would rent her  
for a companion / for shopping  
for trips / for restaurants  
can I see why she does it  
I suppose the answer has to be  
either why not or  
what's it to you

## **After 26 Hours Coming Home**

home but not remembered  
small consolation in being alone  
in a day away I go again  
tomorrow it's the cleaning and repacking  
yes what a joy  
if only my ear would clear

## Bound

trip / another  
how boring and unlike the life  
of a writer and bicyclist  
in some order or other  
the living Brazilian poets laugh  
and salute the sunrise with mango drinks  
spend the day contemplating sugar  
granted they live in warmer wetter houses  
greet most unusual animals when the fluorescents  
come on / but another trip  
so soon after drifting by  
why not celebrate the wrong language

## Crossing the Mind

Colonel react well since held belief fought altered there.  
Building viruses, explode macintel dell buys sells, dog.  
Rawlings, sam betalinux ipsec interop.  
Tag keyword photo ndash account guidelines send, save report!  
NRA upset bolton alexander hill crook clive experiment.  
Vsnet aspnet, vb community iis dev, sys mgmt.  
Pattern, abnormal escalate tumor healthy.  
Languages connection build, whereby, bootable include perl python.  
Sneezing skin rashes roller, coaster seasons season triggers, instances.

## **Oh Foo**

like the old days  
hacking halfway into the night  
near to dawn

## **Best By Far**

as I was not known  
cool wind out at the picnic table  
as the sun seemed not to set  
wrapped itself around my legs  
and walking back to the car  
became tedious and unnecessary

## I Greet You

a beautiful woman is writing you a letter  
this woman is me...I will  
tell you something sad  
about myself I am a woman  
who lost all hopes and dreams  
to be happy into marriage life  
I lost belief into attempts to find  
my rue Love

## **Pure Practical**

long trip  
still working on the talk  
need to sleep to be ready

## Afterward

good response  
he gets the credit  
I walk away down the hall  
it is always this way  
because all I have  
is not revered as all  
he has

## **Alone Some More**

nothing like the cool night  
the filled up feeling after a too-large dinner  
the sound of mariachi still ringing in the ears  
the closest companion days away

## Pools are Next

the day twitters down to a foggy  
pool / the girls who walk by are tired  
of buying / I wished for more heat  
but the light clouds didn't play along  
the crushing fatigue is lying  
on me like a fat man is his wife  
tonight it's not right

## All Wrong

another day of things

gone wrong

how can this happen all the time

why me / why me again and again

## Not Your Father's Thought

get lost  
discovery points this way  
learn something new  
get lost the philosopher says

## Cloudy or Bright

clouds loomed ahead  
the ship quickly specifies  
the keyword used to retrieve Help  
when the user invokes Help f  
or the specified control  
after death we went further  
we wrote a test application  
that called the canibutton control  
which worked perfectly  
I didn't notice the teleport pad  
until I'd stepped on it  
if blocks are used by another file  
"recovery NOT possible" will be printed to  
the screen when nature completes

## Noise You Call

how many middle-aged parents  
now gripe at their kids about  
that “noise you call music”?  
unfortunately being a workaholic  
my idea of recreation is to write a gonzo Pearl  
instead of cranking out yet another high falutin’  
economistic development jargon laden document  
many search engines do not show local websites!  
many search engines do not show local websites!  
slowly she pulled her skirt up to her knees  
tell him silly Milly  
sends her best respects

## Ars

give it all  
don't forsake the bitter  
promise of fame once  
you have the chops in your hands  
in your heart even  
let go of the reasoning self  
enough to let what you've encouraged  
to grow be itself / produce  
then trust it until the passion  
is too much / then reel it back in  
take the sander to it  
take the wax / take the scraper  
and work until the tender shine  
is scraped away and is replaced  
by a bitter

## Recursion Like Many

play every night  
the same songs  
not always the same  
passion of song  
harvested from chaff  
thrown off and sprouted  
overnight as if the darkness  
were the brightest wettest daylight  
watch the pie singer  
as her toes swerve her hips  
in first-time tempo  
like children listening to the same story  
every night and geeks watching Lost  
over and over the wavefronts  
favor repetition  
yes favor  
repetition

## Life All Over

when you arrive  
everything is awkward  
the place doesn't teem  
not much happens  
people olá you  
they wear their penises  
sometimes erect  
some have wings but all can fly  
they say it's a different place  
it really is right here  
right close  
closer to ourselves than we  
like to say

## Like a Flyer

she is glorious  
divisive hair  
red with a black understreak or two  
butterfly wings  
(different colors day / night)  
long dresses flowing when she walks  
and flowing in the ever flowing breezes  
her figure is perfect  
but she types awkwardly  
and laughs in keystrokes  
were only she real  
or real enough  
and I weren't bored  
we would fly away  
as everyone there can

## Lost on Me

yeah summer soon so what  
here the days are tarweed infused  
the ones who will always turn away  
have already done it  
many weep when there is no need  
the dark edges of your vision is the plump  
heart of reiteration / but why not  
you say and hit the far air sly lit  
taken as wholes the rational part of statements like this  
are not worth the crumble they engender  
speak lightly / mean hard

## What A Day

nowhere to go  
the light down the hall  
means only that someone is reading  
not waiting / not eager  
no one there is ready for me  
not ready for what absorbs me  
how about you?

## Town Thinking

the old water pump on Newbury green  
I'd stop there riding back from my friend's house  
the water tasted of metal but cold metal  
perhaps gunmetal I always thought  
it needed no priming but seemed to push  
the water up from deep  
that pump is gone replaced by a WWII tripod gun  
a machine gun / it is pointed coldly at the road  
I used to bike down / it gives me the chills

## Love Type Shuffle

types of love multiply  
as technology marches on  
at first the presence of the beloved  
was required / how physical  
immediacy became valued  
then writing made presence  
optional / contingent / second / secondary even  
then email via internet increased its pace in absence  
and a letter a day became a letter an hour  
or a minute / IM increased it even more  
and with webcams there is the possibility  
of simultaneous release (followed by  
tenderness in the local bedroom)  
virtual worlds make lovers voyeurs of themselves  
what once was wet is now just the heat  
of cpu cycles / but types they are  
and type are just generalizations  
and generalizations just abstractions  
and abstractions just the ignorance  
found in caves / and as you can see  
balance is everything

## The Practicalities of Poem Writing

wither / ask whether  
inquire after the weather  
wander the litter riddled sidestreets  
wallow in pity directed at the mirror  
wonder what sound shapes signify  
waffle at the answers  
waddle past doubts and objections  
think more slowly when your brainheat welters

these are the thoughts that engage the mind  
after paying bills all evening

## Littlefoot

and so and so  
the warning of the ill  
is not taken seriously  
or at all / the mention of truth  
is bespoke as vulgar  
but instead of nonsense like that  
let's talk about a bird with long legs  
walking in a shallow pond  
shaking its wings / but  
let's use poetic language so it sounds  
real purty

## Sentence Death Match

the question of sentences  
comes up whenever writing  
is a serious subject  
sentences have just 1 characteristic:  
one word after another  
even women write this way  
theorists describe language as trees  
but sentence are flat  
just one word after another  
our memories hold our expectations  
for what will come with each new word  
hierarchy is the realm of militarists  
and catalogers / some would say scientists  
to write a sweet sentence drowsy as a sugary drink  
on the breeze-cooled porch on a hot day  
takes a well-worn path through unknowable territory  
or a confidence in the sand drizzled behind  
as we think / as we feel / as we pretend to see

## **Exhibition**

long time waiting to see it again  
that porn flick dubbed from French  
that opened many eyes  
in the world of science

## Your Disquiet

I have no relatives  
just my 2 children  
who are off on their own not needing  
me for much of anything  
I actually have some  
but I'm not sure how to contact them  
some big bunch of them are in a part of the world  
I can only guess about  
in this I am as devoted to incompleteness  
as to self-estrangement  
myself I am minus reason and affectivity  
whatever we renounce  
we preserve intact

## False / Person / Real

from distance  
without interpretation  
after the sailing ships  
have passed out  
to see or of existence  
I dream of everything  
made easier by being nothing  
or pretending to be  
this is my way to be alone

## Kid Band

one friday night  
1968 ?/? 1970  
Rachel was playing  
at a kids' hangout  
in Beverly  
upstairs / we hauled out shit  
up there and played as lou  
as we could / during keep  
me hangin' on we hit a new loud  
my ears  
(and their's I hope)  
are still  
ringing

## Observationally Old

seem old  
speak slow  
the observations render a hazy  
but bucolic world  
filled with spritely leaves  
and curious butterflies  
flat language but flat observations too  
the room flares with rare applause  
at the expected times  
unexpectedly the fiction writer pops up  
and throws off a real one

## Derelection

no one prepared me  
for the act of contemplation required  
to find the prettiest words  
for the simplest things  
this is important  
perhaps what's important is finding  
these words / if so the task  
has grown beyond the simplicity  
I own / if not / if it's important  
no one prepared me  
I am prepared  
to move ever onward!

## Care in Choice

what can it be  
the reading  
the performance  
where can the leverage be  
the heart places itself out front  
but hidden  
held close but vital  
like an animal that always  
moves forward  
what can it be  
the reaching sideways  
grabbing not picking  
gulping not distinguishing  
I am alone with only the uninvested  
to choose from  
what can the best  
end result be

## Writing For Fireworks

today we drew  
tonight we listened  
in the evening just before  
we watched the tops  
of fireworks lunging  
above the far ridge  
from the road to the cross  
(the name escaped us)  
but the cool type wind from the west  
surprised us with freshness  
after the day of hard heat  
writing is never a pleasure  
because the difficulty of hard language  
is more than information can handle

## At The Reading

the readings are terrible  
people read their works  
really slowly and deliberately  
like water sloshing in a pan  
like crosscuts cutting up a log  
like lovers pumping up a storm  
I hear it / wish it  
but none of them can reach the mic  
or think it has to do with them  
they clutch the sheets up to themselves  
and us be damned for our not hearing  
what they practiced hard at home  
to croak and whisper here tonight

## No Writers After Shakespeare

conference over

people dancing

eager to leave

I am always stunned by their readings

and what they consider contemporary art

here is what it would be like

I walked into the Sneaker Pimps dressing room

and found them reading Shakespeare and looking

at Titians despite the otherwise contemporary

art they otherwise love and make

## Progress is Our Most Important Problem

having spent the last  
15 years trying to become  
a good poet / I must now  
conclude I've failed  
though people praised  
me early it was for good achievement  
for how long I'd been writing  
not for how good I was  
and the ramp of improvement  
has been slow or flat  
or worse  
am I ready to give up

## Last Poem #1

she rubbed deeply  
into the tendon that connects  
my groin to my kneecap  
rubbing toward the groin

just as I sat on the toilet seat  
he shouted fuck fuck  
as if he had to go bad  
I quickly wiped off  
but when I went to the living room  
I found the writer had a panic attack  
instead of bowel pangs

an old woman whom I had just met  
in a class on self-portraits  
commented on what a nice  
man I was / I tried to think  
of why she would think  
that but the church bells  
started to ring announcing the end of class

they called themselves  
the yellow jackets  
and showed me their handsign  
which was a hippie peace sign  
with an index-thumb J at the elbow

for breakfast a bowl of yoghurt  
and a cup of coffee  
seemed like a lot

## Snake No Snake

the first rattlesnake  
in the town showed its head in 1932  
biting Peter Torres who worked  
for mosquito abatement  
Torres was taken to the local hospital  
fellow employees killed the snake  
nobody knows how long the snake  
was because when the employees  
finished working on the snake  
there wasn't any snake

## By the Sandy Road

sitting by the road  
made of oil and sand  
the side of the road  
an oily sand  
a strip about 6" wide  
erupting anthills  
and small / only small /  
weeds / sometimes  
a car goes by  
a truck / a tractor  
the air is infused with the humidity  
of the river valley  
of the sea just to the East  
of the cut hay and mowed grass  
of the sawed timber  
of the flowers planted in farm gardens  
all that happens happens in my head  
no one is around  
I am either always  
bored or never bored  
doing everything  
or doing nothing  
walking from favorite place  
to new favorite place  
like a panther pacing  
behind bars  
the bars here being my dependence  
sitting is the big adventure  
today and for many days to come

## Reading of Success

tired of the duties  
sick of working hard on irrelevancies  
I long for the narrowing  
how long will it take to get there  
like a good gig you try to figure  
the way back before the fingers  
cramp up / before the voice can't cater  
pausing now to read the accomplishments  
of my contemporaries / it becomes clearer  
and clearer that I have fallen by the road  
unable to move now that the spine of the will  
is broken (at last)

## Life Taking

of the poet they once  
said that her death was tragic  
a suicide / it was expected  
only by her / she wrote  
tangentially about the names  
of madness in scritch scratch form  
and painted her head as a jelly donut  
with a red hole in it / and someone  
has been making the case this is mere  
coincidence / and they use phrases like this  
she took her own life  
they never think  
it was in her possession the whole time

## Remarks

experiment failing  
what to try next  
enters the mind  
the hard case  
(at first)  
seems easier  
than the easy case  
this means intuition is wrong  
too inside the box  
maybe / let's try harder  
tomorrow / the frightened  
scientist always remarks  
this

## When Night Times Out

photoshopping today  
important project  
perhaps it will work  
but my skills are weak  
though my endurance is high  
late too late for real art

## Art On Top

art has won  
the work is satisfactory  
and displays the perseverance  
of a bon vivant  
whether it works  
is a matter not for me  
nor the audience  
nor art itself  
nor god wherever  
in fact  
we need to figure  
out who determines  
whether it works

## Losers in Arms

at baggage claim  
we were told before  
we could start to look  
for our bags that they would not be there for us  
the liars in Miami said the bags  
get to the plane before passengers  
during a tight connection  
yet we barely made it  
the teenage girl calling on her cell  
wouldn't get out of the way  
of our wheelchair  
I was happy when we clipped her  
she said we were rude  
and I was reminded of how people accuse  
others of what they are guilty of  
or is this one of those too  
everything about the place  
was diminished and decaying  
and little did we know  
what would soon not work  
welcome to losing

## Beginning

on the jetway at the door to the plane  
blocked by people packing slowly their things  
unaware later passengers will jumble their order  
looking toward the back of the plane  
through the gap between the jetway collar and plane skin  
a slice of the wing and tail seem to be over-real  
in the harsh morning light rumbling  
from across the runway from the sun not quite  
behind the hills / another time / this time  
I wonder what it's for & when I can stop this part  
of it / be lonesome and forlorn the way  
artists are meant to be

## Revisitation

the fog  
mist  
light rain  
cool not cold  
new benches to eat the burgers at  
after dusk before dark  
the same old  
all over  
again  
again  
and again

## Get Lost

the way a thing is discovered  
is to look for something else  
and just when your eyes cannot be expecting it  
to pass your eyes over it so that you  
don't have time to accidentally  
permit your mind to decide  
to not see it

## Right

6 hours of driving  
tired beyond tired  
for some reason  
the urge to write  
is wrong

## In What Life?

want to have sex  
she asked  
wings waving  
sure

he paused  
her wings wavered

but I don't know how

do you have a penis  
she asked  
...wings wavered

he paused  
her wings

how can I tell

they wavered  
she said  
be right back

## Lots to Clear Up

she drank  
mother didn't  
but hers...

yelling heard out the windows  
"another of her fits"

while they said this  
the sky cleared  
all the clouds  
all not very many of them  
dispersed just beyond the horizons  
perhaps they were just beyond  
perhaps way

she and the bottle  
were very good friends

## Baz

a beautiful zebra  
zerored a buffer  
and...

## More Cemetery Men

imagine  
they've bought their headstone and  
had it carved with their last name  
their first names and initials  
and their birthdays  
just 6 months apart 73 years ago  
carved on the front  
tastefully where it can easily be overlooked  
is together forever  
forever includes right now  
I'm walking by slowly their black stone  
slightly wet from a heavy mist  
turning light rain  
behind me two off to the side  
two men are resting on their haunches  
under a towering maple after manning  
the backhoe shovels and rakes the task  
this black stone eagerly awaits so it can  
start its duties

## Like a Clock, a Simple One

nothing like the words  
simply put together like concrete  
from sand gravel and cement  
or a drawing where you've  
pretended the pencil is your index finger  
tracing the contour  
things simply put together simply  
last as long as they must  
they do their work exactly as they must  
nothing beyond that  
partial to above average  
the typical mind revolts  
but after a few that feeling breaks down  
and it's time for another snack

## It Is Where We Are

the air is different  
heavier more filled with the odors of mown grass  
laden with river air and ocean air  
the light is different  
less bright more compacted  
the horizons are different  
narrower but not as to limit what's possible  
as much as focus attention

more intimate  
less dispersed  
more inward  
less diverse  
more intense  
less intense

## Long From Here

just one clap of thunder  
some rain  
a bright flash / I saw it  
no one awakens to this  
as those who die from the fear of it  
by bits I learn more  
the facts are not facts  
just whiffs of what  
someone was passing  
by after they're long gone

## Like Tonight

when the moon is near full  
some birds like mockingbirds  
rattle and sing their large disturbances of peace  
sinews of cool ripple through the night  
disturbing the long settled heat  
in my room I nevertheless  
toss from one damp place to another  
in my feral bed so fetid it seems  
in the still air of my room  
discomfort and disturbances  
gather like quills around me  
aimed at me  
points toward me  
the moon simply does its reflection thing  
lighting the night  
dampening the life  
I have left

## Like This Evening

if the moon is in the proximity  
of the completion  
united birds like mockingbirds click more  
and their large disturbances  
and chords like fresh rippling peace  
by the night sing  
the long heat furnished in my chamber  
disturbs me nevertheless  
I throw myself in the air  
from this damp place to the other one  
in such a way  
my stinking wild bed seems like a Malaysian piece  
in the moveless sky  
the collection of disturbances  
like coils around me (me! me!)  
steer toward the moon  
in consideration of the thing  
—the night writing-off of the life  
calmly simply sounding treble—I left

## Collapsing in Budapest

in the breakfast room  
overlooking the square  
overlooking the river  
the Italian biologist  
sits down and begins to speak of phenotypes  
as I butter and jam up a warm bun  
the coffee is quite hot but not strong  
the biologist continues his elaboration  
while I sip down to the grounds  
and re/prepare the second half of the bun  
later that night I will collapse  
to the floor and be unable to continue  
at the symposium because the Italian  
biologist and all the rest are all  
in leagues leagues above

## In Florida

recall the heat and damp  
of the days near swampland  
not even summer but some fragment  
of winter / I could tell  
because the nights became  
cold / outside the window  
the coon dogs bark howl growl  
into the night stopping only  
when the coldest moment hits  
them in their enclosures  
sure the hunt is not on  
or that the bear has slipped  
bumbling away into the swamp  
or a place near it

## Story Through Facts

who knew who  
could tell of the trains  
that must have come and gone  
not far from the farm  
looping around it at quite a distance  
the trains must have been apparent  
in the air / the noise / the smell  
little facts like these  
surely make a difference  
to the story

## History by Facts

that which that of the  
trains could explain  
that knowledge must have come and gone  
its farm grinding  
should not have been around him  
completely at a distance  
the trains in air / in noise / in the small facts  
of the far odor like those obvious  
surely differentiating history

## Two Ways of River

I can never love her  
her head is only partly what I need  
her fears are overfull  
by the running water  
we talked tangentially about this  
she floated hints  
I let them wash down the dam sluiceway  
boats came upriver and tried the locks  
to get further up  
this was what she watched  
I watched the parade of branches  
and plastic bottles cross the threshold  
skim down the sluiceway  
get lost in the foam  
and head their 10-day journey  
to the southern sea

## Timing Affair

far away a cold light  
wanders from your reading room  
falling snow is illuminated  
in the shaft the light makes to the ground  
it is warm enough that the flakes  
have congealed to the sizes of small moths  
at times the snow seems  
or is it?  
stationary / inside your room it is too warm  
to read properly / so you doze  
my message has arrived on your machine  
but the sound is off / the settling snow  
has demanded it / I am sitting here  
waiting for you to answer  
but you won't until  
the snow lets up

## Case of the Synchronism

faraway a cold light  
wanders of its room of the reading  
the fall snow is illuminated  
in the axle the light makes to the land  
that is warm sufficient that the flakes  
congealed to the sizes of you trace small  
to the times that the snow seems  
or is?  
stationary / inside of its room you correctly are too much warm  
to read / as soon as you level  
my message you arrived in its machine  
but the sound is is... / snow establishment  
itself excuse me / I am here sitting down  
waiting to answer  
but you until  
the snow do not leave above

## Sullen Physics

atypical and a long way  
drive or fly  
many particles wave bye to me  
as no matter  
how fast I go I go  
the same speed  
this was all set in stone  
but the stone was jiggled  
into place

## Sad Girl in Montréal

there's a v.sad girl in Montréal  
trying to stare out her window  
but her inward gaze gets her twisted  
from out to in to out to in  
even though it's raining  
the people walking beneath  
on a night such as...  
are worth being melancholy over  
and they could sure use  
her gaze

## More on the Girl

like a bug not yet  
discovered the street  
along the river has a steep  
bank to keep away the scouring  
glances / along the bank  
is a promenade and on it  
couples walk / this scene  
repeated over the millennia  
when it was my turn to replay this  
and my attention and gaze should have been  
well you know  
I instead turned like the aforementioned bug  
in fear of the rushing river

I talked about a bug  
and I'm sure you got the connections  
throughout / nothing subtle about  
this sort of making of poems

but the fear  
the sad girl  
it's more connected than that

## Until Now

the sad girl in Montréal  
looks with wide  
open eyes at the approaching rainstorm  
her tears will mix with its tears  
she has read  
when the rain hits  
the streets will become a different  
sort of black  
an inviting black that welcomes  
the chance to comment  
on what reflects off it  
the sad girl in Montréal  
doesn't care about the world  
because she is part English  
and part French  
she will not leave her flat  
let me try now  
with my computer software  
to erase the gray around her

## Sad Girl on the Wall

she's on the wall  
she is inspired by the red brick  
that lies 90° to her plane  
her red hair 90°es around the building  
and flows down to a swath of pipes  
she's above the cars in the lot in front  
she looks so French but this  
is because of her sadness  
the chips in the brick  
show her age though it's not her's  
let's praise the artist for her  
he thought (I think  
it's he) of the woman in the window  
typing as if a reader were waiting  
that and the rain in autumn  
and cold in winter  
are why she saddens  
day by day on her wall

## Blandness of Tuesdays

mowing the lawn  
I know  
what a blandness  
but I was 16 and riding the mower  
Tuesday / every Tuesday  
my part was the acre excluding  
the trees house garden  
which my parents quickly did  
some other time  
like maybe after work  
it took about 2 hours  
then I'd ride across the river  
to see what's up  
all summer  
every Tuesday unless it rained  
but even then  
I'd ride across the river  
to see what's up

## Memory Bank

in the hotel  
on the sloped bank  
down to the river  
that slope now terraced  
the slope where the drive-in used to be  
I am fully fatigued and cannot  
bring to the surface the feelings  
as a kid of watching a movie  
until I must have fallen asleep  
one of my favorites  
about a yacht converted to a warship  
I can find nothing about online  
when a memory like this fails  
what of simple men

## Walls Gone

over time  
the stone walls come down  
an erosion it seems  
but the stones don't wear out  
the integrity of the form falls apart  
as I guess the stones are removed  
for other purposes  
the effort to put them together  
how straight  
how formed  
when there was no time for that attention  
each stone should cast a shadow  
one over two two over one

## Confusing My Understanding

upriver the bed is rocked over  
pockets formed near the banks  
are crowded around by fisherman  
who cast their intentions for stripers  
tall trees along the river and the early sun  
confuse my understanding  
the river seems not to move  
the tips of poles flick  
the men adjust their caps  
but I'm on my way to the cemetery  
which is just uphill from this same river  
but down there the water is deep  
and the water moves steadily  
in bright sun downriver

## Heavy Dinner but Late

write it or give up  
short or long  
the structure of the narrative  
is to be layered  
instead of writing this  
we sit outside the café  
eating a sprightly calamari  
melon proscuto & chickpeas  
grouper & clams  
black fettuccini  
and in the middle of it all  
a fire across the street  
and the big horn calling the volunteers  
then the crème brûlée  
the theory seemed unimportant  
and the writing far off

## Elegant Angle

the road is cut into a small pressure ridge  
and up its banks are smears of green  
grass kudzu weeds small bushes  
through this insult  
cars act swift  
the cut is curved  
the modern mingles with this green  
the drivers pay none of it  
any attention as they sing to their cars' songs  
or phone ahead for supper  
to be warmed

## Listening for Rain

the kiss  
the rain running away down the small stream  
by the side of the road  
where we're  
parked and perky  
from looking  
forward from the past  
technology doesn't hamper us  
glasses and clothes  
the car that took us here  
the words that disappear  
as the day cools and darkens  
as the remains of the rain disappear  
down to the stream and then the river  
then to the sea we suppose  
using our knowledge of physics  
and fluid motion  
but soon she is nothing aligned with technology  
and knowledge considerations  
and nothing but a moaner  
while the moon rises  
and rain clouds rise  
just below it

## Appearing Lowlands

recall the lowlands  
where after a hot day  
a humid day  
when the sun drops  
and the cool rises  
a light fog does too  
highlighting the low  
spots / not a dense fog  
but something light  
translucent / enough  
to trace the mental line between the acid fear  
of the familiar murder story  
and the romance of the moors  
the lowlands are not everywhere  
you learn and neither the fear of them  
nor the rest

## Timely Deductions

you can plot the growth  
of a cemetery by the dates on the headstones  
the oldest date is when it was erected  
and even with the more or less  
you can get the vision of growth  
once you start seeing it that way  
the meanings history can reveal  
emerge / decisions made  
become apparent / the way  
it was opens

## Information Indirect

the cemetery grows  
but mapping it is hard  
people buy before they die  
to coin a phrase no ad  
person would ad-  
vocate / assuredly  
you could look at death dates  
to get an idea when headstones went up  
but many erect  
them earlier  
perhaps to visit their own burial spot  
to know it  
to see it as others will  
to judge its daylight  
nighttime rainbound burning sun  
snowbound hailpeppered  
hot cold warm etc  
demeanor / to see what can be read  
from how far / what the aspects are from angles  
of all sorts / and this makes it hard to know  
what one day must have been like 70 years ago  
because all that's left are the headstones  
never intended to provide clues

## **Crypto Poem**

keep the surprise surprising  
let the heat heat it up  
let's not worry about our legacy  
it's just the future looking at the past  
how abstract



## When I Step Into The Light

Patrick snoring beside her  
turned over and groaned  
she began to notice  
the odor of poultry in the apartment  
on cold mornings before the heat came on

she always made a new mistake  
and so I lie awake at night listening  
to his gentle snores

then as he inspected  
his hopelessly cremated poultry  
with a rueful acceptance  
a chicken borrowed my underwear

this seems unlikely

I just don't feel close enough  
to any poultry to lend them  
my intimate apparel

## Science of Sweet

the pace of eating candy  
increases over time  
as new sources of concentrated  
sweetness by delirious scientists  
are discovered or manufactured  
at an explosive rate

## Left Behind

thrown into lost places  
with only stories and speculation  
to guide / to lead  
being trapped in dark  
the only light is the light  
of a new story creating  
new light and illuminating  
however hallucinationally  
the walls / the floor / the ceiling  
the pages of the book strangely  
left behind

## Tangential Viewing

sitting on a bench  
overlooking an inlet  
the wind blowing past  
makes the water look as though it is  
passing by quickly  
with the sun in the right position  
the person can look a ghost  
at least unreal  
or alone with the wind and water  
with the bench and the sun  
and only by guessing  
can tell his is filled  
with the wrong emotions  
for a man of great success

## Before and After Pictures Available

ladies always shrieked at me  
and even bucks did  
in the municipal toilet  
well now I hee-haw at them  
because I took  
M\_E GA D IK  
for 3 months and now  
my pecker is excessively largest  
than world

## **Not Much**

the night grabs my eyelids  
slaps them down  
soon I'm out  
what happens next  
is a variant  
of nothing

## Sad Girl on a Rain Night

she waits on the wall  
looking out all red and languid  
her downturned and thick lips  
boasting desire and consummation  
she craves longing and searches  
who might stop by on their way  
through the unstopping rain to the dark  
parts of town where fires in hearths  
warm the waning hopes and hot drinks  
are passed around against the clutching  
night and hampering mist that rises  
up in the rain from the river rushing past  
faster than the sea beckons it  
across the street under a slight eave  
I wait with her

## Mystery of Grafitti

rain and wind  
colors giving up  
leaves and debris  
the longing  
the liquids mixing  
languor on a brick wall  
she is not my idea  
she was someone's  
who knew how to do  
something about it

## Mind Stripped of Ticks

the clock makes its little clicking sounds  
as a continuous motion somewhere inside  
is broken down into 1-second chips  
flung out onto a second hand  
lying here at the front edge of moonlight  
coming through the skylight  
I can either close my eyes then open them  
to see the moonlight draw nearer to me  
or pay heed to the clock that is nothing  
but a fool-made machine made by someone  
who believes in time and so can make only machines  
that confirm it 1 second at a time  
others more clever make machines  
that reveal the same belief with the dredges  
of physics but always it's the clicks  
that give away their step-by-step thinking  
and who ever wonders what the smooth moon  
motion means when the mind is stripped  
of its fantasies

## Only the Few Can Parse What is Seen

are you aware of it  
the headless expectations  
the bar that bars the best view  
with webcams we travel  
to places worth only imagining  
because the fares are too high  
those who explain through rationality  
and economics the ways of the world  
have missed the boat  
when it is scarce the thought of that scares  
and the price is inflated even more  
meanwhile it looks like supply and demand  
only more and the real winners in this game  
know of the emotion amplifier  
are you aware of it  
the heartless explanations  
the bar / the fares / the views from afar  
all of it too modern to live by

## Animosity of Story

you tell the story  
it contracts as your memory wears down  
it expands as your emotion fills it to its original size  
you know what the metaphor is then  
you forget what metaphors are  
you tell the story  
one fact dominates  
the wrinkle of one listener  
makes you say more  
than is true  
but consistent with it  
a story that could be  
you don't know what you said isn't right  
your grasp on people and other stories  
tells you it could be  
if you think that horse kicked you hard  
take this / take this / take this  
you son of a bitch

# Hey

writing writing  
writing writing writing  
more ways / more times  
more venues / more approaches  
I wish I were better  
but all I've got is what you're reading  
man

## What is it for?

what she felt running down her legs  
what she felt as the thunder crinkled  
what she felt as she sat  
    worried what could be happening  
what she felt as her head stopped its unstoppable monologue  
who or what did she think last  
    me / my father /her father  
her mother / the hot day they were or will be buried  
the lightning / the closed windows / the disconnected TV  
my father taught her about which she disconnected  
as her life ran down her legs

## Essence of It

strong talent  
writes with grace  
an elegant ear  
the assets a writer would want  
but what of what  
to write of  
this floats away at each grab  
not like talent  
or grace or the ear  
that never fails  
once something is

## In Heat

Allerton again  
bugs and humidity  
large room second floor  
with cold cold AC  
connectivity sucks  
the work starts  
more work  
always more work

## Until After

shout the expression  
of belief  
or disbelief  
whisper congratulations  
only when  
and after  
it's expected  
praise if you but don't  
brag concurrently  
fill your mouth with fleeting  
words like spit  
treat them like spit  
rustle up sincerity  
like a quick stew  
of old meat  
shout if that helps  
but only when  
and after

Oh?

after the long brisk walk  
past the sunken arena  
the musicians lane  
the centaur  
past black oaks  
out to the sunsinger  
and the just as brisk  
but strangeloy less long  
walk back I was drenched  
by sweat from the head  
dripping down on my shirt  
so that when back the conference goers  
all asked whether I had been caught  
in the storm

what storm?

## Lecture #23

same world  
world of business  
from a database point of view  
they all have a tendency to get  
hung up on detail  
a little bit more complicated  
he ends up with something horrendously  
complicated  
why don't I use the simplest one  
I can get away with  
pass all these books around  
products you manufacture and sell  
with a purchase order you are  
making an agreement  
sometimes it's called a rental  
sometimes it's called a cellphone  
contract  
let's go get more business over there

## My Only Poem Mentioning These

dawn's a long way off  
but time to shower  
time to finish packing  
the air outside  
under the sky starting to lighten  
clings to the car and me  
fog hovers over the roads  
over the fallow fields  
traveling time is tired time  
don't eat time  
driving I pass homes  
with sleeping people  
in the disappearing shadows  
cats assess things differently

## That Girl He Talks About

slow day  
listening to a country song  
a girl laments  
the boy she loves  
doesn't notice her  
but she's just a girl  
just a girl  
and there's no way to relate

## Driving Around & Around

driving the road  
that loops into town and then back  
the radio cycles through the dj's  
song cycle  
I drive past farms  
then long low apartments  
into the beginnings of town  
town square red-brick and other century  
the road heads toward the larger town to the west  
and a fork bends me back to our farm  
in 40 years I'll be able to play my own loop of songs  
as few songs as I want  
so that my moods at different stations  
remains the same from one iteration  
to the next

## Crossing That Bridge

every day there's a step  
taken that cannot be untaken  
we know only one  
way to find our way  
the road down to the river  
is rarely repaved  
it has grown rutted and pitted  
deep depressions  
the bridge is worse  
once you start across the bridge  
the other side is your only destination  
not even the river is a possibility  
did you expect a choice

## Past the Sad Girl

this year the special event is mundane  
we will glorify it  
we will draw from the outside  
and merge with the commonplace  
while creating a sense  
of transparency and interface  
we will leave from the Hyatt by bus but  
walking is easy enough  
the place is ordinary but we'll fill it with us  
with some this and that  
some music maybe (some "music" maybe)  
some curiosities some films  
it will stay open late  
most of us will walk back

## The Chair-Caner

*(adapted from Guy Goffette)*

Whatever the cost, the old farmer folds—he  
who rejected leaving the earth of his fathers,  
and for the sand silting sump and the field attenuation  
and for the receipt of the high dignitaries, he ignores it.  
The painter of the Sundays dedicated to the flowers  
in the cat eyes is breaking the young girls open  
on the devised dune exactly the same as those who ignore it.  
The Gods of this palace smoke and speak about art  
with gestures of Greek statues. He knows  
only that in order to paint a sparrow in the sky  
a sunbeam on the straw of its chair is sufficient,  
provided that deep in the silence one moment separates  
grip from shade. This lets the eyes tremble.

## Don't Go

simple truths  
like spreading cemeteries  
swallow up lives  
though trees are left behind  
something makes the less  
though groundhogs and squirrels frolic  
their eyes watch for your passing  
driving into one  
you find it harder and harder to leave

## Again and Again

the nights spent writing  
like this / sometimes  
there is a warmth to the work  
other times it's the just get  
it done thing / writing quickly  
thought like the mist outside the window  
with autumn arriving  
I feel dead

## Go In

the camp looks good as ever  
the brush is growing up around it  
it feels more and more closed in and over  
parts of it are beginning to fall down  
decisions will need to be made soon  
for now it's a pretty memory  
my only link  
I still can't go inside

## Simple Life = What He Wants

Ray Boucher  
built a hutch  
for Baxter the bear  
small but tough  
like Ray  
like the bear

## Man to Hell

work like hell  
hell will work you  
over

## Again

when work is over  
the urge is strong  
to become weak  
let the remainder  
take over like a  
box filled with toys  
or bonuses / but  
just when you think  
it's over it starts

## Mind is a Razorblade

that one night  
in the bed where the stairs  
would be  
next to the fireplace  
with the wood stove in it  
the other in the other  
corner each covered  
with cheap sleep-  
ing bags  
we slept one night  
then the next  
she asked me over  
somehow soon  
her tongue was there  
soon somehow  
her nightgown was on  
the floor  
the night air was confused  
by the waning fire  
but soon that passed  
we never left  
that bed until the day  
after I changed the oil  
for her and our son  
so she could drive  
safely away down the street  
facing sunrise and  
I never (really)  
saw them again  
it was that night tonight

## Wouldn't Be Good Enough

the color of the time lost in the sparks  
of the space lost  
it dances internal  
red of the walked ones  
for the railroad in brilliance  
of youth when our stages  
had liberated the creaked ones  
of the shots that reach for the light  
scarlet of sin  
crimson of the cool blood  
ruby and garnet of the jewel lodge  
light of the advanced sun  
vestiges of the behind  
sun as funny  
the green disappears  
to be calm  
not to give inside  
to the red throat rabid of age  
in a red world  
imprint valentine and blush of romance for the blackness.  
lode  
you redden  
it will not be this fast forever  
you another time will be green  
repeated times.

## Driveaway

it was time for her to go  
she thought just before she packed  
she asked me to change the oil in the car  
I had already signed over to her  
she didn't want to break down  
on the way to Albuquerque  
she thought I didn't want that  
too  
that afternoon I found someone's  
lap to cry on  
my wish  
is that she still honors those tears  
and doesn't believe them just sentimentality

## WWII

during the war  
she kept the farm going  
alone  
does it make sense

## Place Storms

the thing about the past  
is how sad it seems  
how drizzly the evenings  
how cloudy the mornings  
the past is back there  
a river is important  
here it's Sunset Drive  
in autumn the air smells sweet  
the air feels warm  
the special weeds by road  
in the fields  
the eucalyptus dropping its bark  
nothing can prepare you for this  
the thing about the past  
is things are triggered by  
little looks little  
sounds and it all plays  
back the parts that matter  
all of it covered with weather

## Not Much

making the farm work  
with no man around  
cows to feed clean and milk  
chickens to clean feed fetch eggs from and slaughter  
geese to fetch eggs from slaughter feed and clean  
turkeys to feed clean and slaughter  
hay to mow dry and bring into the barn  
repairs to make to implements machinery house barn and out buildings  
gardens to till plant nurture and harvest  
berries fruits apples pears tomatoes plums and grapes to pick cook and can  
snow to shovel  
grass to cut  
cars and tractors to keep running  
axes scythes sickles knives to keep sharp  
milk to cool and deliver  
septic tanks to clean  
wood to cut and dry  
coal to buy  
food to buy  
trips to the big town  
clothes to make and repair

much of the year is coated with the dark  
the work can never stop  
she can never stop  
and her hatred of she who made this all required  
grew until the day of death

## Long Hauling

the long ride  
another one  
then another  
the air seems not to move  
so the wind is at my back  
the water tastes of plastic  
but it all keeps me going  
learning the way  
crack by crack  
tree by tree

## Bridge Picture

the old railroad bridge  
thick logs whitened in the sun  
grayed in the rain  
delicious weeds in the gully  
indistinction in the background  
at the start of a humid day  
in central Illinois  
my camera tries to do its work  
but painting is the only way  
to make the picture say what that bridge  
said that day

## Over Work

the liftoff of melancholy  
of the dark & holy  
she wheels the baskets  
between the milkhouse  
and the house being built  
behold the cows  
behold all the work that needs to be done  
from these snapshots  
build the world you need  
to make you able to sleep  
when the threats of work  
work on

## Ride Through

what are all these buildings  
torn down between 1946 and 1956  
or burned or fallen down  
why / what were they for  
what are all these rich things  
that fell away before I knew them

## Standing Firm

one day in October  
she walked past the milkhouse  
and came to face the old tree  
the burned tree  
that didn't survive the fire  
the old tree couldn't look back  
it had burned to death  
and only its long branch pointing  
away from the burned out / down  
house looked like life  
she stood facing the tree  
and what it meant to her  
family in the times when nothing  
went right / and she would have kept  
standing and thinking  
but work called / as always  
work called

## Worry About Me

what looked like decay  
and decrepitude  
from far away in age  
looks super different now  
that I'm among it

## Dark in Fall

it darkens quick now  
how dark it will become  
is a problem  
lights are needed  
streetlights for example

there is a grave near my parents'  
and also near my mother's parents  
with a solar panel to gather energy  
for a battery that shines a light up  
on the headstone  
to point the way  
or to point back  
or out  
one day the sun won't be here to power this contraption  
then it all  
all of it  
will be dark

## Not Her Thing

her grey eyes kept watching  
and she and her friend kept talking  
to me about cameras and the way to find  
truth in rusted fire escapes  
and odd light in narrow alleys  
she was nearly perfect  
with just one  
temporary  
flaw / her friend exactly her age  
dripped like a little boy next to her  
her grey eyes kept watching  
sometimes me  
sometime him  
but mostly the sad girl

## Bad A Bing

why won't  
thoughts stop  
why don't  
we quit  
finding out is hard

## In Hours

soon I will practice leaving  
don't I have enough of that under  
way and plenty of energy  
left for leaving

## On Examining an Old Photo

from a distance  
the cemetery looks like a city  
broken down after its people  
have gone  
are no longer living  
in its buildings  
the question comes up  
of what's different between  
now and always

## On Looking at an Old Photo

a small building  
with three stores  
and three apartments above them  
horse and buggy in front  
as I look at the picture  
that time breaks apart  
some of its things are still here  
others have flattened out  
I'm not sure I would be in the picture  
were I there / there seemed  
no place that would be  
where I would be

## Tonight In Town

the square is the same  
the church is almost  
the rails under main street  
have been ripped up  
the Locust Street Cemetery  
is warm in the cold light and air  
as the sun fades  
walking through it is a drain on the psyche  
the river ran in eddies  
the world seemed like it was indifferent  
regarding going on  
or ending

## At the Bend

when the river is perfectly  
balanced the water doesn't move  
not out to sea nor  
up toward the mountains  
this point  
in time and in the river  
lasts just a minute  
exists just one place  
when it does  
and the light is perfect  
the world freezes into a sheen of blue  
and wandering thoughts  
huddle close by  
out of the corner of the eye  
is a slim network of green  
that breaks us free  
for a time

## Couldn't Go On

every attempt to capture  
the place founders  
on inexplicable awe  
to those who came before us  
this place was harsh and meanspirited  
take the river  
now painted steel at dusk  
then it was frozen into the shape of waste and distress  
pictures poems testimony  
all of it failing on the fallen  
leaves that pile up on the mind

## Lost by Design

they define their buildings  
by color / color from  
lights on and inside them  
this city has swallowed me  
she with me has become satisfied  
with my art though her beauty stuns  
all who walk past / we are buried within  
this city where the many who seek  
me can't imagine to look  
this place me my work  
these are she needs and her downcast smile  
looks that judgment to all who pass  
the buildings in yellow near the streets  
viewed vertically  
respond best to organ pedals and piano keys  
singing in a speaking voice  
did I mention the melancholy  
or did you not need to hear that

## My Song

some songs are too hard to sing  
even fewer too hard to hear

## Dark in a Northern City

the dark in the streets below  
the tenured lights in the alleys  
the fire escapes twisting upward  
the rust waiting for winter to brighten it up  
these await me in the dark autumn of Montréal  
where bright thinking turns inward  
this is the where I've been waiting for

## Alley of Art

the problem of describing Montréal  
at night deepens after a long snowfall  
the slippery surface of the river  
passes more slowly than the urgent core  
just up from the river in the alley of art  
footsteps prepare to echo and re-echo  
but snow has ideas and acts on them  
above the street in a blank apartment  
a woman with serious eyes is photographing  
herself and once out of the digital realm  
even when taken in the wrong light  
the pictures she took while I was within the circle  
an echo could make would torture  
the eyes of everyone in Montréal  
on a night a little below 0

## Cold Schooling

the water must be cold  
moving past the quays  
it moves quickly past  
from one cold place to one  
only slightly warmer  
as I observe this  
I and someone  
from Montréal  
are learning  
again  
the art of the soft kiss

## Side Street Time

the sad girl waits  
her red fades  
the bricks fade  
she is auditioning as a dairy queen  
the photos of night revel  
in the glow I write about  
but I've don't recall seeing them  
because today is still in the future

## Could Happen

she worries  
in a disguised dialect  
that I am about to die

## After a Warm Day

in a heavy rain  
pushed about by heavy wind  
we found our way to an over the top oyster bar  
and ate lots of things from oceans  
later walking out we walked right  
into a cab while the rain  
which had politely waited while we ate  
continued or perhaps resumed  
for us  
the waitress beautifully darkhaired  
in a black dress looked out the broad window  
as we moved away into the mistshrouded dark

## After Our Visit

still the sad girl  
no way for her to smile  
no way to force things  
the light in her eyes  
neither fades nor lights

## Or Is It Lovers

with little to go on  
the foremost statement  
is backwards looking  
and former winners  
look like live losers

## Tailor It

the last player is floating past  
the life of the party parties hardy  
one of the wonderful things about life  
is the partial visibility into it and out  
live like 14%

## After Nighttime

she wrote  
it ends

## Prescription

sometimes regardless  
of what you believe  
you must pray  
to live

## Over / Over

over  
over and it hits  
the sadness that pervades  
until it's over

## Appreciation of the Argument

a good way not to  
forget is to write

## On Her's

on a birthday  
we celebrate the differences  
of weather from what we've  
imagined that day  
the real one  
to be  
today it happened to be raining  
and the trees were yellow and red  
the maples I mean  
late October  
what a day to welcome a baby

## Integrity of Time

in the rain  
on the wet road  
that leads into and out of  
the cemetery  
shadows play tricks  
on the remaining stories  
and what we have is a failure  
like the leaves now red and yellow  
that not long from now will fall  
fall wet to the ground  
act like nourishment and redemption  
meanwhile nearby a house tries  
to fall down and apart

## Fall Scene

the song plays  
in the background  
a soundtrack not soon forgotten  
the soft sound dust makes sifting to earth  
somewhere words burst above the background  
precise and cool but made from heat and throbbing  
back there the special greens and yellows wait

## Of Existence

when I left the city  
every bit of the small scope  
I knew of it became nothing but nothing  
the sad girl has been left behind  
and face it  
she was / no she is / nothing  
but paint on a brick building  
in a while she will fade  
or someone with no respect for her  
will paint her over  
the pretty girls there  
the real ones  
and the oddly warm cold northern light  
that washed the buildings in a clear light  
will be just an effect apparent in the photos I took  
and not real / no—real but not present / to me  
anymore / and whatever love I had for the place  
and the people there and the people who came  
there will not be real but just parts of thoughts  
as I try as hard as I can to fade myself out

## Everyday

suppose a world made of dots  
small ones  
& close together  
with uncrying one could wedge  
between them and see real  
coating the back wall  
then what if that back wall  
were bricks  
small ones  
& close together

on this day when I was 8  
so 50 years ago  
I got a tlr camera  
that I looked down on  
to take photos  
the crystals and other molecules  
on the b&w film were like those dots  
and soon I learned to look  
down on the world

## On Every Street

searching the streets  
the yellow sodium lights  
make my hands look orange  
so I stuff them in my pockets  
after pulling up my collar  
against the fog rising from the river  
as the cold air falls from the hill  
the city is named after  
nowhere can I find you  
with just a photo and a guess  
though the city is small  
when I sleep I dream of her  
standing over my bed  
standing over me  
praying for me  
the one place I don't  
look is the wall  
the painted woman there  
her sad eyes and mouth  
are her prayer  
does she look for me  
which of us will find the underground  
passage first

## Farm Day One At A Time

that day  
I sat in the passenger's seat  
of the jitney which really was  
a tractor made of 2 year's of fords  
it had 2 transmissions  
my mother drove and my father  
operated the converted horse-drawn  
sickle bar mower through the mixed rye  
and timothy being careful to raise up  
the sickle bar where he knew the remaining rocks  
were still in the 10-acre field  
I still remember the writhing snake  
chopped in pieces by the hard sharp blade  
which my father had just filed  
this little death nothing new to me or us on the farm  
time covered over by the mufflerless jitney  
making noise louder than the world  
for me this was that 50-acre farm

I pray  
make me remember

## Under a Sky

days slide on  
a long flat plain  
with only one line of like-sized trees  
the earth plowed to uniformity  
a red/brown haze lifting above  
in the downcast sunlight near dusk  
the sky able only to wish it were blue  
it's like I'm driving a car through  
with the windows up and the ac on  
I can't tell the heat or cold  
I wish only that one  
thing could rise above this wash  
before all the days slide past

## Kharma Reiterated

when technology  
aims to duplicate reality  
in some limitation-based way  
the expense is unbelievable  
imagine trying to reproduce  
the sound of a light wind  
through seaside grass with 1' waves just offshore  
about 1/4 mile away with a luxury  
sailboat of 80' passing by  
in a room in a house surrounded  
by walls and guards  
this should cost a lot

## A Story of Illiteracy and Cuckoldry

came home from work at 11 pm  
my wife welcome me with "pssst"  
David her boss has fight with his wife  
so she let him stay in our guest room

I just shrug a shoulders  
ask what's for dinner  
"take something from a fridge" she replay  
watching some stupid show on teli  
presence of strange man and my wife  
ignoring my needs pissed me off  
took a quick shower and crash in the bed

my wife came a few minutes later  
press her nude ass against me  
as I was tired and piss of I told her  
"go and fuck your boss!"  
to my big surprise my dear wife slip  
out of bad and said "you ask for it!"  
and nude walk cross hallway  
to guest room, leaving doors open  
I was in shock!

in the moment I heard  
my wife giggle and mans voice  
"you will got ride of your life" .....

I did not know what to do  
laying in our bed and listen  
pleasure sounds of my wife  
fucking in other room with her boss  
it was not pleasant but somehow exciding  
in about a hour of their intercourse  
I heard how man had his orgasm .... it took him a hour!  
while my dear wife finished  
several times judging by her screaming  
than was some time silence  
after that I heard male voice saying  
"what about a cuckold?"  
my wife with smile said  
"I will take care about it"  
they were taking shower in our(!) bathroom  
I was laying in the bed pretending to sleep  
don't know how to react

after that my wife slip in our bed next to me  
in half voice said "you have what you ask for"! ....  
she fall sleep  
I did not sleep whole night ...  
in morning I hear as my wife night fucker  
left house without saying word  
I was going in the shower  
(where I saw "rubber" in the waist basket)  
in that time my dear wife was already  
in the kitchen making breakfast  
I peek in the guest bedroom  
which was in good shape  
no track of my wife and her boss night tryst ....  
my wife in the jogging suit handle me cup  
of coffee and greets me ...  
"have good sleep dear"?

this is not a fantasy it happen  
we never talk about it  
but it stays with me for several years ...  
I am cuckold and stupid one!

## Alongside Truth is a Pretty Song

forget the melody  
harmonies too  
the things the wandering notes  
enough for the mind to follow  
bit by bit  
one at a time  
randomly  
think about what chaos means to order  
what the disordered means to rationality  
what has truth to do with fact

## Offtune

the liquor store  
a family around a table fantasizing their legacy together  
a liquor store  
an unpleasant stop light though it's not raining  
a 7/11 full of people after a big drink  
some worklights coming in through the side  
a tv turning a room and its people blue  
in the end  
be alert  
stay aware  
if things look wrong  
it's cool to be square

## Etc

through the night  
backroads  
the only kind  
in high western Kansas  
driving with the lights out  
guided by the reflected light of the moon  
on pavement ahead of me  
and the lights of a town between the two  
as I reach toward the one  
it becomes less real and reach toward the other

## Important Quote Number One

Keats and the difference  
is the issue of port workers  
a drop of blood to his brain  
or the skull  
or something like  
in shape

## Important Quote Number Two

most people reading poetry  
are listening to the echoes  
are closer to reverberating  
their road to wade through  
the same water the boy wades through  
he feels for a bottom under his toes  
echoes are at the bottom

## Important Quote Number Three

style is not  
or will be applied  
it is something that permeates  
it is not at all unusual  
it is found  
whether or not the poem  
is God bearing a man  
dress it is not

## Hong Kong First Day

a vertical maze  
redolent with incense  
an automatic stair  
from bottom to top  
the double metal whap then whomp  
of a pile driver  
the large tree outrageously shading the courtyard  
cats with tails and ears missing  
a traffic jam with only taxis  
the embarrassing harbor being slowly  
filled in  
colors of vegas in the financial district  
hard to believe this is civilization  
and an old one

## on the train

she stares downward  
her voice wavering or singing  
like the parody of kung fu  
she covers her mouth when she hears  
I think  
something funny or over touching  
her dark hair falls in cut layers  
down to a place where I guess  
her breasts would be  
or are  
when the call ends  
she remains fixed on the phone  
thumbing buttons  
until she toss the phone to her lap  
and stares at her shoes  
me looking down  
on her as the train slithers underground

## Our Motto At Last

what are they advertising  
skinny woman in a small bikini  
all in Chinese  
with lots of phone numbers  
and a railroad symbol  
her arms are raised  
and her name is Jill  
it makes me think  
you Macao big tail

## How I Wonder

how can it be  
that every single one of them  
every woman in the train station  
all hundreds of them  
can wear any fashion in the stores  
and look good  
are they that thin  
or only short  
they like being spun around  
when I decide to not step aside

## Wild Food

the white boots  
the dumpling mohawk  
taking back uneaten food without charge  
a tank with 2 groupers  
some black crabs  
a bucket of whelks  
every waiter in waders  
this is Hong Kong on a bad street  
in North Point  
do you get it?

## Way Up A Hill

kitsch monastery  
barrels of burned debris  
a barrel hauled around the monastery deck  
smoking as if from incense  
the monks singing their prayers  
and finally the ceremony  
white flowers and a gathered family  
smoke from incense sticks  
rise toward the old monastery  
up the hill and in the bed  
of a stream or is it a gully  
the 10,000 Buddhas seem happy  
even the ones with arms in place of eyes  
when the sun sets  
even the chintzy monastery  
looks good and the Buddhas' smiles  
make sense

## Tai O in Nov

was it a quaint old town  
on the edge of a modern city  
or a contrived tourist trap  
was the old woman bent in the slight doorway  
cleaning her teapot top in tea  
an actress or just old  
and what about the aluminum  
houses on wooden stilts  
(you read that right)  
and the little puppy who  
stared in the one small crop of grass  
along with 2-person wide lane  
for 1 minute before seeing the cat  
sitting there and yapping/jumping back  
was that an animatronic device  
from Disney's labs on the other side of the island  
and the smoke that made all the photos hooded  
and ethereal / was that from a real fire  
or a set one / if you know what I mean  
and the hills too steep for a sports car let alone  
a bus discarded by the British when they were kicked out  
and all that dried and salted fish  
who needs it except tourists  
I mean really  
really I mean

## Not A Thing

did I see the sad girl tonight  
kissing me goodbye  
as the taxi chattered under the surge  
against brakes in drive  
in Soho ready to take us to Sha Tin  
tonight and then the airport tomorrow  
this could be the last time  
in years / or ever / for us  
fog/mist over the harbor  
the green laser show solitary but bright  
she was perhaps thinking of crying  
this is what thinkers do  
instead of linger we were eager  
to hop in the cab / scoot off  
pack to leave because she can never  
be anything

## Away Or Far Away

that scene  
beneath the flashing buildings  
the laundry out the windows  
blowing in the harbor air  
then today the haze as always  
shrouding the harbor  
making the island hills  
look like the Smokies  
where I learned to write  
this terminal is just one big tent  
and holds people who are the same  
travelers used to the same rituals  
of security / luggage / wrong food  
she perhaps realized  
just as we left  
that I would be one less link  
between her and the life she wishes  
and isn't that enough reason  
to sniffle

## Little Memories

too many people  
in the way  
out of the way  
little / they are all little  
they come at you  
and rarely veer completely  
if you're huge  
then just keep going  
watch them spin and wonder  
if you're not  
move

## The Road

the road by the river  
catches the wind and windblown light snow  
off the lightly frozen surface  
which is just a façade for the river  
up north the snow deepens  
in a promise to the road  
that the winter will deepen  
that the ice will thicken  
and everything will be  
back to normal  
after an autumn too warm  
and too welcoming

## It's Those Parentheses That Count Most

now is the time to fade out  
the time for fame is over  
being out front is all over  
time to write  
to get it all down  
time to focus on myself  
but not as an object of adoration  
but one of healing  
time to explore my past and get that tidied up  
not very poetic  
but practical  
(and healing)

## In This Way

poets savor  
what bees' wingbeats do to pollen  
in small flowers  
so much more  
the strange attracts us  
after an encounter like this  
think of the long drive  
and the music played repetitively  
people in trances  
appreciate the oncoming  
many wish for eternal life

## Winter Terse

winter and the terseness has arrived  
hot breath turning white  
on the walk from front door to car door  
I'm reminded of the hunt for christmas trees  
heading through our woods  
the blueberry bushes  
the swamp iced over with thin ice  
then over the stonewall to Sam's woods  
angling to his road out to the cross-county road  
then over to the Merrimac town road  
into the forest they kept for christmas decorations  
we time it so it hasn't snowed yet but is about to  
and before or after the town has done its harvest  
we bring a saw and a toboggan and rope  
everything from that time is gone  
no parents no house no farm no woods  
no Sam no Sam road  
I guess I lied  
the county road is there grown over and an ATV/snowmachine road  
as is the Merrimac town road and the grove of firs  
but without those woods of ours and the farm  
the family and friends  
who needs what's left  
any of it

## Odilon Redon

the head is made of metal castings  
an ordinary hero of the head  
a metal muscular speckled fat head  
that automatically adjusts to its jobs  
now it's on the tip  
driven beside the river  
as an early winter comes  
and it is from all sides  
on a pyre of truck tires  
pallets and jumped up to joiners

## This Is The Biggest Surprise

the tragedy of exploration  
the world throws its experiences  
at our wicked brains  
and those things + dreaming  
+ the clutter of discord  
from the part of the mind that jiggles  
constantly and orgasmically  
forms the sentences of the essays  
we spit out out of order  
and fragmented as our ordered  
thoughts and considered speech  
the more randomly we select from those essays  
the more rational we are applauded

## Actress or Role

her voice sometimes soft  
always modulates  
even the writers  
know this and write in a scene  
where she plays at phone sex  
she displays a wide spectrum  
and is curvy to boot  
listening to her voice  
is a module of softness

## After A Month I Remember

I met you in Montréal  
alone on the street  
your tricolored hair  
a confusion to me under the sodium light  
just a rain and a strong wind a bit ago  
there is no narrative in play  
so the city and wetnightdark is infused  
with my own willowing and mechanical melancholy  
when neither of us looked away  
we merged enough for the blue  
of the city to pop  
it wasn't long  
until at the edge of the river  
you edged back into me  
and I chose your innermost  
and probably almost  
naturest color

## Costain's Basement

the basement has red and pink lights  
the record player playing  
long dance songs  
sometimes the slow dance  
back then the basement  
was filled with women yearning  
for lust to overcome them  
for the meaning of night  
to become clear to them before  
the latent dawn  
now they were only girls  
their ankles barely able  
to support them  
their skirts with nothing  
to cling to  
today if they are still alive  
they sit and wonder about those nights  
why their melancholy is not redeemed  
they are so afraid of dying  
as if those night will not  
live on forever in the hearts  
of poems and their poets

## Ship Ahoy!

so I met this girl  
who worked at starbucks  
I worked up the courage  
to ask her on a date  
after a couple of conversations  
at the register  
she was a month older  
than me but I didn't really care  
she was fun to be around  
so we took a walk along the beach  
we kissed in the pale moonlight  
a full moon  
it was really romantic  
we started really getting into it  
she slowly unzipped my jeans  
she reaches inside and starts kissing  
her way down my chest  
she finally gets all the way down  
looks up at me with the most seductive eyes  
I've ever seen and says  
"No thanks, I had Reese's for breakfast"  
and I'm like  
"No way, you had candy for breakfast?"  
she replies  
"Not candy! Reese's puffs cereal!"  
so she sliiiiides me a bowl  
I crunch into it and  
WHAM!  
my mouth goes crazy!  
that smooth combo  
of peanut butter and chocolate-y taste  
attacking my taste buds!  
she zips my pants back up and says  
"it's part of a complete breakfast!"

## Plains Song

a place where wind  
is significant  
where a fire in the fireplace  
wavers from the wind outside  
breathing through the house  
where you can see the weather  
arriving for hours or days  
where you can watch her  
drive away for as long  
as it takes for the memory  
of her kiss to fade  
the wind lately  
has been blowing in snow  
along with spring's seeds  
one for the burial  
the others for resurrection

## Lost Trinket

greed's partner is revenge  
who is happy to wait  
many decades

## Why Not Now

it is hard  
for an idiot  
to write

## Unhinged

it gets worse  
the only way  
for there to be no incorrectness  
is for there to be no correctness

## **Where Next**

well each day is like the last  
the connections to the past  
severed one at a time  
this way they slip my grasp  
I become more of an island

## Winter Process

somewhere tonight  
it is very cold  
ground covered by snow  
wind smoothing everything down  
every detail is being blown away  
tonight tomorrow the day after

## She Come

—suddenly the room where I sit  
it feels emptier than before  
if I see so far  
I see standing in the open door  
endoscopy to my question  
and I am less because of that here  
not more

## And Now Again

today a miracle  
on a hunch I asked her  
to help look through the vacuum cleaner bag  
she took it outside and 15 minutes later  
came in asking  
is this it  
it was  
back then it seemed  
that now was so  
far away

## We Endeavor to Destroy

when the first Oppie recruits came in March  
few knew that we work  
rumors piqué a bit  
the parties to the case purely conjecture  
radium-closing toxic  
rocket electric wiper blades  
for submarines  
thus Oppie had me write  
some discussions for our colleagues on the move  
we have unfinished laboratory employees of the library  
when dialogue and the workers rebounded  
I started my voice about their sound absurd:

“the objective of our work is to  
a time-bomb”

## I Am My Rust

nothing beats a small town  
going dry  
imagine the excitement  
when the roads were first paved  
then electricity zipped in  
just think of the advance  
of a central dump  
behind every house I've ever  
lived in but ten  
that is three  
out back  
down a path that led  
just into the woods  
we piled our trash and garbage  
animals and bacteria took care of a lot  
the hard stuff rusted nicely  
I'll bet if you got back there today  
even after 50 years  
you'd still see our old stuff

## **Photoing**

looking over photos  
looking at the past  
wondering how the people I took  
could by accident look  
as memorable as they do

## But It's Cold

we went tobogganing  
I would replay my youth  
for her / walking through the woods  
to the hill / driving down to Hoyt's  
road and hill / we liked winter  
sports because of the need  
later to warm up  
she likes it  
when she has her  
clothes off  
she would swim sometimes  
in the lake in winter  
would crosscountry ski  
naked too / you can see  
why I grew to like winters

## Pining for Montréal

down the street  
or in this alley  
bouncing off walls and windows  
bricks and metal lacework escapes  
recently painted remarks  
and portraits bedeviled  
by sprayed acrylics  
wanders a voice  
lost in song and lament  
in the foreign language  
of the place we're in  
did I mention the cold

## Paradox in Two Parts

beneath the snow  
and above the pavement  
sneaks a layer of ice  
made by compression  
from the wheels of cars  
trying to find their way home  
or going off to work  
to the emergency store  
later I'd do the most insane thing  
put on my skates and skate from the farm  
up on a plateau down to the river  
which is too worked up to freeze over  
but this is all an internal state  
because the road appears more worked up  
and it froze over  
didn't it

## Voting For Everything

what happens when the winner is voted  
on / when you're asked to justify yourself  
to answer why when for whom against whom  
is it fair to fall back on art  
say it was all a canvas and everything you did  
was to make the picture be what it most  
wanted to be / or is art the answer of evil  
of little spirit / when you think of your answer  
think of the thousands coursing through the central hall  
of the largest mall in Hong Kong  
after the 6pm train has come and gone  
a potion I had too much of

## Apply Finally

How to interpret the final bytecode?

Well, as CBS News notes,  
a new report recently brought this issue back  
into the spotlight: The U.

So what am I doing at the moment?

Conversely, if you have a story to tell  
or a comment to say, we welcome and appreciate  
any additional elaboration.

If token is an operation,  
pop needed operands from stack,  
perform operation,  
and finally push result onto stack.

At the same time, I hope people can respect  
my opinion that there are different ways  
in which social scientists can apply  
their expertise to help solve social issues.

“The Rise of the Nguyens” Asian-Nation:

The Landscape of Asian America.

How to interpret the final bytecode?

## The One Who Won't Be Taken

the time of year  
for forgetting leaves  
for waving to the grass goodbye  
for waiting for the first ice to flow  
down the river from one of its tributaries  
for pacing about the headstones  
over frozen ground  
past where the dripping faucet  
has grown a shaft  
under the icy light and moonlight  
every year this time of year  
prepares the world to be broken down  
and some would say rebuilt  
but I say reinvented  
because the outcome can never  
be certain / can never

## Gig and Dance

the cafeteria is maybe 100' by 150'  
the wall with doors to the serving area  
is where the band from Haverhill sets up  
all Fenders and Ludwig except the Farfisa and Leslie  
they wore suits and played with their backs stiff  
tables and chairs folded up along a side wall  
Meredith and Jim dancing close  
Sally and Grandmaisson  
Chris and Glenn (now a producer in Hollywood)  
the music has a ringing quality and is slow  
(and maybe sensuous)  
my place is a chair by the wall by the windows  
so cold their smell has a taste  
my job to watch  
to be somebody else  
to approximate as best as is humanly possible  
nobody

## Under

the computer believes  
she's alive  
well I mean one of them does  
and another doesn't  
after she moved away  
I would look down the road  
that led to her  
when we passed it  
after 40 years  
how can I still miss her

## Bad Occasion

the night is here  
and cold  
the lack of thought  
and passion  
is like a desire of loss  
not a desire for it  
but of it  
one day soon  
and all of it will wash away  
like oil down the St Lawrence

## Beaten Trace

music stumbles  
fragments trembling down the sidewalk  
like leaves leaving the city  
for burial in the country  
perhaps under a tree  
mistaken as their mother  
perhaps at the bottom  
of a small pond that is taken  
to be a depression  
aching into the woods  
like the depression of mistake  
that overtakes the wind  
that blows over your mind  
and down the sidewalk  
to the studious beat  
of an unconscious song

## Bad Alone

I was once married  
on this day  
not in the state but the start  
possibilities sure  
I once thought I'd be the youngest novelist  
now maybe I can start  
finally now that what would have played out  
has / all the clever possibilities  
distant dead ends  
ones I'm glad to have missed  
ones otherwise  
what a detour it's been

## Was This Love

Christmas Eve night  
trying to sleep upstairs  
the colored light from the bulbs  
on the tree pastiche the ceiling  
I throw myself from one side  
of the bed to the other  
walk out along the balcony to the bathroom  
when my mother has been in there  
it smells of smoke  
I can't help looking at the tree  
then and now I can't imagine  
how easily the sure yes and sure no  
are kept in the head at the same time  
every possibility just as possible  
and out front  
I never saw anyone leave presents

## Stories in Ink

when we meet  
there is a past  
you have and I have  
that were never twined  
case to the point  
when I was hoping for Meredith  
you were somewhere  
maybe in this house  
with your heavy dark hair  
and hidden smile  
a little girl I suppose  
everything about you to me  
is a story  
and same for you  
the past looks  
so in black and white

## Sad Girl of Montréal

on a street under a streetlight  
where else  
on a night bursting into mist  
the sidewalk is shining all the way  
up to the next intersection  
where it disappears across the street  
which is level or worse  
I'm standing wishing for a hat  
when a woman in a fake fur  
slows a step or 2 before me  
her eyes scan up from the sidewalk  
to somewhere above my eyes  
I hear her thoughts drying the mist  
nothing you have  
she is saying in her thinking voice  
is deserved  
you are here not up at the intersection  
or better  
you have no hat  
the mist is all over you  
beyond all that  
I've entered your circle of sad  
and now I must  
I really must  
keep walking  
all night if I must

## Why Not Cry Before the New Year

The Bud uncle who will make each year the map  
does not know a holiday to hazard it.

There is a door and the Scrooge  
which it does not search but is positive  
and—or

that it sees to get near.

It will be wrong in the table

and if it welcomes,

he, the futures, or ...

will be extensive in 2

and it surprises;

he does not know.

## The Day Before

the day done  
remains cold  
the warmth once felt  
while wrapped around a lover  
is sometimes long past  
when I think about this  
the range of possibilities  
is too limited  
as if a program committee  
had selected from a menu  
of simple topics  
not the ones whirling around

## How Many

and why shouldn't I finally  
just be mad when I'm humiliated  
all but one or two  
have made the effort  
and now maybe  
this one is one too  
many

## What an Early Morning Teaches

we can be at ease  
with the discrepancies  
the shade of rust on the peeling red paint painted manure spreader  
the yellow seed buds on the one tall strand of grass in front of its  
metal treaded wheels  
the rotted wooden impellers that transported the manure  
from the bed to the dispersing beaters  
it's standing on its tail in an unused and soon to disappear  
field by the swamped over pond  
by the side of the gullied asphalt road  
from the forgotten town to the park with the last  
piece of Illinois prairie  
and classical sculptures in bianco cement  
just the way Brunelleschi  
or would that be Ghiberti  
would like it

## Shared Fraud

with age  
people detoxified apparently their regrets  
reframing like shared frauds  
a retrospective a tocando-acima  
that in many cases could have been  
more exact  
touching up is a touching sentiment  
the year is about to start that is beyond  
any I had imagined  
planned for  
tonight a man will try to jump  
via motorcycle  
the length of a football field  
I can remember lying in a small bed in my room  
with a TV that barely worked  
decades ago  
and I can't recall thinking about  
motorcycle jumps  
this is how the year ends