

# Shared Fraud

*A Collection of Poems from 2008*

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## Contents

Delete the A's.....	1
Roading.....	2
Throat Surgery .....	3
Replacements .....	4
Fear Reenvisioned.....	5
Stared Down .....	6
Short of It .....	7
Woody.....	8
Why Do the Houses I Dream of have Unused Rooms.....	9
Solitary Driver .....	10
Windsor Hotel.....	11
Wind Voices .....	12
Two On One.....	13
Parent Thinking.....	14
Singularities One by One .....	15
Neighbors Till the End.....	16
City Throughout.....	17
Bad Visit .....	18
Cold Night.....	19
Loop .....	20
One From One.....	21
Order In.....	22
The Rope Knot As Indecision .....	23
Losing.....	24
poor health because of overcrowding .....	25
Meaning in Sync .....	26
Middle then Late .....	27
Giants Whichever .....	28
Comparings .....	29
Liquid Exposé .....	30
Finally a Thought.....	31
Beach and Others .....	32
Seen Unnoticed.....	33
Loss.....	34
I Could Use a Hero .....	35
A Hero Could Save Us.....	36
Choosing to Walk Back .....	37
Light Travels.....	38
Suffer Then Suffer More .....	39
When Everyone's Left .....	40
Storm Front.....	41
Walking Back .....	42
Lies and Their Falsehoods .....	43
Un Comma .....	44
Iconoclastic .....	45

On the Day I Must Imagine Only .....	46
Back Home Cold Time .....	47
Bad Writing Night .....	48
Hard in the End.....	49
Glass Cold .....	50
Change Prone.....	51
Marketing Sir .....	52
Work Word Work.....	53
Universal Appeal .....	54
Writing Dizzy .....	55
Quick Back.....	56
Word Dance .....	57
Dear.....	58
Wasted Time .....	59
Cranking Out Reality .....	60
After a Long Climb .....	61
Sad Girl Never Off My Mind .....	62
Yes Finally .....	63
After a Party (after O'Hara).....	64
No Wonder .....	65
Supper Of the Family .....	66
Once More.....	67
Rainy Snowy Afternoon.....	68
Do It To You .....	69
Thinking of Digging .....	70
Facts Found.....	71
Wedding Flush.....	72
Who is Who.....	73
Destiny in Old Town .....	74
Long at Riverside .....	75
Cold Night Seat.....	76
At the End.....	77
River Ended.....	78
Hot Night in Globe Arizona .....	79
Long Day .....	80
End the Ride Soon .....	81
Turn Off.....	82
In a Small County .....	83
The Last of the Laughters.....	84
Hauling Away .....	85
Told To Me Before a Joke .....	86
None of Them Along the Line .....	87
Of It All .....	88
Safer More Reliable.....	89
Too-ish .....	90
This is Taking Me Under.....	91
Artistic Naturally .....	92

Stopping By With Help from the Lisp Function Poem1 .....	93
Love Song of Lisp .....	94
Out the Window .....	95
Fly In .....	96
Plot Synopsis .....	97
Cat Metaphor .....	98
Down Roads .....	99
Metaphoria .....	100
Big Pretend .....	101
Craftsmanships .....	102
You Are Everything .....	103
Crazy Horse .....	104
Dakota .....	105
One I Imagine .....	106
Coincidence .....	107
ph ez ysi me cal la fla rf ws .....	108
A Mighty Prison .....	109
Project Forever .....	110
Stand Off .....	111
Ground Pearl .....	112
Time Walk .....	113
Phantom of the Night .....	114
Oh She Is .....	115
Time Lapses .....	116
Light Lesson .....	117
No Poem But an Idea .....	118
In Kobe .....	119
The Bring Back .....	120
Kobe Laced .....	121
Kyoto Developing .....	122
Flower Road Side .....	123
Dear Park .....	124
Now? .....	125
Program for Life .....	126
something story .....	127
spreadlet .....	128
Proofs Rock .....	129
Proof Rocks .....	130
Goth Max .....	131
Lobby Spirit in Red and Gold Dress .....	132
Replaced Memories .....	133
Not In College .....	134
Potsdam and Me .....	135
Magic and Light Holes .....	136
Out .....	137
Hating .....	138
Sleepy In Potsdam .....	139

Dreams and Not.....	140
Admissions .....	141
On Street .....	142
Fingering Past .....	143
Illinois 1970s .....	144
Grad .....	145
Clods of Ants .....	146
Skull Feast .....	147
Splleing .....	148
Tilt .....	149
I Wanna Hold Your Hand .....	150
All in Photos.....	151
To Recall .....	152
Design .....	153
Road Trip Interrupted.....	154
Road Killed .....	155
Road Widened Too.....	156
Which One .....	157
Paste Itch .....	158
Yet .....	159
Reading Advice .....	160
tags: words verbal .....	161
And You?.....	162
After Too Nights .....	163
Light Lounging After Near Death.....	164
Bangalore Dogs.....	165
On Writing Finally.....	166
Once a Chance .....	167
Interlude.....	168
Another Sick Day .....	169
Nearing.....	170
Supported Vision .....	171
Fishing Down by the Dead River .....	172
A Trip to Skip's .....	173
Blunt Terms .....	174
Passion Invents A Way .....	175
Linger by the Cut.....	176
Unlisted.....	177
Roadless.....	178
Finishing Down .....	179
After Watching a Sad Tale.....	180
Tappan Zee at Dusk.....	181
Urge for Later.....	182
Ass Foremost.....	183
Fear of All.....	184
Write On.....	185
Telescoped.....	186

Wasted .....	187
Get Right.....	188
Building .....	189
Know or Not.....	190
Picture of Heaven .....	191
Bob the Poet.....	192
Coincidence at the End of the Day.....	193
Replaced Upon Request.....	194
When Silence Isn't Enough .....	195
Holy Toledo .....	196
Universal Suffering.....	197
He Passed by Earlier .....	198
Some High Coos .....	199
Today is Avoidance Day.....	200
Deformity .....	201
Pain.....	202
Accident Prone.....	203
Numbness.....	204
Estrangement .....	205
Invisibility .....	207
Unwantedness and Dependence .....	209
All Closed .....	210
Whiter Higher Neither Other.....	211
Ian Sez .....	212
Up High.....	213
Up Yes Up .....	214
Schnitzelization.....	215
Filling Up.....	216
Laughing Purpose.....	217
Squaw Recalls .....	218
In The Strong Wind Before It Calms For Evening.....	219
Not So Many Laws.....	220
I Yi Yi.....	221
Two Drifters.....	222
Problems Again .....	223
Twirl .....	224
Ugh Bletch.....	225
In the Market for Drain Inhibitors .....	226
Ian Wilson and Backward Drifting Smog .....	227
Dithering on Last Position .....	228
Bends and Slides.....	229
With a Drip .....	230
More on Grandfather.....	231
Day of Drink .....	233
Judge Reluctance.....	234
Airport Rest.....	235
Attacks .....	236

Flecked Door.....	237
Go.....	238
Night Break.....	239
Today in Spam.....	240
Simple but for Technology.....	241
Foo on Sun.....	242
Overnight Revelation.....	243
Green Pathways.....	244
Black Watching.....	245
Planning Style.....	246
Now or Soon.....	247
Two-Horse Hay Mower Story.....	248
My Stories.....	249
What a Waste.....	250
Books Wait.....	251
That Season of 60 More Days.....	252
Waiting More.....	253
Politics Today.....	254
Short Pic.....	255
Confessions.....	256
Hoboing Down.....	257
River Dreaming.....	258
Quiet Street without Streetlamps.....	259
Spurious Trip.....	260
DFW Up Up and Away.....	261
Why Go.....	262
Dream Weaver.....	263
Joint.....	264
Ars Star Trek.....	265
Nature of Order.....	266
Listening.....	267
Endings.....	268
Wasps Under the Pillows.....	269
Why Here?.....	270
Bits Broken.....	271
Ill Wonder.....	272
Live on the Street.....	273
To Me.....	274
Aubade to Who?.....	275
Out of Sight.....	276
Among Fields.....	277
The Four Questions.....	278
Why Who Would.....	279
Facility of Love.....	280
Price Sensitive.....	281
Recollection and the End of Love.....	282
Me.....	283

Electronic Pan Pipes.....	284
Mortal.....	285
Localities.....	286
Along a Worn Out Street.....	287
Temples Out Here.....	288
Reality Really.....	289
One Fine Day.....	290
Fashion Train.....	291
Creepiness.....	292
Story Lights.....	293
Twang Kong.....	294
Near Musicians.....	295
Also Too.....	296
True Truth.....	297
Qualifications.....	298
Do Good.....	299
Certain Chunking.....	300
Parthenon.....	301
Up North.....	302
Books.....	303
Birthdays Are Happy.....	304
Across the Waters.....	305
One Discussion Too Many.....	306
Because Work.....	307
Open Close.....	308
Requiem for Methuselah.....	309
On Our Way Home.....	310
Greatest Good.....	311
Question for You.....	312
Voids and Nulls.....	313
For the Fourth Time.....	314
Looking.....	315
Song of the Ancients.....	316
Against the Top.....	317
Oh?.....	318
Stride Right.....	319
Airplane Health.....	320
Once Upon Her Bed.....	321
Hard to Sleep Sometimes.....	322
Bookfall.....	323
Shot.....	324
Duty Avoided.....	325
Friends of the Night City.....	326
Re Alignment.....	327
The Club.....	328
Alley 1.....	329
November 22.....	330



Traipsing .....	331
Our Depression .....	332
Future Looking .....	333
Falling Through .....	334
Thanksgiving .....	335
Blam-o.....	336
Live a Lie.....	337
Mistake Now Failure .....	338
Bills See.....	339
Yes Yet .....	340
Purpose of Correlation .....	341
Behind It Today.....	342
Crab Spider Approaching Dusk.....	343
Nobody But.....	344
Several Outbursts.....	345
History Marks This Spot .....	346
Honolulu Airport .....	347
Her Day .....	348
The Science of Not Much .....	349
Where No One Goes .....	350
The Lost Lovers.....	351
Im Possi Ble.....	352
Prophecies.....	353
The More We Know.....	354
Don't Ever Call Me Sweetchromodynamics.....	355
Who Makes It Out? .....	356
Bad Gig .....	357
Look Look Here .....	358
Rant O Rama.....	359
Why Big Boats Sink and Logs Don't.....	360
What Was Learned .....	361
Coldity .....	362
In the Strange Dark.....	363
Linger Just a Little .....	364
Escaping is Always the Last Part of the Game .....	365
Hard Search .....	366
I5.....	367
Tortures.....	368
Hiding a Year .....	369

## Delete the A's

the year starts  
it seems to start each year  
about the same time  
outside is a tree a tree a tree a tree...  
I (one) could go on  
in the background a sad song plays  
through the expensive DAC and a small tube amp  
some old almost audiophile speakers  
almost is a word of distance  
meaning not much of it  
in the room upstairs  
the curved in part of her back  
is a field of light short hairs  
insubstantial aside from their meaning  
she consults her crossword page  
before wondering whether a new year  
represents something new  
or just the repetition she repeatedly regrets  
for me I hope this is a year of writing  
that the past will finally be wrapped around  
and now become  
that ago ago ago will just in time  
go go go

## Roading

below my stopping point  
gulls storm the reservoir  
today a sheen and reflection  
paired hawks knot the air  
one plunges and one wonders  
whether a life has ended  
up here I sip from my camelbak  
stretch and watch  
this is my halfway point  
harder low hills  
but the initial climbout  
is a cooling descent  
the stopping point though  
combines highways  
roads dirt paths  
the longthin water  
birds the rising hills  
fog and rest  
it would make a good last stop

## Throat Surgery

she is jerky  
when she sings before audiences  
her left arm signals the pitch grossly  
she bends  
her voice growls along the stage  
her voice smears its way through the songs  
she is a bundle of ogres  
always a piano  
at least once she was seductive  
in profile her eyebrows raising  
at the seductive moments  
while she sang a song  
from sound memory  
in another language  
barefoot though Japanese

## Replacements

writing by candlelight  
makes me think of infrastructure  
how it needs to age quick  
to be always fresh  
from replacement

## Fear Reenvisioned

sometimes it hurts to write  
night is really the culprit here  
it takes hold of the day  
points it away  
night greets you with that rictus  
you've always read about  
I dread the reminder  
looking back ever grows  
but then a smart song comes on  
the volume up because the DAC  
likes it like that  
now on to writing that's fun  
(in another file  
I'm afraid)

## Stared Down

storm crossing overhead  
thunder overheard  
shouting surprise après lightning  
downpour so thick  
no downspout can stand it  
through this I sat  
staring first outside toward the hiding bay  
then toward the dead tv  
nothing passing through  
but a highwind regret  
a longing for a cold dark fog  
early v.early in the morning  
in a northeastern city  
it felt like sadness  
only sadder

## **Short of It**

sometimes I think I have ideas  
when I look back though  
the few have been small  
the impact less  
I inspire though  
and dream in a newfashioned way



## Woody

previously unreleased snow  
dropped from the tops  
of the stubborn pines out back behind  
in the woods but beyond  
the small maples and the swampy part  
the ground is a needley bed  
most literally with a small granite boulder  
in its middle near where I would lie  
summers like a pioneer or explorer  
camping in a congenial convenient place  
will anyone ever know that beneath the floor  
of the teepee-like hut I built buried in a tin  
and in there wrapped in plastic are some pictures  
only a teenage boy would covet  
because how decayed must it be now  
and I know you won't tell

## Why Do the Houses I Dream of have Unused Rooms

suppose  
I suppose I  
could try harder to remember  
the details of the look out people story  
or the floorplan of the barn  
whether I ever went upstairs in that one house  
but truth is bricks  
and the fiction of the stories I'll tell  
are the mortar holding them up  
making them clear

## Solitary Driver

grasslands and low very low hills  
rolling west into the sun  
into the teeth of the mountains  
but not yet  
little song playing over buzzing speakers  
dust from roadside oiled sand  
and wheat dust after harvest  
kicks up a seethrough rug of pinkred  
blown through by the foregone sun  
I'll stop at the first motel next to a steakhouse  
pull a book from my bag  
read through it all  
sometimes a girl will notice my book  
see me writing sometimes  
see my car and its faroff plates  
sometimes I'm not alone all night  
when you think of the words  
never

## Windsor Hotel

in Garden City the streets  
are wide because they can be  
everything here being wide  
nothing is tall  
the wind  
why bother  
even a lot of cars is not many cars  
no one walks the sidewalks  
built wide to accommodate multitudes  
the old hotel where the Writer stayed  
is just a historical spittoon now  
there is a steakhouse next to the Wheat Lands  
why not there

## Wind Voices

standing next to me  
cottonwoods the only thing  
between us and the sun  
in the high western plains of Kansas  
her long honey brown hair down to the small  
of her back facing into the green shadows  
if only the light let us see them  
everyone we ever knew wondered  
where we were and we washed each other  
every day in a love that was like the wells  
of water beneath our feet  
this is how I dreamt it  
in 1977 and instead  
places like that  
places exactly like that  
I've only passed through

## Two On One

mindless hacking  
no purpose at all  
I guess that's what the mindless  
part means  
maybe the hacking  
part too

## Parent Thinking

dirty farm  
no place for privacy aside from the woods  
or maybe the barn  
down by the river might be  
the beach  
movie theaters  
small places on back roads  
cemeteries are good  
funny to know all those places  
the same way they did  
maybe it was to gain privacy  
he built the house as quick  
and haphazardly as he did

## Singularities One by One

we have it from authorities  
the cold wind is here to save us  
the rain is just a sideman  
the hard ground is advance fieldwork  
this means those buried are locked down  
there is no real reason for this  
it's a mirror of old writings  
when everything is ready  
the singing will start  
or if already underway  
grow loud then quit  
this I know from a recent telegram  
from the upper atmosphere  
written in the form of a foreign poem



## Neighbors Till the End

across the street  
something alive is disagreeing  
with something else alive  
one might think  
with such articulation to the screams  
it would be people  
but the ferocity  
is beyond everything

## City Throughout

we walked toward dinner  
past dark in a northern city  
late winter but still cold  
we walked past the block of flats  
where I knew she lives  
as we went past  
she looked up from her laptop  
and out her window where the wind  
was making a statement on my behalf  
and she saw the back of my coat  
and lackluster gait and knew  
(the elements believe)  
we had reached the restaurant  
and ordered heavy meals  
when I noticed our path there  
rehearsing the cold wind before beer  
and remembered I knew her once

## Bad Visit

the drive back to Rochester  
from Ithaca  
in a borrowed car  
the night cold as usual  
before Christmas  
the snow dried from the cold  
blowing across the road like desert dust  
after each good song on the radio  
I punch seek to find another  
ball games come in  
static and phasings  
stations from Canada more accustomed to the cold  
the visit the air the wind the memories  
all bitter  
when I got back I read about the bomb

## Cold Night

the why of it intrudes  
on the why not  
she gets up out of bed  
the warmth  
the smell  
the regret

## Loop

walk my bike back through the rain  
a small shack with a woodstove waits  
take off my slicker  
hang it and my gloves on a rack by the stove  
feed the stove the last book read  
enliven the coals to catch a wet piece  
a green piece  
slice warm bread and smear cold butter  
watch boots steam off  
dark never gives up  
without a bloody fight at dawn  
always losing  
getting even later  
go loop

## One From One

out of the shed into the snowdrifting evening  
no one to watch to see to notice  
they expect me elsewhere  
they will wait  
watch the roads up and down  
they will wait  
only a while  
until the need rises  
I will walk to a place with tables  
get one order read eat  
many that night will be sure  
we talked  
and for a long time

## Order In

Because it fouls the order in which people normally read.

Why is top-posting such a bad thing?

Top-posting.

What is the most annoying thing in blogs and e-mail?

## The Rope Knot As Indecision

the knot at first simple  
reveals complexity as it tightens  
what I thought was a careless twist  
grabs the strand I thought over-constrained and fixed  
but diffidently slipping until mr careless twist  
steps up to the plate  
what role do the loose whiskers  
from the fabric of the rope play  
bunched in like the unlucky  
in straitjackets  
making this machine so neat  
sprayed to mess



## Losing

failure is where we all end  
shutting down  
nothing to be shown for it  
every day we contend with it  
the little pains that grow sharper and deeper each year  
each year something else is lost  
and little gained in return  
when will it be time to give up

## poor health because of overcrowding

after a rough mix into song  
while waiting for the magazine  
by reading a coma for a brief recess  
two lie on a lounge sofa inconvenience  
of a central body and mind just to loosen up  
then we will confabulate  
or try to stretch the light or eating rice

## Meaning in Sync

many times the clock has ticked  
sometimes words forget their meanings  
in the cold winter air  
every time the clock ticks  
the words regain themselves  
when it all comes together  
the words all pulse  
warm to cold  
meaning no meaning

## Middle then Late

bugs and things on the pond  
heat adds to the bubbles and disturbances  
reed and pads  
frogs at the edges waiting  
dragonflies hovering and waiting  
midday is not a time to do  
it's a time to wait  
it's a time to read  
everything is still at midday  
except pages  
except words  
the surface  
the waiting  
later the sun will give in  
drop away and the bugs  
and frogs will move  
in search of their nourishment

## Giants Whichever

the greatest minds are tested  
against their need to be right  
with it the temptation to skim  
to lightly touch the facts  
before remixing  
shallow thought  
without the mood of depth  
like giants they secretly  
pine for trampling and tumbling  
they are ready to go whichever way

## Comparings

ahead the tangles and unwilling comments  
hard descriptions and predictions  
growing like brambles like nettles  
the pretty stuff is pretty  
much over / kaput  
so much chum  
like a moss / a fog / a hanging flag  
a cloud bank coming down the ridge  
chimney smoke rising to a low level  
forming a paper like thin coverlet  
over the valley / a ghost watermark  
nothing above it  
cloud folding down over it / through it / into it  
like a thicket the wall impending  
is like a death to strong behavior  
or only like a death  
or like death

## Liquid Exposé

indigo . nice color for a sky  
auburn . color for sweepstakes  
turquoise . fiddle color  
goldenrod . in a bursty sunset colors shade to dramatic  
wheat . what the last whisperers saw but they heard more

once the tale's tattled  
whisky's sipped  
or bottomed up  
the ooos and ahhs pour in

mix and stir for color effects

## Finally a Thought

synopsis opens thoughts  
simplified observations  
make the overall reappear  
like standing on top of a wave  
in a jungle of emptiness  
which each open space crowds  
the next or two others  
perhaps the biggest difference  
is difference



## Beach and Others

they were lost  
flummoxed and intertwined  
too of several things each  
scratched starcrossed messed up  
wrongly pointed everywhere  
landed in a land that forces polarization  
some become more  
they will be they  
some will settle  
the rest will rest

## Seen Unnoticed

her hair writes her face  
black ink mixed blacker  
her innocence is her  
shroud of thought  
she thinks when she must  
be / all around her stutter

## Loss

it can happen only once  
it doesn't  
like health

## I Could Use a Hero

a hero now that's appealing  
better a clear cut genius than a complicated  
story with lots of parts coming together  
better to say  
ooh look  
how smart  
because then maybe you could be smart too  
or could have been  
or lucky and then one man can turn  
that into riches  
just one shot  
in the bull's eye  
ask why are you rich  
and the answer is always a life story

## A Hero Could Save Us

a name and story are less abstract  
you can learn  
you can do biography  
make it come alive  
inform give people  
something to copy  
it gives hope  
invention is like luck  
luck onto something  
grab market share  
be wealthy famous whatever  
we crave heroes  
maybe we can become one  
or because then we don't have to  
it's not our fault  
a hero should have  
a heroic excuse

## Choosing to Walk Back

sun on basalt  
obsidian chunk on it too  
in the sunken light  
a sound repeats  
the sky's dome is pricked  
white sand stands out  
footsteps and shooshing underneath  
I should have asked the way

## Light Travels

exhausted the whole trip  
constant strumming of the wheels  
the road  
however it is made up  
is not a friend  
it leads away pretending  
to lead to  
in a before after setup  
after is more like a potion  
before is like a first date

## Suffer Then Suffer More

dulled by bad news and weary  
from a tough ride  
not absolutely but  
being ill

bad news is like a panacea  
in reverse in a gear higher than low  
weary from bad news and then more  
the same news with different names  
all bad

ride till you stop



## When Everyone's Left

why shake in fever  
why sweat when cold  
remembering yourself young  
when you're ill  
a chillout song playing  
over the overs  
now all's old  
all's left are stories  
the chillout songs help  
with them

## Storm Front

barely a year  
into running the farm  
without warning the big blow  
hits winds up to 120 trees blown down  
barns blown down  
animals killed  
started as the most beautiful day of the summer  
the radio saved the farm  
news spreading north faster than the storm  
the Long Island Express  
one more bitter log  
on a badly smouldering fire

## Walking Back

certain to succumb  
to winter be it  
snow rain wind sleet mournfulness  
once I felt a cold wind  
so cold  
so strong  
I could feel every abrasion of bone on bone  
walking uphill into it  
trying to find my way back to the hotel  
with wrong advice emerging  
from the fog of the voice next to me  
would someone ever look out their window  
down at us

## Lies and Their Falsehoods

mirrors and cameras  
satisfy the lucky  
when I see myself  
the site is more than anyone can take  
at more than I can  
frame full of ugliness  
camera expensive but must be broke  
but pix of the family farm  
the cemetery  
the river and its bridge  
all accurate and beautiful  
too much smarts in those digital cameras  
eh?

## Un Comma

the bay below  
the lights outlining  
water roads rivers streams woods  
all porcelain layered  
I suppose the air we breath  
contributes beauty  
haze and smoke add  
on this hillside  
I'm walking down  
this carpet is jewelled almost  
beneath my feet  
people in their homes  
are cooking by their tvs  
what might have been seen  
has long ago passed into lost memories  
like love only the new awakens the eyes

## Iconoclastic

sometimes some places  
rise up / become iconic  
like when the back sweats  
becomes caked with hay dust and pollen  
like when the sun stares a hole in the sky  
and sunburns were more rare  
working this way / then / the horses  
knew the routine / would look back  
stop start move on to the next bales  
without intervention / without  
I mean with  
only themselves and the task to guide them  
how unlikely one of them would kick to kill  
how young of me to believe one would

## On the Day I Must Imagine Only

the line of cars and carriages  
came in from the west  
hooked around the entrance hill  
and came to rest by the part least filled  
the family not large and friends  
knew only a good man had died young  
that the modest funeral was all that could be afforded  
only five knew the truth including  
the one  
after / they returned to Auntie's to eat  
watch the priest and cantor  
place incense in the censer  
censer those present and begin as usual  
to sing

## Back Home Cold Time

the sky all gunmetal and grey  
pink porcelain shading gradientlike up from the horizon  
one splotch of cloud backlit  
looking like the remains of a recent explosion  
tree branches backlit form tracery and measure  
all these highlight how cold it really is  
how winter is more than the name of a season  
more than a season / more like the main course  
day passing to day  
imagine the rivers and sea / how cold they  
how strong the dark can be  
in the face of light



## Bad Writing Night

misting up cooling off  
soon the snow  
a light wind growing confident  
doglikehowling past my window  
looking down to the street  
I search for a companion  
someone walking by who might look up  
me writing looking down  
such and only such a connection  
might be possible tonight

## Hard in the End

nothing is like the rain in the dark  
nothing to highlight the drops  
just the wet in hard spots  
now add the cold  
each drop like a pin  
like a small knife  
now the weariness  
late after hard work with no breaks  
too filling a meal eaten quickly and alone  
the road not lit not marked  
curves under trees  
in the end  
going to no one  
more words in containers that look like sentences

## Glass Cold

something to suppose  
long road to negotiate  
old fashioned ways of communicating  
I once wrote beautifully  
but now the fear and sloth takes over  
over the air tastes of cold glass  
like the cold air that falls from the top  
of the winter window  
to the floor  
let's praise this cold  
this taste unlike the pulse  
the warmth  
let's praise what we shall all  
become

## Change Prone

the air never cooperates  
too warm too cold  
change grates  
predictions of changes  
bear the same  
the thinking of  
the wondering of  
lights pinpointing off cars  
in the lot sparkle just a little  
in the air tonight  
the cold air tonight  
the air aiming for colder  
predicted they predicted  
my eyes feel the looming dryness  
and weep

## Marketing Sir

the poor  
hunger  
civil liberties curbed by our government  
war  
fear  
torture at the hands of those running the land of the free  
serious research  
hard work on our failing infrastructure

the woman  
a wife and mother  
well dressed opens the door  
for her friends over for a chat and cucumber sandwiches  
she feels proud of her choice  
to purchase the scented candles that make her house odor of baking apple pies  
she watched the commercials and decided  
this small bit this small touch would enlarge her life and her family's

people in jails while innocent  
passion for executing the guilty (even when they might not be)  
genocide  
epidemics of death  
planet death

the smell of apples blushed  
by cinnamon

## Work Word Work

cold wind cold rain  
then snow then rain  
freezing in the meantime  
the roads not slippery at all  
but people packed with caution  
I used my suave use of words  
to shortcircuit the meeting  
and spent the day planning  
how to eliminate writing about a poem  
nothing like the thrill of revision  
applied to not just the words

## Universal Appeal

moon  
light and alighting the sky  
the possibility of other worlds  
with moons of their own  
the question of poets arises  
if such worlds are  
are poets along with them  
what loves abound  
what's univesal  
where do the words go  
when the moon sets

## Writing Dizzy

no one in town this morning  
but nothing is there  
the roads are clear  
but snow is piled at the edge of the curb  
and caught snow in branches falls onto cars  
I'm the only one in the deli  
expecting good pastrami but hoping  
it's not piled too high  
all day it never warmed though the sun  
whispered it's trying  
to me  
looking through the screenlike window shade  
there are two red and two blue dots  
as if produced by selected parts of a prism  
I'm moving my head side to side  
to see where they're from  
and this makes me too  
dizzy to



## Quick Back

all the world is thinking  
of coming to the end  
in a paradox of time or death  
great geniuses plot their own ascension  
to greatness based on derision and tough angles  
when we drive too fast we must trust  
our sense of good place for traps  
and funny cars  
tie the ends off on lust  
with the plus of light off snow  
the cool is not reflected in the brightness  
we are ready to slip  
into a higher gear

## Word Dance

they danced  
without grace or timing  
the music meant nothing  
just the execution of the calls  
properly but not musically  
this is what happens  
when words are just information

## Dear

here for days  
but no time to visit them  
snow on the ground but drenched by rain  
miss them is not quite right  
nostalgia for place perhaps  
habit probably the real answer  
the river I suppose is still flowing  
one way or another  
the bridge is still green but rusting away  
the leaves are all gone I suppose  
the stone still remains  
perhaps stained by winter  
wishing to visit  
I write instead

## Wasted Time

I planned the thing and it went well  
though I dropped my life and things went poorly  
recovering is taking a while  
and the pace is picking up again  
of things that can invade time  
naturally my fear rises  
the cruellest month is coming up

## Cranking Out Reality

the beauty of it  
the contrast  
the colors just as they should be  
making beauty requires a sharp  
critical skill and fast convergences  
or else slow reflection  
and many nights of contemplation  
I wish these all were available  
when there were things I wished to remember  
so that my memories now would  
be like this

## After a Long Climb

gathered on a porch  
infused with incense  
standing before a table  
covered with food and photos  
looking ahead then down at their feet  
while saffroned monks chanted  
the group was not just prepared  
but fully engaged in the beginnings  
of mourning which will persist despite  
the teachings that say don't  
look back but turn your back  
and while this small group  
fell into its ritual my friend  
and I stooped nearby in front of them  
to pet the temple dog  
who drooled its happiness  
onto our hands

## Sad Girl Never Off My Mind

why do my poems of Montréal  
speak so often of rain when most of my time there  
it was dry and warm  
there were no girls walking past  
or typing at computers in their windows at night  
as I walked by  
the painting / graffiti though  
was real / she was sad beyond human sadness  
many evenings I would stand across the street  
and look at her with love in my thinking  
nothing changes her mind  
not like me  
nothing changes her at all  
but the wrecking ball  
and a spray can of paint

## Yes Finally

the difficulty of weather  
phones not working  
ceilings too low  
the other things that go with it all  
flying into that famous large city after dusk  
the lights doing their heat rising thing  
and after a long effort to be thoughtful  
to be thought thoughtless  
makes me want to go to sleep  
finally



## After a Party (after O'Hara)

I do not always know what I feel  
last night when the air was warm as spring  
my people were not opposed to intense tirade  
interested?

I? it is your love for me that sets  
lighting

and is it odd for the entire room?  
my most tender feelings for a stranger:

torture and  
scream bear fruit let me hand it to you  
there

an ashtray all of a sudden there? next  
in bed? and somebody who loves you enter a room  
says not as follows:

would you like a little bit of egg on his mind  
today is different?

and when they  
scrambled eggs just plain warm weather  
the landowners

## No Wonder

every picture of a foreign city  
has a lamp post and light  
demarcating the quaintness of the place  
its strange nature  
its deceptively other  
women / many remark  
on their selective charms  
the hold they have on their hairlines  
and the oldlooking but newly fashionable  
dresses made seemingly to melt away  
at the right glance  
should I muster one  
all the above + the hefty price  
of a fat-laced meal will buy  
me a night cut short just short of second base  
especially after an hour of explaining it  
with the wrong tongue  
or with babelfish where it will come out  
*cherish or seek*  
*particularly centres*  
*sometimes recapitulated as "hands in the shirt maker"*  
*and probably the stimulation*  
*of the genitals of the outside clothing*

## Supper Of the Family

scene of hunting painted in wild boars  
and the plate dogs with a castle  
on the back  
the cut pear does not bleed  
nor not white  
its pulp moans under the knife  
we are these that  
on the plate  
on the pear  
on the blades  
smile ferociously  
our teeth snarl in the old hunting  
of the family at the table

## Once More

outside the sky falls  
snow and the like  
long trip ahead  
and eyes full of tired

## Rainy Snowy Afternoon

some of the places  
are received by purpose  
we sit with our hands cupping cups  
of coffee while what we say  
makes not one bit  
of difference though we plan and plot  
each word as the other  
speaks / and this is how  
I mean why  
we make it mean  
nothing

## Do It To You

they spy on us  
because they can  
but we have the Net on our side  
let's pick one of them  
not them directly  
but one of their relatives  
a cherished son let's say  
find out everything  
post it  
oh what fun  
oh what fun  
make them cry  
over the horror of exposure

## Thinking of Digging

beneath us the ages of past  
await the crush that will make them  
mere geology  
history has nothing to do with these bones  
the skulls and shinbones or maybe fibulas  
and metatarsals and not to mention the utensils  
and bowls carefully made and lovingly used  
filled with warm food prepared tenderly  
by women for whom they hold dearly  
but you see this latter stuff is history  
and the rest just matter becoming geology  
with few remaining whiffs of biology  
where's the soundtrack?

## Facts Found

lefthanded?  
his handwriting on display  
perhaps or maybe  
an official though  
his signature looks the same  
as the rest  
tall / slender  
a piper (makes pipes?)  
Teremcy  
Kamenec-Podol'skij  
Panevėžys on the other side  
with a scar in the centre of his forehead  
he changed his name  
Grinkewicz Grinkevicius Grinkaitis  
finally Gabriel



## Wedding Flush

the fascination of the toilet  
seat / no worry one would fail  
to find one in time  
and with a lover to bring food and drink  
every need is right there  
the toilet door keeps away  
the curious / curiously  
her lover doesn't stop  
to think why she's in there  
perched with her sweat  
pants down around her ankles  
for years / though the unswerving  
sameness of the situation  
eventually burrows down  
sufficiently for him to phone  
the police who arrange for the toilet  
seat to be removed / though  
she cries it's the ring  
she's wanted all these years

## Who is Who

finding clues  
data and information  
nothing is more important than the photos  
some I've lost because  
well because  
the tall grass being cut  
by the tall slender man  
I wonder though about the man  
with nearly the same name  
from roughly the same place  
living originally nearby  
who ended up in the home  
for the insane  
makes you wonder about more  
of the story

## Destiny in Old Town

water  
cold water flowing rapidly  
past the concrete retaining wall  
eddies here and there filled  
with debris  
plastic bottles and chunks of wood  
swirl  
the sky wants to snow  
it's that cold  
that warm  
back a couple of streets from the river  
a girl with dark hair under a wool cap  
stares through the fogged window  
of a French restaurant as two lovers  
put the first forkfuls of their first meal together  
into their destined to kiss mouths  
the crotch of her meeting legs warms  
she and I are separated by night

## Long at Riverside

her hands in her pockets  
her hands in her gloves  
the eating lovers on the other side of fogged glass  
raise glasses to honor their first meal  
together after a long online flirtation  
she turns into the wind  
heads uphill to her unheated room  
the piles of blankets and sleeping bags  
there she'll poke just her eyes and nose  
out from the coverlets and her sweatshirted arm  
read three chapters  
not knowing I wait by the river  
the dark flowing its long flow out to the far ocean  
where she's waited before  
cold in her blue coat  
the coincidences that fail  
define us

## Cold Night Seat

after reading and dropping  
into a deep dream she woke  
covered in blankets and sleeping  
bags the windows open and snow  
accumulating on her floor  
and threw the covers off  
to pee her panties sticking  
by sweat to her rear  
by the time she reaches the seat  
she is shivering again  
by the time she's back to the bed  
she unable to remember that dream  
by the river he thinks of heading  
to his flat but the darkness  
reminds him of warmth even though  
the river shouts cold

## At the End

eventually the sun begins to reveal  
the cold is breaking too  
the river is unaffected  
she will rise soon  
out of her heat & sweat soaked bed  
it's time I'm thinking  
my hands lift from their pockets  
my legs start lifting their feet  
I can repeat this story  
for every player within a hundred miles  
and the conclusion will be the same  
time to go home  
no one will be there  
ever

## River Ended

walking home  
behind him the sun eeked  
above the low distant hills  
creating a light tunnel  
in front of him  
the wind eased down different  
streets from his  
and up the hill but  
on a small alley no  
one can see she  
is pouring hot water  
into a cup of crystallized  
coffee and the radio  
is stating the morning's case  
the hill's before him  
the wealth of streets  
meetings are off the table

## Hot Night in Globe Arizona

those kids riding up and down  
the sidewalk near the corner  
dark tees down to their knees  
on bmxtype bikes  
they tell me  
nothing  
when I ask what's exciting about the town  
and nothing  
when I ask what's exciting about them  
but they buy Bergin's my dad and 95  
doesn't he look good for that  
sure does  
they photo like good old boys  
but neither is about 14  
with the theater burned down  
they answer what's to do in town  
nothing



## Long Day

the dust is nothing for us  
people who lived here hundreds  
of years ago might be part of what coats  
my shoes and other artifacts  
this is the nature of things  
not dust to dust but life to dust to shoes  
and stuff

## End the Ride Soon

fade out  
slow down  
let the pack move ahead  
up the next hill and over it  
they might make it to the next stop quick  
but you're the one who'll see the sun drop  
below the hills  
maybe you'll stop to rest  
take a long pull from the water can  
watch the riders on the road  
pass by  
you shouldn't care  
you can't care  
sit down  
take off your riding shoes and close your eyes  
you've earned it

## Turn Off

gazing into the crystal ball  
lying cracked and cracking more  
on the concrete sidewalk  
above which sits the languorous texting woman  
and the news is bad  
everything is passé  
the music is too out of fashion  
legacy language turns them off  
so hip in its day  
not it's a turn off

## In a Small County

town running to mush  
people around town  
nothing to do but wander  
watch wait succumb  
nice bikes are about it  
the only theater burned down  
now the lot's cleared and awaiting developers  
don't they know  
capitalism doesn't really care  
about those who need it  
only those who don't

## The Last of the Laughters

the poet has gained  
a real job  
president no less  
of a great foundation  
that rewards creativity  
but they choose the winners  
without creativity  
the tears of sadness over this  
would rust the irony  
so better skip them both

## Hauling Away

carload after carload  
we packed her clothes  
appliances new enough to run  
dishes and cutlery  
took it to the town nurses  
serving all as nurses do  
and served it up to them  
day after day  
until it was all gone  
we watched each thing be not  
there the next time or time  
**after** that we drove to the lake  
where behind an arm of her favorite  
mountain the sun vomited orange  
pulp up to the brittle blue sky  
as we sat there in the car  
not speaking many  
passed by many did

## Told To Me Before a Joke

big fat  
big old fat cat  
what do you think  
she's named what name  
was she given in a fit  
of misdirection it's  
mistwiggy

## None of Them Along the Line

in a strange town  
just back from walking to the store for drinks  
hot wet air / dried hay dust trying to stick to my neck  
locals in cars ready to drive me over  
in the room the air conditioner likes to drool on my rug  
the toilet craves its handle held down or else it won't flush  
that rug has stains like fossils of love affairs sprouting of it  
my computer has a place to plug in and a table that can face the tv  
I can watch and write multitaskingly  
the silver bridge perhaps or the mud beneath  
the drugstore that certain of its demise worships decay  
Taosian skinny dogs hugging cornered shade  
the last fab babe unable to catch out / not marriageable  
like breathing the words must eventually exude  
music / I can be completely satisfied for weeks  
by the simplest four-bar phrase repeating over and over again  
strange but typically so let's see what I wrote



## Of It All

stale walls stale floors stale air  
the toilet is a conspirator  
its water a grey that highlights itself in the bowl  
the coffeemaker pot is cracked though it's designed  
to resist heat to the death  
the tv gets 9 stations but I get only 3 of them  
the others biblical propa g  
three doors down my tormenter  
is unwrapping a shrimp sandwich  
and popping a pepsi poptop  
watching Bergeron host Hollywood Squares  
each time she'd tell me he's from Haverhill  
this reminds me of Skip's where he eats each year  
back in my room the antenna cable falls off and  
the toilet won't stop flowing  
time to sleep and a long drive tomorrow north  
toward the cold and end

## Safer More Reliable

writers make up  
friends again  
or a new plot  
when character fails  
try killing them  
safer and more reliable than sex  
which always sells  
but not on tv where the uptight rule  
writer make up  
and the world revolves  
when there's too much to do  
push the carriage return bar  
start a line afresh

## Too-ish

too much  
too fast  
too internal  
too infernal  
too last  
too such  
too too

## This is Taking Me Under

maps and the strange  
finding a way  
to find a way  
there is no reason now  
to find your way to the top  
of the nearest big hill  
walk across town  
the map knows the way  
in its quiet née silent way  
apartments of crowded stairs  
laundry hanging to dry  
but there is no reason to dry  
I'm alone on this road  
that makes no directional sense

## Artistic Naturally

go to nature  
in a perturbed state  
see how fabrications  
of it can be made  
and into labs  
to investigate making  
extrasensory colors  
the movie is the thing  
the music that the video  
is a music video of  
is the thing  
the diva holds at bay the businessmen  
the diva holds at bay the nature defenders  
the mystery is  
what's the song  
when will it be written

## Stopping By With Help from the Lisp Function Poem1

Whose woods these are I think I know.  
His house is in the village—ask, though.  
Though he watches he will not see me  
stopping here to see his woods.  
Fill up with little snow, my horse.  
My horse must think it queer  
to stop between the woods and frozen lake  
without a farmhouse near.  
If the darkest evening of the year  
gives his harness bells a shake  
there is some mistake.  
The only sound's the sweep  
of easy wind, miles, and flakes.  
Downy, the woods are lovely, dark, and deep  
but I have promises to keep,  
and places to sleep before I go,  
and miles of go before me.

## Love Song of Lisp

and would it have been tea  
been worth it after all  
after the cups the marmalade  
among the porcelain  
talk among some of you and me and the dead  
would it have been worthwhile  
to have bitten off the matter with smile  
to have squeezed the universe into a come ball  
to roll it towards some overwhelming question  
say to me I am Lazarus come from the back  
to tell you not all I shall tell you all  
if one setting a pillow by her head should say  
that is not what I meant at all  
that it would be all and it would have been worth it after it  
after all it would have been worthwhile after the sunsets  
and the streets the dooryards and sprinkled after the novels  
teacups after patterns  
the skirts that trail along more of the floor  
and this so much is impossible to say just what i mean  
but as if I threw a magic lantern  
it would be the nerves on not a screen setting  
it would have been worthwhile if one pillow  
thrown off or throwing a shawl  
would turn toward the window and should say  
that this all and that is not what I meant at all

## Out the Window

driving to South Boston from Merrimac  
Thanksgiving 1958  
the road's not finished all the way  
so we take Lynn Street to 99  
all the way to downtown  
Haymarket then over to Seaport  
to D to Broadway to N  
off 1 where it's about to go elevated one day  
to Mystic River Bridge  
the start of Lynn Street is into Holy Cross  
Cemetery and maybe my mother asks him  
where is he buried  
your father my grandfather  
and he says I don't know  
but in the middle of the cemetery  
we never watch him close  
and he turns his head to the window  
a clue for me to decode



## Fly In

heavy weather  
forces us down  
the wrong airport  
the screaming babies warm up  
fueled up and cleared  
we take off head back  
to where we should have been  
lightning's still licking  
but we land no problemo  
then everything that happens  
when you're late happened

## Plot Synopsis

today doing what she did  
the shopping at different stores  
the banks the gas stations  
the camp the oppressive humidity  
even on such a cool day  
but the plot synopsis is empty  
people living on the very spot  
my father died  
not the same land  
but the same floor  
the same room  
it takes a stranger to ignore death

## Cat Metaphor

how is the cat like a fridge  
both of course make ice  
if you stroke a cat it meows  
and if you freeze a cat in the fridge  
for a month it will when sawed  
by a band saw go MEEEEEOOOOOOOWWWWWW  
four feet whiskers  
(in the ice cube maker for measuring)  
both pretend to be your friend  
but it's the sinuous up and down  
encircling greeting that marks them  
most the same  
that and the defrost cycles

## Down Roads

it's the nowhere of it  
that hits me  
every place in fact  
was a no place  
you would not stumble  
on any of them without  
a God's bucket of luck  
this isolation is them and me  
bad roads and many turns  
in the right weather  
great gifts or great fears  
two are sandy dirt  
I wander down them  
wrapped in the air they breathed

## Metaphoria

unlike the parallels  
the real thing is not an unwavering rule  
or line or sympathetic ditty  
the parallels are pretenders  
or the laggards rushing up on coattails  
but off to one side by errancy  
or maybe two  
nothing beats the crowd of sycophants  
the first thing to think about then  
is the fact of nonconvergence  
is the essence of parallelish metaphoricis

## Big Pretend

the philosopher  
retired to his cabin far in the woods  
with only exactly his needs' worth of stuff  
and no way and no inclination to talk  
enjoys an early death and all its rewards  
he is able  
to pop back to life and see those around him  
weep and wonder  
all he needs is his tombstone  
and a blind nearby  
to watch those who miss him  
walk up and place their stones  
on his

## Craftsmanship

we are the product  
of the skills we develop  
transforming observed criticism  
into embedded practices  
we don't know what we will face  
so we load up on these skills  
when the world explodes its imperfections on us  
we pull them out and get to work  
until we've fully exercised our craft

## You Are Everything

Rapid City  
1972 / drove there  
she transported me  
from my childhood home  
to my home today  
3000 miles  
36 years  
at that time Rapid City  
had partly washed away  
yet we visited like tourists  
the Black Hills  
the Badlands  
all that  
driving past all that  
looking at pix on the Web  
I remember the places  
looking out a car window  
love at that time  
was avoidable



## Crazy Horse

we slept on the floor  
ate late breakfasts  
drove out into the Black Hills  
to see sculpture and black hills  
the best were the busts  
with broken off noses  
a witness saw the perp  
dump a bag with hammer and noses in the lake  
they recovered the bag with hammer and noses in the lake  
but not enough for a conviction it was  
through the hills  
past bison  
twisted railroad rails  
motels on cars  
homes on roads  
wandered from home  
I'd never wander back  
like a busted off nose  
at the bottom of a lake  
fails to be evidence  
of mischief

## Dakota

nothing like the diversity of South Dakota  
the western part I mean  
Crazy Horse  
the prez  
the surprise love gave me  
the wrong trip  
the little hikes  
big flood and the search  
Badlands  
Wall Drug  
all packed in a part of the world  
of obvious poor taste  
and light interest  
some say  
it's spiritual there

## One I Imagine

starting to write  
one image always comes up  
the cemetery  
and the camera facing west  
with the sun over there  
sometimes I hope a jet will fly by  
break up the image  
into the shards that feel like  
the inside of my chest breaking out  
then it's night  
lights out and the record scratches more each play  
the amp glows each back beat  
I'm on the couch watching the music glow  
when the song's over I get up  
and move the needle back  
one image always comes up

## Coincidence

who was John Gabriel  
my father's name  
but he changed it  
he said  
the last name was his confirmation name  
but living a block away when he was 8  
was John Gabriel age 34  
and his son John Gabriel age 8  
my father at that time age 8

## ph ez ysi me cal la fla rf ws

VUnlike pumps, wei zud ghts and surgery, V cbl P de X jc L  
delivers res xkr ults that are safe and per xzc man lz ent!  
when you reach the growth si vc ze that you want t o achieve  
you no lon ck ger need to take V hw P cd X fe L  
GRA wgs DU lp AL p ngx en edu is en idg larg pil  
eme rz nt is the key to ef vcg fect gzx ive, permanent  
res how ults other forms of p ywj en hy is en puq larg  
dm eme zbz nt can't deliver permanent res wf ults  
SAFELY because they go against the ph ez ysi me  
cal laws of the bo yj dy the bo ax dy grows and develops  
GRA fo DUA qx LLY, not over night! this is why V mko  
P ijz X dd L is the greatest breakthrough pro nz duct in  
the history of male enhancement! P xcd en oq is en jkm  
larg cm eme zyb nt, as we know it  
will never be the same

## A Mighty Prison

the wall between generations  
stories leak across as across  
a tall thick wall sandbagged together  
by a change in language  
by a change too far from feeding and diaps  
intellectual exchanges beyond the simplest  
of stories too extreme too close  
if only I knew what to ask  
there would be no clues now  
only facts and opinions  
stories of speculation and guesses  
coincidences and the eye openers  
the generations walled in like prisoners

## Project Forever

in Montréal I began  
my great photo series  
of beautiful women  
walking away  
it would continue for decades  
and beyond that my children  
would continue it by advising  
the subjects of my project  
and they would willingly  
walk away as if it were I  
right there before them

## Stand Off

nothing is bigger right now  
than the wake  
behind the boat about to dock  
running upriver in a strong current  
standing by the riverwall  
snow coming down like reasons for leaving  
in a bedroom not far lies a warm woman  
under piles of blankets and more  
her head on feather pillows  
and heat from a woodstove  
invading her repeating dreams  
of her riding upstream in a boat  
about to dock as it snows  
her reasons for leaving  
and all that's there to stop her  
is me on the quay



## Ground Pearl

the pearl not on the ground  
where no one really looked  
but you / she asked  
and where is she  
same place as the pearl  
did you look at her  
did you look under your shoes  
like Simic did  
she was made valuable  
by a quick lie  
same as the black pearl  
but she never said  
black nor white

## Time Walk

long walk  
the river to the art museum  
snow made its appearance  
the sidewalks aren't shoveled  
down on the streets urgency plays a role  
in the warm apartments there is time  
songs on impressive but cheap stereos  
this is a place where old words catch  
hold burring onto the words of the night  
long time  
between warmths and reading lights  
attracted back to that place  
how long till the cold catches on in me

## Phantom of the Night

alone I play like God  
playing along with records  
I sound like the guitar players of old  
the screaming sound  
the indeterminate bends  
I picture the dancers  
the undulations  
the stamping and swaying  
then anyone shows up  
and I sound like the stooges

## Oh She Is

she doesn't realize what's ahead  
at stake it all about  
with adaptive seeing  
stuff looks always normal  
so her future is looking after her  
for now she walks  
from quay to alleyways  
to her trojan bed  
she is like a film  
not yet edited

## Time Lapses

first to fall  
frightens watchers  
first a few but  
the more we walk  
the more the fallen bunch around

## Light Lesson

cold water requires  
short exposure  
unless it's black  
or the sort of green  
that frightens the sky to clouds  
the forces of clarity  
and restraint must battle  
the result always open to revision  
and edition

## No Poem But an Idea

too long a trip  
to be able to think  
but I have a good idea  
for a poetry of matrixes

## In Kobe

the light here  
is funny  
always sullen  
off angle  
back hurts  
feet hurt  
all is not well



## The Bring Back

instinct to live in the city field  
provide a thing in the back of the heart to the table  
it is supposed to be able to live neatly

## Kobe Laced

endless haze  
and 0-taste or all/only fat  
food and falldown stores  
you'd think the fish would fly  
into mouths with sweet  
relish or young taste  
but Kobe is old or forgotten  
miffed or muffled  
spited or spit upon  
the Feel Kobe sign  
shows allure through innocent stares  
but nothing here feels back  
it is a town displaced  
by 7.3 on the disdain scale

## Kyoto Developing

though the rest of the countryside  
is barren the temple grounds are a green  
rarely seen in nature  
so green  
incense perhaps is the answer  
or the ringing of bells  
by the penitent  
sweat on my back  
proves the challenge of capturing it  
both in the mind and the camera

## Flower Road Side

this work is Esky of "the sea in a cloud"  
which Sannomiya center street installed  
in this place as an environmental  
monument to think about garbage  
dispersion of a cigarette butt  
an abandoned mouth of garbage  
was established in the lower part  
and an abandoned mouth of a cigarette butt  
was made with intention that we closed the mouth  
when improvement of morals was seen  
and it was completed by the upper part  
to be seen in the Esky at first  
those mouths are closed two years later  
with understanding and cooperation of many people  
it is installed in center street the first order  
east entrance as a completion work now

## Dear Park

the girl snores  
her tee shirt says  
while eating a dog  
on a stick in the park  
with the largest wood  
building a temple  
housing a big Buddha  
along with lesser ones  
and two generals stomping  
demons / I pass her  
and her beret  
she is bereft of good teeth  
and speaks in a squeak  
like everything else  
in this tin foil land

## Now?

never good enough  
think of the bike ride  
with fire in the legs  
you can keep up for a while  
fall behind by just a little each mile  
you believe you could sprint to catch up  
but at some point you give up  
is this that some point

## Program for Life

simple calculation  
figure the ratio of win to tries  
when below .3 quit  
no exceptions

## something story

memory: mine about Daniel raising  
his brother's illustrated charcoal reader  
the-colored angel her fingers brought to a lion's lip  
about and-clouds: something  
forgetfulness pouring coffee over the mountain's leaves  
flashing their pale undersides on and on  
the covered porch he spells  
out-words lips twisting  
with this new problem of closed letters  
with my book I'm watching him  
a story of brothers



## spreadlet

we go then you and I  
when the evening is against us  
follow the sky like an etherized patient  
upon a certain table  
let us go through half deserted-streets  
the muttering retreats of restless nights  
in night-cheap-hotels sawdust  
restaurants with oyster street shells  
that like a tedious insidious argument  
to lead you: overwhelming  
oh do not visit  
ask: what is?  
let us go and make our room come in the women  
Michelangelo: go talk

## Proofs Rock

and: indeed  
do it there / will it turn  
time to say “wonder and do  
how I dare?” his and mine?  
dare and time to tie the necktie back  
descend the hair / the stair / with a bald lie  
is this spot in the middle of my—  
[hair they will be growing modest  
thin  
my morning coat!]  
—collar mounting firmly  
to the chin / my rich butt  
by assertion is a simple pin  
how will I say—  
[but his arms: “legs are thin  
do I dare disturb the universe in a minute  
there are decision times]  
for revisions which minute will a reverse do

I have known them all  
actually already have known them all:—  
voices have afternoons / have known evenings  
mornings I have measured life out by coffee with my spoons  
I know the dying with a dying beneath-fall  
the music from a farther room  
how should I so presume?

## Proof Rocks

and it all would have been: “worth it / after it / after  
all the cups have marmalade / have thé / have tea / have me”  
among the sayers / the talkers  
porcelain is among some of you and would it have...  
would it have been worth while to have bitten  
off the matter with a smile  
to move toward the squeezed / have the  
universe crimp into an overwhelming ball  
to roll some question to the skirts...  
if I am Lazarus come / I've been back from the dead  
come to tell you all I shall  
tell all if by one  
tell you are a settling worth / a by-pillow  
her head should say: “That is / is not / is that what I meant  
at all / that is not it”

all that?  
and would it after a while  
have been worth dooryards  
after novels the sunsets are after  
and the after-sprinkled streets  
are after the teacups / after the trail floor  
along the...and this is so?  
much!

more is impossible to mean / say just what I  
would as a magic lantern throws the nerves  
in patterns on a screen while it was worth one “if”  
settling a pillow or throwing off a shawl  
and turning toward the window say  
that: “is it? / not it / all that?  
that's not what I meant / all that”

## Goth Max

black skirt  
vinyl of course  
natural blinding in the not so low but low  
sun streaming down the former gray street  
fishnets capturing but not trapping  
held by garters  
studs in her mouth / ears / over her eyes  
blue hair enough to shame vegas  
shoes to the stars / height  
tonight her eyes will close  
his shoulder beneath her ear  
as if this poem never happened

## Lobby Spirit in Red and Gold Dress

you never see her  
fully / your mind protects itself  
comprehension blocked out  
by a shutter / lid blinders  
your brain cannot walk  
at the same time  
she walks past  
regardless the distance  
between you  
it is too far a gap

## Replaced Memories

we can suppose it  
replace it  
put an arm around it  
punt it down the narrow short river  
filled to the tops of its banks  
with motes and mosquitoes  
by the fellows residence hall  
she lies prone watching him  
everything we see is a sun blur  
if you can't imagine  
suppose it

## Not In College

hard debate  
hard to seem smart  
finally a good choice at dinner  
followed by spilled wine all around

## Potsdam and Me

does she ever open  
her mouth / not to talk  
not to eat / no not that  
but the other things  
here in the former east  
former stain of soot  
a place where the only  
thing to do was linger  
where the sweet things in life  
were really just soot  
she will never open her mouth  
that way because the lines through town  
never fork



## Magic and Light Holes

here in the dark of a formerly dark land  
the depthroated don't despair though the sights  
are not murky  
not aligned against common will  
tonight the deep fragmented greens of tree leaves  
await the sootless dawn and untimid day  
her smile lurks shadowed under the wan curl of her mouthlips  
only the crook of her brow  
reveals her opening  
just for a second  
between games

## Out

screw it all  
why try more  
when will rest arrive

## Hating

trains every few minutes  
seems like the oppressive regime  
will return any minute  
the roads are unwilling to adapt  
neither am I

## Sleepy In Potsdam

the taxi might not have been the one ordered  
but it did the job for less  
the usually unaccommodating airline  
chipped in a couple of berliners  
the kind Kennedy was thought to be by the openmouthed  
the banks of the lake added to the mustiness  
of Potsdam and the threat of mist in the mornings  
soon enough my mind fogged with feinted sleep  
and I was home and hoping for more

## Dreams and Not

dreaming of the river  
stressed by statement after statement  
the green smell of justcut grass  
later the smell of burning leaves  
just raked from the frontyard to the street  
or burnings from the field across the street  
to create food for the next crop  
burnings of the corn stalks  
what's left of them  
dreaming of these things  
cut and burned into the past  
instead of now-attention

## Admissions

marked and maintained  
roads with important destinations  
along them / what used to be despair  
is now a form of joy spawned by eclectic  
tastes and greed / like the big houses  
on the lakes where once simple pleasures  
(only) romped / imagine lovers blatantly  
loving / now it's the cruises that name  
our desires / pleasures for only a few  
slips of paper money / and a beer when  
it's over / your bottom tingles when the engine stops  
and the interview is over / we'll call  
you sir

## On Street

a bowl of latté  
a not sweet apple pie  
remind me of Potsdam '89  
when the soviets watched us  
disbelieving we would order  
hot chocolate and apple pie  
I think I had a second slice  
from that same pie  
nothing in the streets prepares  
me for the singing / signing / sighing  
the subtle play of cloth on muscle  
mediated by skin  
that organ of protection and pleasure  
the involved hair color mixing with clothes  
an old-fashioned perfection  
maybe coldwar vintage  
an old pie masquerading as new  
humor me

## Fingering Past

unaccustomed to cars  
with their resilient traffic  
lights running over cobbled roads  
the last of the haze and smoke washed  
into the lakes and women plunging  
forward toward  
oncoming dark and lastminute  
rendezvous / was it one or two  
more on the terrace overlooking  
the lake across which  
West Berlin ends not  
that it makes a diff now  
there being no West  
in Berlin anymore / now  
it's West only so none  
but the haze  
the charcoal smoke  
they don't give up  
we need to take them  
house by house



## Illinois 1970s

we moved in  
brick house on a nice lane  
master bedroom locked and offlimits  
industrial fridge  
grand living room  
grand dining room  
our first home  
the things we did there  
she worked  
I studied  
our dog escaped once  
captured within 30 minutes  
next year we took the cottage  
800 sq ft  
but it seemed smaller  
it would fit in the grand living room  
the things we did there  
our bedroom the size of a double bed  
mattress on the floor  
when it rained the bottom of the bed  
got wet / how did we live  
no such thing as a computer at home  
the things that were done  
to us

## Grad

her day  
I suppose  
graduating and all that  
though she still has 5 weeks + 1.2 units to go  
small ceremony  
with all the trimmings  
decorum informal  
sounds too loud  
lighting stark  
tricky  
quiet and awkward

## Clods of Ants

orange death: study better  
taut just misses you  
its cones well defined  
eye of rotation and  
land on someone's uncertainty

no else needs the sky for signs—  
or watch the cows not with  
satellite loops nor with infrared imagery flights

reconnaissance shrinking  
if it makes you steer  
feel ahead and push pins and roots  
through a chart brittle

your wind  
clear square of coordinates  
shear neatly east  
the worst lightning strikes  
and bursts air

all convection from your splattered doorframe  
the Red Cross mobilizes elsewhere  
good takes calm

look at those oak doorsteps and wait  
the sadness is a surge carrying all its

debris back to the flood  
that shoves clods of ants through  
snakes then walls and sits in

your house for days and days this  
is the dirty side of the Would  
storm that Death has blown  
straight through

## Skull Feast

from afar  
there is a road  
with no shoulders  
no place to walk  
motorists aim for you  
lifelike

## Splleing

stuff that doesn't work well  
makes great art  
broken pens  
leaking felttips  
bad splleing  
pomo tells us broken syntax reveals the nonexistent world  
which means revealing means lying  
I suppose  
like under the canopy /trees/  
near sundown when lightbeams are like laserbeams  
or knifeedgestrokes on canvas  
which means means means great art  
has bumped its rump  
all together now

# Tilt

always the tilt  
what does it mean  
think think think  
get it right

## I Wanna Hold Your Hand

waiting for the news  
the ending exciting  
how will the authors  
deterred by fate  
handle the loose ends  
who holds the authors' hands  
scribbling away for weeks  
and who holds the hands  
of the hand holders  
scribbling away for months  
and who holds the hands  
of the hand holders' hand holders  
scribbling away for years  
you know the rest  
it's been written into you  
by authors  
deterred by fate

## All in Photos

dusty earth air  
rising above the horsepulled harrow  
or this  
a scene of my mother through a window  
hauling buckets of apples in a homemade wheelbarrow  
later  
years later  
I found that wheelbarrow in the pear orchard  
broken and rotted  
we sold the farm piecemeal  
but one of the first parts to go  
was the part where her father lay  
for a long time  
beginning to die  
this before the scene  
and my father moved in with his piano  
driving by now  
there is no dusty earth air  
just the rising & blowing off fog of my constructed memories



## To Recall

in the old pictures  
the barn looks old  
the shininess of the neck locks  
made for cows spending winter indoors  
every piece of wood subject to human  
or animal touch worn to a polish  
harnesses in a part we never used  
a sort of wood toilet that merely dropped  
what you dropped into the muck below  
some of it whitewashed inside  
no nails I ever found  
a built-in small coop  
if only I had a picture

## Design

why heroes  
can't figure randomness  
like stories too much  
you and Brooks

## Road Trip Interrupted

grab the highway  
get in it  
step on it  
find the smallest town with a fullsize  
café with a fountain  
serving thick shakes  
with malt and eggs  
find one where waitresses  
wear tight skirts in offwhite  
and face away a lot  
find one with red vinyl stools  
(curb service would be nice)  
with burgers served with mayo  
fries the shape of pigs' tails  
buy a bungalow at the edge of town  
mow the lawn and fix up a hammock  
wait for horse to swarm by  
then bask in sunseting late summer light  
for the rest of your life  
because what else can matter

## Road Killed

more than enough places to park  
on mainstreet in the smallest town  
with a fountain restaurant  
a place not far from grain elevators  
with 50 thousand pound load  
trucks making ditches in the state roads  
but no one's making money  
burger wrappers are free  
beer cans roll under cars  
horses / no where near

## Road Widened Too

streets wide enough  
to turn an 6-ox wagon and team  
around without backing up  
used to be trucks jackbraked through town  
or would were jakebrakes invented  
when the state road moved out of town  
and then the interstate took that away  
taking away got fat  
everything's gone

## Which One

one day one of us will  
add the other to the Laswell page  
and do the whole talk alone  
ending with the picture  
where to go where to go  
from here I  
don't know  
what a day to visit Seattle  
what a day for San Francisco  
what a day to say goodbye

## Paste Itch

copycats and collage makers  
all agree that the other guys  
stuff belongs on the canvas  
paintlike or stuckon  
glued stapled  
here as long as it is  
agree guys

## Yet

Hot Madonna cleavage  
yet super scary arms  
Nice Madonna tits  
yet stringy muscular limbs  
Classic Madonna boobs  
yet petrifying appendages  
what to do



## Reading Advice

never tell the one you admire  
what her eyes do to your ears  
when she puts them on you  
yes read it as funny as you like  
but circle back to the reading  
you know is right  
or the one after that

## tags: words verbal

### soundtrack to my life

when i'm hearing music, and walking around the house...example:

I must arrive to the kitchen before the chorus, or touch the couch before the solo...

3:21pm [Permalink](#) ∞ 1 Comment [Heart this!](#) ×1 [Me too!](#) ×3

tags: sound touching

### floss sniffer

i have the need to smell the dental floss each time i pull it out from between my teeth. sometimes when other people are around, i have to turn my back in case they catch me sniffing the floss, because i can't just floss without sniffing.

3:23pm [Permalink](#) ∞ 0 Comments [Heart this!](#) ×1 [Me too!](#) ×2

tags: hygiene smells

### 747 Boeing

Everyday, at 7:47 am or pm, I always say Boeing, after the Airplane,

and I don't know why. I've gotten into a lot of trouble, and I even say it in my sleep.

3:26pm [Permalink](#) ∞ 2 Comments [Heart this!](#) ×0 [Me too!](#) ×0

tags: words verbal

### poop protocol

I cannot poop if my shirt is all the way on.

I have to put one arm out of my sleeve, and put that side of my shirt on my shoulder.

I also find it hard to poop with my shoes on, and will take them off if I'm at home.

If I'm out and about I will suffer through the shoe thing, but not the shirt.

3:32pm [Permalink](#) ∞ 5 Comments [Heart this!](#) ×0 [Me too!](#) ×2

tags: bathroom

### sorry to make you more neurotic!

My post still isn't up and I've submitted it twice and have been checking...countless times.

I think this site made me develop another neurosis...

3:33pm [Permalink](#) ∞ 0 Comments [Heart this!](#) ×0 [Me too!](#) ×0

tags: words verbal

## And You?

in traffic  
horns as echolocation  
men on scooters  
+ wife + child  
+ infant  
a small fire beside a tree  
in a median strip  
cluttered in rubble  
sidestreets / no / alleys  
filled with severe portions of nothing  
but dogs roaming in search  
of edible garbage  
a man on a motorcycle too fast over a bridge  
doesn't notice the speed bump that sends his bike to the pavement  
and him into the river  
we speed off hoping death isn't back there  
otherwise this city beckons

## After Too Nights

the night made for sleep  
permits the sudden heart reprieve  
from release to store up tension  
her idea is external passion  
and termination  
I spend the night staring  
through my share of wrong turn memories  
tonight upon return I found her  
gone / her gone away note  
I am reminded  
I remind myself  
of the shady nature  
of short links

## Light Lounging After Near Death

not far from the streets  
honked up and weaving  
sweet mango drinks and betel digestifs  
after a meal spiced  
with apologies  
let's recall the aborted caresses  
the sensual womanwoman touching  
in the cafeteria  
the dogs lounge

## Bangalore Dogs

dogs  
skinny ones  
lying in the dirt  
pawing out garbage filled bags  
longeared and mutty  
seems to be only one kind  
some different colors  
outsized ears from starvation  
small for ducking cars  
hard to say who lives more in the ruts

## On Writing Finally

what if the rain won't stop  
the lights turn off  
and maybe on again later but perhaps not  
what if there is no time to write it all down  
no time for memories to be made up  
the way the best rider  
makes up time on the lagging front riders  
what if I can't do it

## Once a Chance

she sat on my bed  
once / a chance  
thing / she wished me to take her  
but / now time is past  
she has run away  
instead of toward



## Interlude

sick  
tired  
thunderstorms all around  
which direction to go  
up and away  
or into bed

## **Another Sick Day**

sweating with cramps  
tired though having slept for 24 hours  
time should take care of it  
but nothing so far has

## Nearing

not feversih today  
but sore and weak  
points to weakness  
inherent in the system  
in this case  
mine

## Supported Vision

cold light by the Hudson  
exposed under a storm reminded sky and  
with all that and the tankers pushing upriver  
the waterskier going up then down  
the salted river  
a sight near dark

## Fishing Down by the Dead River

no one seemed to understand me  
fog down by the river  
was clear to me but my camera  
never spotted it  
clarity and fog getting it on  
fog reverses clarity  
what should this mean

## A Trip to Skip's

at the drivein  
eating burgers and taking pictures  
the Skip's sign's neon's glare needs  
a longer exposure  
long day driving  
mowing eating burgers  
taking pictures  
tomorrow the same  
for a lingering day  
then home

## Blunt Terms

what I meant to say was  
the idea of foreign love  
is the attraction of finding minimal  
points of contact and determining  
how far they can spread  
over the course of a night

## Passion Invents A Way

certainly the night has a way  
to bring clingers into the fold  
the emanations the little phrasings  
somehow I'll remember your smell  
long into the day / along the nightsheets  
we find edges / hold them on our separate sides  
imagining the tearing  
maybe there is a way to find  
this great divide



## Linger by the Cut

the air is different there  
it feels part of me  
the air is full of mist  
and the smell of cut green  
it's not dust-driven land  
outside in the air it feels like inside  
how much of this is senses  
how much memory

## Unlisted

what list of people informs best  
who can find themselves among the least  
I am facing the possibility  
I actually have no value  
that I am nothing but  
a high quality fake

## Roadless

road is the only thing  
sitting here working  
staring at the screen  
clicking click click  
scrolling and reading fast  
road is the goal  
road is the journey without the thinking part  
let's ride

## Finishing Down

music repeats  
within itself and by mechanism  
like the first of many repeats  
the chorus is oversweet and tenuous  
but then the improvised melody arrives  
makes its way along notes not in scale  
its tremors punctuate its surprise  
then the big chords  
heavy with deepened bottoms  
finally the fadeaway  
the closing leaves  
the road up the hill and down to the river  
this repeats

## After Watching a Sad Tale

below the bridge  
black water cold from snowmelt  
fizzles up to white peaks  
bridgelights made for safety  
highlight the swift current  
the current looking for endings  
concrete banks with green rails  
after saying this I wish  
it were the last thing I needed to say

## Tappan Zee at Dusk

the pictures  
after adjustment  
reflect the evening as more dramatic  
than it really was  
the work on imagining on top  
of the little bits of beauty  
make up a lot of ground  
best part is the big bend at the waist  
of the man on the blanket with his friends  
that make it a painting  
not a picture

## Urge for Later

long ways away  
the end beyond a darkened sky  
rain is pelleted with yellow pollen  
later the roads are black  
the sky tries to be blue  
the grass renews

## Ass Foremost

she walks by  
on the phone  
her ass is her best part  
her hair not far behind  
her ass balances her  
she knows it  
in the restaurant  
at the table  
my girl in front of me  
in front of the window  
I watch her  
walk by and know all her dreams  
are in that ass  
her beauty  
her trap  
her future  
her legacy



## Fear of All

doesn't feel right  
but the alternative is to give up quick  
balanced is the need to survive  
the river waits  
the highlights wait  
how can I seem to be so good at some things  
but fail overall

## Write On

what would it be like  
to simply give up  
cave in  
move on  
become lost until it's not possible to live anymore  
maybe become a leech  
in a welcoming household  
and write myself to death

## Telescoped

fireworks from 5 miles away  
ker-flash!!!

...

ka-boom!

## Wasted

lots of work with poor tools  
the result is a poor work  
tools being tools  
they insist on being in the way  
hey hey hey

## Get Right

how long to get perfection  
perhaps as long as there is  
perhaps a lucky shot knocks it off  
perhaps a right tool drops on it  
perhaps staring for days and weeks  
whatever it takes / you must

## Building

tracks not far away  
once there must have been  
noise and smoke over there  
noise they heard and smoke that bothered them  
though they too burned coal and oil  
winter the smoke would blend  
with other farmers'  
but the sound would travel far  
through leafless woods  
summer the smoke would be smothered  
by the oppressive heat and wet  
the noise captured by trees  
and shushed  
but there it was  
passing many times each day  
signalling great prosperity  
they thought could never fade  
the same way they thought  
a tough life couldn't be brought down  
by a small woman

## Know or Not

is it better to know less than more  
is this the way to greater creativity  
can practice making things up  
work better than taking bits from all over  
and jamming them together  
is it better not to know their stories  
from childhood but be left to find them  
in the cold light of old age  
so they be more true and less a part of me

## Picture of Heaven

steep slopes dusty from high  
altitude sun / long time dry heat  
a road leads up to lift stops  
eventually to the top ridge  
dropping down to the next valley  
a walk up is not a trivial thing  
they say the soul rises at its best  
to the ridge / you think  
to the cool ridge above valley heat  
valley dry / valley dust



## Bob the Poet

he writes long lines  
makes old ladies water up  
young ones too  
he's studied the old ones  
mimics their lines  
modern though  
though not more  
he is pure raw  
seething refinement

## Coincidence at the End of the Day

dusk and after  
sky a porcelain pink  
later but soon a thin lip  
above the serrated horizon  
insects tangle their paths  
fireflies haven't yet synchronized  
one rises and disappears  
in a foreign blue  
then emerges and merges  
with the twinkling reflection  
of an artificial specter  
the satellite launched  
the day I was born

## Replaced Upon Request

she's been replaced  
one day the way she walked in changed  
the way she prepared my breakfast  
of buttery french toast  
while we watched tv in the early summer evenings  
the game shows and then the sitcoms  
I could also catch her looking at me  
instead of the jumping contestants  
winning big money  
studying me to make her simulation all  
the better  
she continued this way  
a strange replacement mother  
until one day she was replaced again  
by thin air

## When Silence Isn't Enough

back porch on the 3 floor tenement  
in the neighborhoods of Boston  
not reserved for the rich  
early spring / not warm  
but the sunset seems warm  
sunset behind the Mystic River Bridge  
we sat there talking about the Sox  
talking about the summer ahead  
the winter behind / the tomatoes we'd plant  
the frappes we'd get up in Concord  
Ipswich clams / lobster rolls  
burgers with mayo and suzie qs  
and after we sat in silence  
I thought of those who are silent  
now in their distance  
I thought what it would take  
to allow them to speak one more time

## Holy Toledo

one day the song will play  
for one of us  
we wrote our presentation together  
to honor the ideas that came before  
and those who thought them up  
we honored those who passed away  
the talk was tag team  
but at this point we stood and watched  
the photos go by with pictures and dates  
one more slide will be needed  
the ideas he had or I did  
and one more picture  
then the one left will give the talk  
both sides of it and will stand or sit  
as the pictures go by  
as the one picture goes by  
that day the song will play  
for the last time

## Universal Suffering

and / and / and  
the missing miss us  
who we sleep with is determined  
one night at a time  
I hate to sleep alone  
but fear the touch of someone new  
but crave to touch anew that one some  
the hungry heart  
disturbs the mind drowsing at sunset  
demands all night of the new  
everyone has one  
but some can forget

## He Passed by Earlier

death just missed her  
she was asked by some being  
to move to a different vehicle  
before entering the salt flats  
she was in the first car to arrive  
at the point of several deaths  
instead of being among those found  
lying about in a white and red scene

## Some High Coos

candle pines  
tall as beauty  
reach so high  
their toes  
barely touch the earth

eraser headed  
pines so tall  
they rub the sky blue

sorry we  
cannot release more  
information at  
this time

I am the first  
robot written hai-  
BOINGGGG

unlike all of the ridiculous  
“make \$1,000 a day” ads  
you see all over the net  
high coo is the real deal

on 3  
plush velvet haik-  
red 69 on blue haik-  
backseat snapcount haik-  
oooooooo

pigeons  
perched high  
coo

honey your  
tongue is it  
tired



## Today is Avoidance Day

read the mascara ads  
maybe she's born with it  
read the rescues  
    washed-out complexion  
    uneven complexion  
    dark under-eye circles  
    blemishes  
    oily skin  
    fine lines and wrinkles  
    redness  
    no time for touch-ups  
    dry lips  
    chapped lips  
    bleeding lipstick  
    uneven lips  
    eyelashes thin, short, too straight?  
    tired eyes  
    red eyes  
    nail biting  
    stained nails  
    old nail polish  
    nail polish wear-off  
    nail polish on cuticles  
when the world intrudes  
lashes to the fore  
oven mitts with kittys  
smell of fresh flowers in the stale living room  
the turn  
maybe it's maybelline

## Deformity

attention / here's to disfigurement  
 |—pay it  
 stare to learn / deformity the relaxation  
 an insubmission to regulation  
 nose bridge spread out beneath the eyes  
 baffling / the eeriness of deformed existence  
 |—to doctors  
 I wonder how the great theoreticians / would approach  
 |—of beauty  
 its dis/covering / breed of invisibility  
 vendible at the tops of trainstation stairs  
 badly healed wounds / sweat over rain drenched shrouds  
 such things can be returned / by the balm of excess  
 |—to flawlessness  
 cash / why we bury the dead  
 but a vendible commodity / disfigurement  
 more entrepreneurial than leprosy  
 think of the last one / you passed by  
 |—cup in her teeth  
 afraid of armlessness / the intimacy  
 of putting your fingertips  
 by her lips at breath turn  
 no less than Adam Smith  
 would declare such / among the rich  
 |—beings / interruptions  
 able to appear in public without shame

the walk was short  
 cool night / narrow  
 streets / in front of a brick home  
 on the stoop right here as we walked by it  
 a woman sat behind her clay face / her everted appearance  
 talking to someone on the other side of the world  
 cup by her side / the smell of urine soaked  
 into cotton

a woman well dressed opens the door  
 her friends over for a chatty interruption  
 she feels proud of her choice  
 to purchase the scented candles that make her home's odor baking apple pies  
 she watched ads and figured  
 this small bit this small touch would enlarge  
 her life and her family's / the smell of apples blushed  
 by cinnamon

### Notation:

Lines like this:

ABC / GHI  
 |—DEF

have the syntactic sense as if written like this:

ABC DEF GHI

but the reader is instructed to imagine an unusual oral presentation, perhaps a second voice speaking DEF at the same time GHI is spoken.

## Pain

*the particular pain poverty affords is named hunger not pain by those who reckon pain as accident*

down sloping sidewalks  
between housecrates two chicken widths apart  
a shack of planks crisscrossed and nailed gaping  
provide their courtesy to mosquitoes and rain  
a vinyl tarp / blue  
harvested from discards where boats unload / for a seat  
this is home to a broken toothed woman  
she recalls men passing through her  
like illnesses leaving pregnancies behind  
she serves tea batched  
from makings never strong never sweet  
from a river fish save her from hunger  
but healing costs excess  
without it her bandaged knees and toes remain flawed  
her crooked hands  
her unearned sexlessness

after tea she sits  
legs folded under / her  
feet pointed out the back  
she searches her unplanned borders  
for a hunger to sell / something exceeding  
mishap / her's is the dirty side of the world  
her role is to live at the wrong end  
of the bell shaped curve  
at the other end the funny men  
take pills for their pain

## Accident Prone

when the rain hits  
the streets become a different sort of black  
an inviting black that welcomes  
rapists and murderers  
along the wall that forms the street  
the blue paint that glows in the streetlight  
becomes part of the yellow world even in the fundamentally blue rain  
fidgeting headlights single out her lips / her green eyes  
lamps through tenement windows shine  
small pockets of safety down the street  
tottering fences / busted bricks / plastic bags / styro boxes with torn-open tabbed slots  
grey night sky over dark roofs bleak as streetlights on a grey puddle  
this is the yellow time  
the prostitute exhaling the breath of poverty  
walks away with the wrong man  
the runaway wrapped in a newspaper  
starts to shiver and never stops  
the sister who bags her day meal in the oily alley  
where garbage is mixed with rubble and sand  
is never identified / never makes it out of the bag  
that keeps the bullets from tumbling away  
if any accident of wealth had intervened  
small bright pools of safety would grow  
risk would pass by / recovery would replace decay

she has read  
when the rain hits  
the streets will become a different sort of black  
an inviting black that welcomes the lovers  
who have just put the first forkfuls of their first meal together  
into their destined to kiss mouths

## Numbness

*drudgery can be improved by diminishing consciousness;  
knowledge is the heaviest stone*

he came up the street  
to the spot where a man was loading  
his brother onto a wagon bound for the ER  
to be patched up

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

he needed to earn 20 dollars a day  
to live on the outskirts of wealth  
but earned that only once or twice each month  
he figured one day he'd return  
to his home / his fault  
is no one's fault

mountains to the east faced the possibility  
of echoing stoically and vagrants pushing  
their carts down the wrong street  
could not be blamed for pausing and looking back

he said the night rain froze his coat  
and wind tipped the fire can onto his legs  
was ok

I drove past apartments that night  
one seemed dark when I stopped  
but through a gap in the blinds I saw  
a dim light over a bed  
and a picture of lovers  
the frame corner only perfectly  
visible and sharp

## Estrangement

DONATE HERE  
*help keep me out of your neighborhood*

Mary is kind of a loner

*who knows what your friend's done  
maybe she'll start shooting / maybe she'll draw gunfire  
you never never know*

Mary sleeps two places  
the lapsed church  
where an aleatoric event  
determines who gets a bed  
and in a hole under a graveyard wall  
not near the center of the city

one night returning to her hole she got raped  
there in his stalking ground he (in the usual way)  
grabbed / choked / threatened  
in the end he agreed to protection

Mary's face is toneless / her flesh smells / she has wide brown eyes  
when she fell asleep later / her head in my lap  
I could see lice like lace in her smoky brown hair

she took her raper's dropped cap  
to her social worker who gave it to the police  
(—fingerprints)

I wanted to snap Mary for this poem  
but she feared to let you see her

tonight Mary was playing it safe  
she didn't come downstairs  
because she would lose her won bed  
I talked to her on the house phone  
two grim police came in  
I asked how she would sleep tonight

*I'm thinking of you  
be good*

I wish this were all / I mean isn't it enough? / turn the page  
for the final scene which is about estrangement and war eyes  
set where the overstimulated overeat

walking back to my hotel two streets up from the blueblack river streaked streetlight yellow  
I stopped to stare through the fogged window of a French restaurant (was it attractive? / full? )  
before I could move on a close cropped man (ex-soldier?) looked away  
from the woman with serious eyes across the table from him  
who was about to photograph herself  
and in much less than a second  
studied me / decided I was no threat / turned back to her  
just as her hair fell aside  
revealing her pierced ear / the flash  
explored everyone

## Invisibility

*culture like poems  
shapes by constricting*

by the river a hot drink  
is passed around against the clutching night  
and hampering mist that rises  
up in the rain from the river rushing past  
behind a row of breakwind trees  
one who is poor fellates one who is not

what you and I may take as institutionalized dependence  
another may see as cherishing and respect

suddenly he finishes his meal  
rises from the table  
takes 20 steps and resumes his invisibility  
his blue cap pulled down tight  
over his sweaty black hair  
when I left he was gazing everywhere  
but not at anyone  
with his reddened eyes

he shopped for his wife's underpants menstrual pads and burqas  
how could a woman haggle with a man for such things

where the emblem of beauty is the impossibly slender  
who can't be seen  
the thickwaisted / the sweaty / the drunk  
in short a forgettable thing  
muttering to itself at dusk  
between a paintpeeling cart and the roaring freeway

low tattered tents together in a herd  
dust and smoke rising up into the dusky sky  
a refugee woman speaks from the other side  
of a veil / her lips distorting its hanging otherwise perfect opaqueness  
she says she is not like American girls  
who are used like tissues and thrown away

imagine the humiliation  
of being inexplicably forced  
to serve food to the being  
you have resolutely refused to see



at the club outside town a 400 pound man  
sitting on a chair by the door collects a 25 dollar cover  
inside they're shaved and showing pink

on a subway crowded by strangers  
I moved to sit between two women pretending I wasn't there  
they furred their skirts as I approached and halted their eyes again once I sat down  
they seemed to be asleep but got off when their stop was called  
I can respect shame

the train yard smells of piss and shit so why go there

how can you respect a woman by not seeing her  
the same way you respect her by not seeing her vulva

she seemed unremarkable  
she stood shaking in an icy doorway / nothing in her cup  
she wasn't there was she

## Unwantedness and Dependence

the master foresees / the slave works  
households are formed by men  
using women and slaves

affection may be an advantage  
interdependence with benefits

self-reliance is a luxury

a street vendor told me  
the police took his goods  
left a receipt  
he declined to die  
he put on a good show  
by not falling off yet

Adam Smith said  
*all are often supplied  
and a workman even of the lowest and poorest order  
if he is frugal and industrious  
may enjoy a greater share of the necessities and conveniences of life  
than is possible for any savage  
to acquire*

unless you're used up  
*a carpenter in London  
is not supposed to last in his utmost vigour  
above eight years*

the tightrope wins by default  
in the ninth

my father lived in a community  
that suddenly had no use for him  
he picked apples  
we ate our livestock / sold land

two men cooking  
outside their crates / discussing hope  
*I'm waiting for my death* the old one said  
the young one laughed a brassy laugh  
what if they force you away  
*I'll make another* / pointing to his boxhouse

*unwantedness* may be too much word

## All Closed

when my poem comes up  
comments are hushed  
unenthusiastic / as if it were  
made of black words  
written carefully with a face pen  
but no matter how hard I try  
nothing I write is a face opener  
they sit there all closed

## Whiter Higher Neither Other

I warned her hair about her dreams  
she hung them on the existence tree

## Ian Sez

I'm weighing in tonight at the peddlers' bush  
where the orange stands tall and weeps  
what happens when life meets orange  
when palms meet concrete  
Hades waits by the well for wolves

## Up High

no one tells you how to write better  
only what's wrong with what you wrote  
but looking close but not thinking hard  
you can find things wrong with their stuff too  
a crooked tree about to fall over

## Up Yes Up

the shore doesn't fit  
sitting by it is sitting on shifting sand  
Dean says don't practice  
we know what he practices

## Schnitzelization

Berlin's no stranger to strange  
with more wars lost than won  
(when did they ever win)  
it's full of walls and broken equipment  
but art's won  
maybe it's the pants  
too many pants  
a wall of pants



## Filling Up

you live in a trench  
your ears are onions  
the shape of the town you live in  
is the shape of voluptuousness  
people who believe in words  
don't believe you when you use them  
big rocks by the ocean  
with a history dragging behind them  
fail as metaphors individually and in a group  
with the world filled with beauty  
why not me

## Laughing Purpose

down low I hear low laughing  
in it I discern street purpose  
up in the window she types her blog entry  
never looking down / she never sees what's up  
I marvel at the silliness of people  
who don't write a poem each day

## Squaw Recalls

Blue Ray humped it to the workshop  
well she sauntered in late  
she didn't like a thing  
except what the earnest women wrote  
even still she liked her own work best  
I was surprised when 3 days later  
she remembered my name  
I could tell because she called me by it  
without apparent reminder  
she didn't get to my poem  
but Dean looked at it  
I told on her  
and Bob took care of it

## In The Strong Wind Before It Calms For Evening

over the prairie a strong field wind  
reverses the corn's tilt  
the corn's leave sound like overly dried paper  
with dirt black as the blackest dirt  
everything around here is primal  
nothing sounds like whispering  
or people interested in strange or hidden thoughts  
it sounds like overeager old man hair  
pushing up through hell

## Not So Many Laws

in texas they love death  
by gun by hanging by lethal injection  
nothing stops them  
not even sometimes the courts  
they love the fear  
they love the agony  
they love it  
they love it  
they love it

# I Yi Yi

everyone loses  
(they tell us)  
when the innocent go free

## Two Drifters

many streets lead to the basilica  
centuries were needed to make it  
who could who built it  
it was the work of a mass of god  
some things are not automatic

## Problems Again

always a bug to fix  
a problem unresolved  
and always when I have no time  
to resolve it



## Twirl

beauty of wording  
like slime tiles  
or licorice wrenches  
on a satin decoration  
we harpoon what we like  
resist the rest

## Ugh Bletch

White Plains is so wrong  
10pm Sunday and nothing to eat  
save a greasy diner on Westchester  
yeesh  
next time bring a sandwich or fly somewhere else

## In the Market for Drain Inhibitors

blue uncluttered lovers on their top sofa  
replicate nausea in highpitched tongues  
then retire to water despair  
in sorrow drain inhibitors pack tears  
a spent covered sorrow  
but saxophone objects replicate nausea  
just as effectively as epigrams water away despair  
wastefully I spent my covered sorrow on a nausea mower

## Ian Wilson and Backward Drifting Smog

how poor the poem  
when its line ending  
words read backwards  
aren't interesting  
regardless of skips and an  
undeviating willingness to like  
almost anything say I

## Dithering on Last Position

the tree would like to walk  
it thinks while couples walk  
by or stop to sit under its changeable branches  
it envies you you  
know your movements quick enough  
to seem determined  
but the one you're with doesn't see it  
that way to her the movements  
are random and undirected  
like the breeze that now is hot  
now cool and rain wet  
nearby a white dog believes  
he's about to understand  
something but then he thinks  
it's just a smell or a tick  
and besides now it's time to shit  
the tree will believe one day  
it's about to understand  
but it will be just it's roots  
spreading out beyond the dripline  
anticipating a good year next year  
green with envy as they say

## Bends and Slides

today women occurred to me  
but since all I did was drive  
it must have been the music  
I did see some  
ugly and full of the promise of bad times  
nothing worse the plumber pants  
on a big belly big nose woman

## With a Drip

listen to what the comma says  
its pause deceives  
its information commands existence  
the breeze is starting to blow  
and soon the water will rise  
and the , will be a !

## More on Grandfather

facts learned today  
grandfather was cantakerous / had a bad temper  
he pushed Nana before she kicked him  
it was a marital argument  
Ann Scherbon learned the story from Nana  
Nana kicked him from behind but caught him in the plumbing  
Nana and grandfather did not speak the same language (Ukrainian and Russian I suppose)  
if grandfather stayed outside all night it was because Nana went to bed angry  
my mother likely stayed away when the argument started  
Butch said my mother was friendly  
all the farmer neighbors in the area hung together because their livelihoods were intertwined  
Nana had explicit instructions for butchered cows:  
save all the blood (Butch had to stir it continually so it wouldn't clot)  
head was "quartered" which included ears one place / snout another  
intestines but not the paunch (stomach)  
Nana made hot / spicy sausages  
she also made cheeses which she stored in a well in the far north field  
the barn partly burned and was rebuilt but only part of it  
the raised ground to the south was the main cow part (where they were milked) / no floor there  
the "creamery" was to the East on the raised part or possibly where the empty cellar was (burned in fire?) / no floor there either  
they raised and slaughtered 1 pig a year (my mother and father)  
the well in the field was also called the "creamery"  
my mother worked 8-5 everyday to pay the taxes / the farm paid the bills  
she worked the farm mornings and evenings / she did 75% of the work  
Butch heard the story 17,000 times  
as you entered the door to the barn on the right was a grain room and maybe a box/cabinet for other foods / to keep the animals away  
Jimmy was merely deaf / but people learned that when he was 4 so he was simply 4 years behind everyone  
Butch nearly accidentally killed him when he backed the mower blade up into Jimmy's gut / no injuries  
had grandfather gone to the doctor immediately he would have lived  
I visited a chiropractor 1 day a week for a long time (Neil D. Batchelder or Neil D. Butchelder or Neil D. Buchwald) for my eye problem (it's a weak muscle in the back of the head / treat that and the eye will move back into place)  
Sam broke the "span" on the 1-horse mower (the arm that transferred power from the wheels to the reciprocating blade is how I understood it) / grandfather threatened to sue / Ann Scherbon for \$1.75 in her jar / clothes / purse and that paid for the repairs or the part / Sam returned it & the Hoyts mowed his fields for him and that's how they became fast friends  
Butch = Charles Hoyt / who remembers me getting shyly on the bus everyday / he remembers me as timid / he would never recognize me he said  
the first house my father built was maybe an add-on to a 2-room shack  
my father told Butch that he was building the second house on a site of his choosing and to be nicer since he and my mother wanted another child  
my father was the first person in the area to use a fake / metal chimney painted and sculpted to look like bricks



the slaughter house was cut off from its foundation so it had no floor / they pulled it to the wide part of the road beyond the Lay sand pit and left it there overnight  
Roy Star was Lithuanian / his wife's name was Edy  
Edy died early  
he lived on his Bell stock as a "gentleman" farmer / he had 2 houses one in town and the farm  
he liked the fruit of the grape  
he was walking to church and had walked into 2 trees and was all bloody when Sam picked him up and took him the rest of the way  
he lived only in his kitchen and the rest of the house was just junk  
he tipped over an electric heater and it started his house on fire and he died right away / he was drunk  
Scotty found the bones the next or a while later and reported them to the police  
used to get 300-400 bales from our property but it dwindled to 200-250  
George Hoyt would frequently deliver grain and other stuff (beet mash???) to my mother  
Butch was surprised I had an uncle  
his memory seemed to bump along so maybe not all this is right  
my mother worked in a shoe factory in Haverhill maybe as a stitcher or she ran a machine  
there were two Wykysac houses and one of them sold the cheese Nana made  
Butch helped fight the Roy Star fire  
Roy Star had a dent in his head where a horse kicked him with his 2 rear hooves after Roy snapped a towell on its rump / he said bone would come out through his skin for years  
he could juggle / he had a trick where you put your hands between your legs and Roy would grab them from behind and pull / flipping you over and you'd land on your feet  
Roy had a glove with sandpaper attached and would sit cleaning eggs and would talk nonstop  
he knew John Carver was a realtor  
Priscilla Carver went up to the Bath Maine summer camp and starved herself thin

## Day of Drink

day of anger heat drink  
a day drunk with wet  
they fought / their daughter drove off  
she kicked him from behind  
but landed her foot in front  
refusing treatment / laying drunk  
he died / all the women cried  
for 20 years they cried  
nothing was fixed

## Judge Reluctance

should he graduate  
seems yes but the case is not easy for me  
the explanations not so thorough  
he seems evasive but not from fear or lack of knowledge  
I tell them all I'm disappointed but satisfied  
he passes easily  
we are all happy and drink together that evening  
with his family who all love each other  
and me for passing him  
he will not embarrass

## Airport Rest

with hours to kill  
it's a meal of Montréal smoked meat  
aka pastrami of a sort  
dijon mustard on light rye  
made famous by  
an enterprise  
that makes things famous

## Attacks

the wind nearly blew me over  
the wind by the river  
the sky was purple with distress  
cloud bits broke off and swirled to oblivion  
when I couldn't stand anymore  
I got in the car and tried to sleep  
when the trees seemed like they'd fall over  
I moved the car  
later I drove to where the weather was bad

## Flecked Door

funny little thoughts  
scribbled like backwards rainfall  
on a brokenglassed door  
my hand's on the handle  
not the knob  
behind the door lies a secret so final  
that even learning it doesn't  
make any difference

## Go

in the next room  
my computer works hard on a problem  
optimization of workshop schedules  
for a poetry conference  
work with all leaders in the first 5 days  
work with 2 repeated but not same leaders the last 2 days  
work with as many other participants as possible  
no 2 people with the same schedule  
no workshop days 1–6 with more than 13 participants  
last day no workshop with more than 15  
go

## Night Break

behind them the lights are reflected as frizzle  
reproductions beading up in the drops on the window  
they've abandoned their blankets and if it were light  
you might see mist rising from them  
soon they'll be done and first one then the other will cover up  
behind them the lights keep on



## Today in Spam

Very,  
Incapable  
Anyone  
Gravity  
Replied;  
Anyone  
<<http://www.ltodnenm.cn/>>  
very,  
suffering,  
<<http://www.ltodnenm.cn/>>  
Crossly  
Incapable  
Anyone  
Learning,  
Incapable  
Suffering

## Simple but for Technology

ICs in the the D/A burn and think  
tubes glow  
music appears  
through the air

## Foo on Sun

how can installing emacs  
be so hard on a machine  
that claims to be for hackers

## Overnight Revelation

the building  
cut off at the foundation  
because it needed next  
a dirt floor  
was placed on a sledge  
to be dragged by a made-up tractor  
well they couldn't make it the whole  
way that day  
so they parked down by Lay's sandpit  
the one guy who saw it that night  
always asked Hoyt who lived in the house  
down by Lay's pit

## Green Pathways

hail shredded leaves  
green coat on the small roads  
layers of half/inch hail in the gullies  
mist roiling up from the leaf bed under the pines  
and from the road curving up the hill  
following this path I found another witness  
whose views contradicted everything

## Black Watching

dead crow labeled  
do not touch  
every dead crow has the danger of west nile  
animal control will pick it up and test  
do not touch  
days pass  
the crow remains  
remains composed  
its black eye eying me  
eying its note  
and it after all

## Planning Style

in Denmark  
cold air will push away the leaves  
the oddly tasty hot dogs will be served from carts by the train station  
it's only 10 minutes to the grocery for juice  
and 20 to the preserved town  
canals / water scenes  
down past the church  
there's the old cemetery  
spread out large not far  
from the center of town  
many are respected here

## Now or Soon

watching the storm show its black face  
above the brick faces  
of old buildings  
people turn away

in the streets lights like headlights and neon lights  
smudge the streets orange and white and purple and green

the storm is everywhere  
that is near here

a black storm warns  
a green one threatens

to some a storm is a danger  
to others a story

men with yellow eyes  
and hungering mouths  
drive to the edges of swamps  
beyond the rim of the city's fragile order

someone far away awaits  
coronation / near  
someone awaits death

fingertips hover near  
key caps

which way is stage left

did I mention  
the streets have already  
been wettened



## Two-Horse Hay Mower Story

to cut his field  
Sam borrowed Powell's mower  
about a 6' blade on a horse-drawn rig  
metal wheels with teeth to dig in to transfer  
forward motion to a back and forth of the blade  
it needed a tractor or two horses  
Sam broke the drive shaft  
Powell threatened to sue  
but Sam's wife Anne found  
\$1.65 in her pin jar and Sam  
bought a new shaft and replaced it  
Butch Hoyt said they never spoke again

## My Stories

the way words fall  
into place or off the page  
makes the hair stand up  
and sing / nothing navigates  
through the mind  
like a mindless  
story playing out  
with half-random words belittling  
the halfwit author  
but through it a thread of indecency  
plows up the subtext  
of plainwrapped characters  
fixated on a tour of the bar  
that first served  
undrinkable martinis

## What a Waste

not a line of poetry  
in the first 54 lines  
what was TS thinking  
I guess he wrote them in April  
the cruellest month

## Books Wait

not far from the paths  
I cross though habit  
every year  
lies a person who might  
have been important  
who might have known  
things I want to know  
but it's so tiring to think of it  
when there's more reading left

## That Season of 60 More Days

ditch the bridge  
keep the cash  
this is what I saw  
as the most important  
news of the day

## Waiting More

one day a woman  
will bend down to kiss me one  
last time  
one day soon

## Politics Today

when we can't count on the elites  
all that's left are the mediocres

## Short Pic

windmill in the red dust  
of late afternoon  
being blown in circles while  
cars drive by  
everything you can see  
is relentless  
this time of day is cruel  
this time of month passes quickly  
like the wind passing over the blades  
making spinning



## Confessions

like living  
in the past  
like believing  
in the past  
like losing  
like the past

## Hoboing Down

when the shouting is over  
the hoboes move out of  
the back of the graveyard  
and into the railyard  
to fire up their barrels  
and cookfires  
the evening clams down  
spark add to the constellations  
smoke smell invigorates the cooled air  
and even throwaways smell good cooked  
behind a row of headstones  
a teenage couple settles down  
the paths of choice fan out

## River Dreaming

if Florence means anything at all  
it means look here at what men can do  
(yes sexist but that's the truth of the renaissance)  
now it's the old buildings and cathedrals  
and the leather markets  
the repeated stalls and muted bargaining  
and the funny old cuisine not like Italian  
at all  
no not at all

## Quiet Street without Streetlamps

lost in thought  
in the city  
in foreign chaos  
who we meet is just hot noise  
who I am is a leaking balloon  
living I adjust  
otherwise I'm like rock

## Spurious Trip

the drive up through the north woods  
alone / the drive through cold north air  
I'm listening to songs repeating  
and the same song played many ways  
to learn of its integrity and what makes it it  
the city I'm driving too is not inviting  
it's know for its cold dark wet nights  
for snow and unfamous meetings after the cafés close  
what would it mean to meet then there  
after the cafés close / after the long drive

## DFW Up Up and Away

never sure  
but always writing  
fragmenting reality  
finding fragments of literal truth  
among the potted absurdities  
always about the self  
foot and end notes  
interruptions of continuous literalness  
where the interruptions are themselves  
continuous or serenely attached to one another  
fragmented reality  
writing / sure  
never / sure

## Why Go

why chicken out  
put the weeds between you and the country road  
why bail  
sneak beneath the bridge where the sound  
of the water passing the pier and rocks  
sounds like silk on silk  
why end  
the pulses and throbs in your head  
that makes the world and everything in it  
a colorful bright red

## Dream Weaver

too much to do  
time dropping into the bottom bowl  
makes me want to sleep



## Joint

one day the drive-in will close  
and though I never found it til I was 40  
that will the day my connection to the past  
is gone / the mayo-y burgers  
the suzie Qs / the picnic tables  
where the west sky is purely visible  
no one will ever know what about it  
was the best / maybe the stolen frostie sign

## Ars Star Trek

a poem of sewing  
threading a needle through the squint  
of eye (of person) and eye (of needle)  
this is why poets are forced  
to scrub warp plasma conduits

## Nature of Order

wholeness / life / personal  
egoless / subdued brilliance  
gift for God / unity  
structure / the architect  
says it all / yes says  
it  
all

## Listening

years of fiddling  
and I found the album  
listening  
Michael Tschudin  
the Hammond B-2  
Leslie 147  
finally on its way

## Endings

summer about to quit  
quitting / such a lovely idea  
to just stop to relax  
to permit life and the world in  
summer has the luxury of simply stopping

## Wasps Under the Pillows

because the night comes up earlier  
because what poses as work grows darker  
at the same rate and in the same place  
we celebrate the increasing pauses  
and flowers sent increasingly by accident  
pile up in the trash pile out back just inside  
the ring of woods and swamp  
still I recall the warm room cooling  
as night was pulled in by the fan  
the cricket sounds / the frogs  
my dreams of accomplishment  
more / different / less  
more confused  
less defined  
less valuable  
less like those nights

## Why Here?

clouds and light rain  
mixed with heavy and heavy winds  
hot / typhoon blown into HK  
flights delayed / ferries on hold  
maybe to be shut in with someone  
to look out over the bay  
the shitcrazy buildings  
instead it's here with the cool air  
from the screen door up to my knees  
just writing as if I were able to do it  
worth anyone reading

## Bits Broken

what else can go wrong  
everything she said



## Ill Wonder

the song is heavy on the wavering  
deep piped organ that can and does  
well upward to a silver shimmer like high thin  
clouds underlit by the set sun  
but even with this image in my mind  
the song tells me it's about a rainy  
early winter evening in a bright northern city  
surround by ocean water  
and I am at the curtained window  
watching a girl who once loved me  
walk with her collar up  
and her hair kerchiefed

## Live on the Street

on that street  
puddles are whipped  
into reluctance  
into streams into the gutter  
her kerchief wags on the down  
of her back / maybe  
she is reciting to herself  
one of the poems I wrote  
for her / for her  
I live here

## To Me

the sulphur lights across the harbor  
contribute squiggles to everything  
that points to me  
at least the pathfinders can't straight arrow  
themselves through my eyes and into  
the night that has my back  
better to lean on forearms on the rail  
pretend the tears are for the girl  
who just hours ago unsheathed her hair  
after the sharp glacier wind  
rushed her back  
but it's the cold wind  
off the water  
off the far glacier  
off the world

## Aubade to Who?

(she eating a cucumber)  
the train like a bullet  
6' into a pond  
(she with sculpted and shaped lips)  
the cobblestones like a former street  
down to the river a former septic drain  
(she walking her bike with a man / a future lover)  
the romanesque church  
closed on Sundays  
(she walking away)  
(down the cobblestone street)  
(toward the romanesque church)  
(me never a lover / not past / not future / not)  
but dawn just waking  
the clouds not folding

## Out of Sight

river uncovered  
now plain in the sight  
of the low sun all day  
short days  
but still all day  
all those days  
seems the victims are lined up on the banks  
waiting their turns  
for the lowering sun  
to wink them out of light

## Among Fields

she told me  
she would take me to her  
for the rest of the days I have  
knowing my days were few  
hers many  
she would follow me  
as far as I could go  
then make me comfortable  
wherever that might be  
however many those days could be  
would be enough she said  
her eyes / her cheeks / the pillow wet  
the train then took her  
around the bend  
out of the city  
back to her north  
her warmth now hours later  
is just the shape of her blanket  
her pillow / her not here

## The Four Questions

what gift  
which woman  
why her toothy smile  
how much will it cost

## Why Who Would

why would anyone care  
why would they find their way  
to my side / the small player  
the one not expected to arrive  
let alone thrive  
why someone would love to be near  
why the dark would be a treasure chest  
and the promises / fields that find themselves  
flooded and uncasual



## Facility of Love

nowhere familiar and certainly sounding  
flabbergasted by the dark sun behind grayed clouds  
we walked down to the formerly covered river  
in search of artmaking gear and a new view of the oldfashioned  
in her skirt she made herself into an innocent  
we worked hard on the art / felt safe from artifice  
later she talked of the days still left and her plan  
to ease my head down softly when the time came  
when she was ready to make her contribution

## Price Sensitive

among the hats  
hat pins dress sharp  
skirts hang to cover  
no one wanders more  
than the fleeting stare  
nothing more fun than typing  
a row of 0s like this  
000000000000000000000000  
even of them  
it adds up  
doesn't it?

## Recollection and the End of Love

does remembering the nights  
mean the nights were about love  
does remembering the walks  
mean the walks went somewhere  
her skirt (not pretty) made her walking young  
what happens when it rains on her street  
here it means I'll walk

## Me

on her street footfalls  
have pumiced dailydirt  
into a fine black dust  
but the snow will grab  
and rain it away  
near her street  
trains probably turn snow to steam  
with the force of heavy attractions  
she of course has made a place for me  
has shaded the window and streaked it  
in dust and caking to make my disappearance  
whole and sparkling  
she has planned meals  
and sleeping arrangements  
and a story for every ear attached  
to a doubting mind  
all that's needed now  
is the one thing too hard to deliver

## Electronic Pan Pipes

does the heavy breathing  
coincidental with your name appearing  
on the presentation slide represent  
a coincidence or a desire  
now think about the snow falling  
from gray/black clouds on a day  
the sun never rises and the importance  
of warmth through the night  
rises to the level of desperation  
she of course has it planned out  
the down above and below  
the little caresses  
something like a fire but buried  
and its smouldering like hot asphalt  
under a desert sun  
she welcomes the snow and commands it to pile  
so there is nothing but the bed for it  
now the slide  
hunh hunh hunh hunnh

# Mortal

when life was young  
death could only wink

## Localities

and the rain that fell last night  
persisted to become the strength  
in a unfurling fern

## Along a Worn Out Street

cracked glass  
still waterproof  
might hold under a load of snow  
could use some ice this winter  
be careful when you rest beneath it  
so rare to find a glass roof



## Temples Out Here

she doesn't know about the roadside crosses  
the plastic flowers the desert turns white  
broken red lights and cracked mirrors  
from the car that kills  
day after day the cars go by  
no one admires the carefully made but makeshift  
arrangements by the unofficially saddened

## Reality Really

lens flare made her miss  
the best photo of the most fleeting thing  
that has ever happened  
so fleeting she didn't even see it  
her only hope was the camera  
and its fast shutter and quick lens  
its very receptive sensor (film for you old guys)  
she knew it was there  
she almost saw it  
sensed it sort of  
like an orgasm pulling up like the Rambler in second gear  
but never quite getting there  
(it felt good though honey)  
but the sun flared  
the lens flared  
such a beautiful geometric pattern  
like in all the best magazines  
but not that most fleeting thing  
like a pinprick of perfection

## One Fine Day

how many will come visit  
what'll happen if they meet  
which of them will own me  
what if it's raining and the only  
place is under the copper beech  
what if one of them points and says  
I designed that  
what if it's not raining  
and they spread out nude trying to guess  
which spot I'm in  
only one will know  
which one

## Fashion Train

everyone around me is dying  
they are doing it younger each year  
some say I'll grow frail  
I believe they are wrong  
I like to follow the crowd

## Creepiness

the deep dark and the red face  
within it / he holds a small silver  
camera and frames his shot  
as if overseeing a tremendous  
evil being committed on the floor  
in the dark / he holds a small gift  
for you / one you don't want

## Story Lights

certainly the illumination  
the eyes that watch  
the clipped memory machines  
that capture it / frame it / make  
it a story or worse  
in words of one punch each  
but if not the illumination  
another story about what we saw  
and with each retelling  
the story clears

## Twang Kong

Nashville noise from the bars  
a staggering drunk punched from bar to bar  
by fatty bouncers  
some play as if it mattered  
but it's just a strip  
just a place to walk / be seen on a Friday night  
no one can face the truth that even  
yes even the talented suck

## Near Musicians

nothing  
dinner / no comment  
music and a float  
nothing



## Also Too

and where are they  
where do they sit  
when the world needs to dance  
who is able to refrain  
from singing the refrain  
when everyone else has forgotten  
my life is the drain  
everyone else's pours through  
but like thin water or thinner  
where are they  
the voices quiet  
the wind too

## True Truth

her hand small and  
still dimpled with young fat  
rests in the cracked palm  
of a man none would mistake  
for someone related to her  
by love alone

## Qualifications

the beauty of the night  
is the blueness of light on the rivers  
the yellowness of light on the streets  
meet in the middle

## Do Good

she speaks an Irish slag  
and drinks men under tables  
this man / this table  
he is hunchshouldered  
and done drinking  
for good

## Certain Chunking

hair parts  
the upper class  
into withs and withnots  
I assume the mantle  
I assume is false

## Parthenon

the fake greek statues  
the absurd costumes  
the hard to obtain difficult food  
nothing to drink without drink tix  
and drink tix as hard to find as lasting love  
even though with the target in site  
the grassy slope though  
is lit well

## Up North

what if what  
we are is nowhere noted  
and little appreciated  
simply put  
what if the constant sunset  
is all there is  
if the black dark clouds hovering  
above but not near the horizon  
are the peak of clarity  
what if a bit of freshly fallen snow  
is all that could remain

## Books

books piled around the recliner  
lamp bookshelves a nice stereo  
(to use the old terminology)  
too much to read  
and I'm not inclined  
to start something that cannot be finished  
so the task accumulates  
piles pile up



## Birthdays Are Happy

the past is stamped  
by a darkness and a wetness  
for example  
to imagine a girl's birth 92 years ago  
requires picturing a cloudy day  
a birth at night  
a raining day or a drizzling day  
a cold day  
the mother  
of course  
deeply involved  
and the father pacing outside  
under an elm or more likely an oak  
if the mother is 17 as some records indicate  
she wishes she were and he is  
drinking from a widemouthed jar  
stern family is just outside the door  
to the birth room  
soon everyone  
even the youngest  
is crying  
is screaming

## Across the Waters

her promise is to walk me to the end  
to take care of it all until there is no more  
she knows it's not a long journey  
and when it ends she will not be well  
she's already made the place for me  
she will not scream there

## One Discussion Too Many

too curious  
about her she  
becomes furious  
with me  
unlike with Blessing  
I've lucked into this blessing

## Because Work

she began her work  
a day early  
a while back  
a long while  
we await  
the gone time

## Open Close

the day was like this  
cold and drizzling  
clouds and some fog  
dark hung around all day  
before midnight it was over  
one bracket in place  
the other under construction

## Requiem for Methuselah

she is likely not sleeping well  
pissed / I hope so  
the better to forget with  
remember Kirk and Spock  
and Rayna with Flint as once immortal  
make her forget

## On Our Way Home

many trips / much talk  
no one really there  
the future is fear  
always running away  
time is no friend  
I say to time  
“hold it right there”  
time moving  
fast laughs

## Greatest Good

of the places cars park  
nothing is more special than  
next to the water  
river / ocean / lake / tank  
it spells romance of the most  
intimate sort as orchestrated  
by men with fumbling hands  
and smelly intentions  
life is so strange  
it had to have evolved  
no?



## Question for You

picture a place by a river  
picture the water flowing  
from maybe a far off mountain range  
into maybe a nearby ocean  
picture a bridge  
make it a peculiar green  
make it a swing bridge  
operated still  
by hand  
picture sitting by the river  
and you feel it's time to move on  
not time to leave  
time to move on  
what does the river do?

## Voids and Nulls

suddenly emptiness  
fills the back room  
insulated from the world  
by walls of thick books  
all I have is 1 plain window  
looking out on an abandoned lot  
broken bricks / wire in concrete  
plastic bags & ampersands  
it's what I watch as I type  
the repeating stories  
the stabs at making love  
with imagined lives  
like someone I once  
walked strange streets with  
with her missing too  
the emptiness needs  
another room

## For the Fourth Time

the expanse  
the cut corn  
the sheared wheat  
the light fails early  
and under a smudged sky  
facing an indefinite west  
covered by smothering level smooth bank of clouds  
all these things irrelevant compared  
to who's missing  
who's passed on  
passed away  
the sentiment of untested writing

## Looking

once we looked for words  
we looked in alleys  
on main street  
down the largest boulevards  
we looked in busted houses  
in warehouses  
in cardboard tents by the tracks outside town  
we searched the woods  
the fields  
the oceans  
mountains seemed promising  
highways / back roads  
we went fishing  
and hunting  
we made love a couple of times  
but it wasn't memorable  
we didn't speak  
and it was weeks before I realized  
it was because we couldn't  
because we had no words

## Song of the Ancients

many days the ancients cried out  
filling themselves with great self  
they tried learning to sing  
but the concept of melody  
wouldn't play in their heads  
after hearing this  
I moved to a flat by the tracks  
in a country that neither would be  
expected nor un  
in a room on the second floor  
I'd sit each day writing  
watching the trains go by  
the heads sometimes looking up at my window  
people would pass on the street below  
and look up  
but because the place is neither likely nor not  
I'd be who I wanted to be  
ancient / no one

## Against the Top

the dream of moving  
into the past is a symptom of depression  
/ over failure or fear of more  
of it / anticipates a remainder  
of life dedicated to uncelebrated  
effort / unlike days before  
where performance sat atop the goals  
the depression of  
leave me alone  
has the effect of isolation  
and sleepiness

## Oh?

she pushed her stroller into me  
at the corner called  
the Bermuda Triangle  
in Manhattan  
flustered she didn't  
but I did  
apologize to her  
I said  
I'm sorry for pushing my stroller into you  
I didn't see you  
down the street in a small park  
with benches enough for old men  
to sit and remember young men  
a yellowed maple leaf  
just missed an ant  
after detaching  
she said  
I'll think about it

## Stride Right

who doesn't love chaos  
and the unexpected lives  
that go with it  
who needs a foreseen life  
flying over me in a pan-Atlantic pattern  
overhead fields size rooms  
for computer counters  
passing breathings  
are alone in their thick skins



## Airplane Health

above the city fading away  
my plane banking showing the city's  
raked streets in lights like thick  
pinpricks is just aiming to get away  
and me with it / not every headlight  
and backyard light is foreign  
underneath / perhaps some are recalling  
something we said together  
ahead a another city is lighting up  
its tonight heaving into view  
someone who might one day wish  
to say something with me  
is watching something like  
a computer turn on his backporchlight  
and I suspect that light will be the first light  
I see when I decide to arrive

## Once Upon Her Bed

foreign  
she is strange  
her preferences depend  
on pasts and presence  
in the night  
after the great darkness began  
I watched her  
I was half/asleep  
my memory of it weakens every night  
she eventually cried out in the quiet  
in her version of the night  
I did what I could  
for the rest of the night

## Hard to Sleep Sometimes

if only  
time would  
make room  
if only  
the far places lasted longer  
if only  
I could make  
myself over  
the past will catch you too

## Bookfall

books responded  
to those who walked past  
by falling to the floor  
the store clerks took turns  
rushing in good-natured horror  
to piles of books in splits  
and getting them back in their ranks  
all they wanted was for their  
words to be licked off their opened hearts

## Shot

all that's wrong  
is summed up by  
an out of focus  
snap

## Duty Avoided

someone's life was at risk  
I was in a position to judge  
but a vacation intervened  
my hardship was granted  
but was that all

## Friends of the Night City

we love the shots  
of cities from above  
colors are blue and exaggerated  
steam rises from manhole covers  
headlights bite through streets  
what must the lovers be doing  
as the helicopters chop

## Re Alignment

of course we can discuss  
this all later / when we meet  
but for now just assume  
you're wrong  
the woman will welcome you  
cry while forgetting me



## The Club

she likes what she  
has / her  
music declaims it  
we like what she  
has / our  
eyes are on her swelling  
parts but she believes  
herself worth too much  
and asks it  
we look  
don't pay  
walk out and back down  
the concrete canyon

## Alley 1

the crazed night  
the stared-at streetlight  
the steam waist high  
the man beneath an old comforter  
uncomfortable by the backdoor  
of a reliable restaurant

## November 22

day of important deaths  
one for everyone  
the other for just one  
or the handful who have chosen  
to stand by the one

## Traipsing

dogs enjoy  
flight of birds entertain  
they all act  
on the basis of silliness  
the true purpose  
of the order behind  
our worlds

## Our Depression

wouldn't it be funny  
if the fear of the worst  
my mother taught me  
because of her childhood brush with the collapse  
were to come to pass and it was I  
who experienced it at the worst  
possible moment  
and not her

## Future Looking

looking back down the street  
curving down away and out of sight  
I see the green light taking on a variety of shades  
of green in the titanically polished  
finishes of the newer cars parked  
along the outside of the curve  
soon the light will turn red

## Falling Through

on the bridge  
one of the times when everything  
it seems stops  
the sound I heard was the water wiping  
past the piers not even a wind  
or a far-off bird / no bugs no flies no breathing

then off somewhere  
up stream I suppose  
in a house lit by one flickering light  
I heard the guitar strummed  
making a sad set of chords

I pulled her bobby pin from my pocket  
placed it above my lip and under  
my nose / it still had some of her  
on it / then the guitar stopped  
a bird sang of its night ahead  
a car seized the road with its hot tires  
the bobby pin slipped off my fingertips  
and bounced into a drain hole  
down into the streaming river flow

a weeping came from the house  
I listened

## Thanksgiving

were it then  
we would have walked  
the fort and watched  
American Press  
head out to sea  
as it happened  
I cried



## Blam-o

I dreamt I kissed her  
chastely in her bad hour  
but on the lips because  
that's all I know  
when I did her mouth  
turned into a muzzle  
and her tongue into a thin tongue like a rat's tail  
she pushed her serpent's tongue into my mouth  
but cute  
very cute  
she stays on the list  
of people I could love

## Live a Lie

if you had any doubt  
the alleys will pave the way  
to a vein of daylight losing  
understanding as we dip  
our way to philosophical twilight  
this all in a town  
once inhabited by those  
with more ways to lie  
than a henhouse of chickens

## Mistake Now Failure

the only house I have left  
of my tiny past  
is a place beginning to leak  
(both ways I suppose)  
a place I cannot walk into alone  
every year I went to turn on the water  
the pipes under the sink would burst  
years after the last time  
after it was no longer required  
I realized it was because  
I opened the valve as fast as I could  
I did that for years  
my friend who could plumb would come with me  
in anticipation of the failure  
why was it only just now  
I figured out my mistake  
when the house is ready to seriously  
start falling apart  
like says Zachary Schomburg  
I should choose no scary

## **Bills See**

planning a future  
that keeps me well  
but nourishes me  
not at all

## Yes Yet

from a cornfield  
in a heavy rain  
don't ask  
I watched them run  
from the porch to the car  
switching sides so she  
could drive  
and laughing  
they will be in lover  
one day but  
they can't know it  
yet

## Purpose of Correlation

americans grew fat  
at the same time and rate  
that widescreen tvs became popular  
and were set by default to stretch wide

those lovely female stars  
with their wide midlastcentury  
hips and asses

## Behind It Today

when the thoughts get happy  
the discouragement and mistakes  
pile up again  
think and pay attention  
don't blow out the sky  
get more depth of field  
when you're not sure of the focus

## **Crab Spider Approaching Dusk**

the light that lights  
the dark parts of the jungle  
is strained of every color  
but green and an earthly orange  
this casts a pale view toward horror  
on the humble spider merely  
repairing its web



## Nobody But

nēnē nē nē nē nē nēnēnēnē  
nē nē nē nē nē nēnē nēnē nē  
nē nēnē nē nē nēnē nē  
nēnē nē

nobody can do the  
*shing-a-ling*  
like a goose

nobody can do the  
*skate*  
like a goose

nobody can do  
*boogaloo*  
like a goose

nobody can do  
*filly*  
like a goose

well let me tell you nobody  
nobody nobody nobody  
nobody nobody nobody  
nobody nobody nobody  
nobody nobody nobody  
nobody

## Several Outbursts

outside the restaurant  
where the older elfin woman  
eats her fettuccine with her  
twotablesfull of friends  
the motorcycles designed  
to pretend they went mufflerless  
banged their pistons to applaud  
her wrinkled though girlish laugh

## History Marks This Spot

today I asked  
third one  
third time  
she agreed  
no one else will follow her  
Kilauea lighthouse  
overlooking the island at the end of the hook  
2pm today

## Honolulu Airport

where the warm wet air  
carried by the trades  
from the far south seas  
and the fertile lava islands  
found out there masquerades  
as it blows over my back  
while I write these words  
as a cool breeze

## Her Day

in a bar  
on the ground floor  
of a pale pink building  
with bright yellow awnings  
on each small window  
a woman with dark  
very dark hair  
sips a blue drink  
while wishing her husband  
whoever he may turn out to be  
walks up to her

## The Science of Not Much

when all the years  
are piled like a careful  
pyramid and archeologist  
type people stare at it  
and stare some more  
the question I would want to ask  
is one that the pile can answer  
but the science in their heads  
is not ready for  
the pile is starting  
to top off

## Where No One Goes

so many roads  
some are selected  
for the curves they make  
through forests  
or the lines they cut  
vertical and horizontal  
through deserts  
the ones I select  
are selected  
for the way they've  
broken apart  
become unpassable

## The Lost Lovers

*after Bolaño*

I dreamt of her lovers  
standing behind the mercado  
staring at their hands  
the wounds puffing up  
the tiny unbeloved  
spatters of blood  
beginning to cook on the hot asphalt  
just beyond the edge of the ragged  
midafternoon shadow  
I dreamt of her  
lying back on her bed of pillows  
reading soft poems  
written by her hard lovers  
all the contrasts hidden  
in the dark inner circles  
in the middles of her eyes



## Im Possi Ble

I speak to those whose ears  
desire human sound  
I play my guitar for those whose hips  
and feet desire movement  
both languid and ulcerated  
I write for those who wish  
they were better / wish  
they could do the to-them impossible  
I try to tell them that it's the same  
for all of us but to them  
that's impossible

## Prophecies

clouds eat away at the sky barrier  
allegiance falters eat bite  
inside the ward his eyes  
are covered by bandages over bandages  
because of this he is unable to eat  
and therefore to shit  
how long has he been here  
the other children are shouting  
snow / snow / it's snowing  
this means months  
out the back door of this place  
is a cemetery  
and years after he gets out his mother  
will buy a plot not 100 yards from his bed  
decades after that he'll bury her there  
from the ridge that leads up the hill he can't see  
I'll watch every one of these shows  
wonder what's next  
maybe you

## The More We Know

the madness of where  
we must be  
just think  
the dreams stuff  
is made of

## Don't Ever Call Me Sweetchromodynamics

the light tires  
but never slows  
though we've believed it for years  
and never understood anything about it  
 $e=mc^2$  has just been proven  
protons and neutrons comprise quarks  
bound by gluons  
the mass of gluons is zero  
(that's what makes them stick)  
& the mass of quarks is only 5%  
where therefore  
is the 95%  
quarks and gluons screwing around  
for those keen to know more  
the computations involve  
"envisioning space and time  
as part of a four-dimensional crystal lattice  
with discrete points spaced  
along columns and rows"

## Who Makes It Out?

what makes her tick  
only in a place across water  
who will buy it  
that her tricks aren't tricks  
her love a forgotten token  
on her dresser next to  
invisible lipstick

## Bad Gig

too far off the road  
through a deep field  
into the woods  
down a woodland road  
to the stonewall  
that's where it's buried  
what a dope

## Look Look Here

as she approaches  
I watch her eyes and her hair  
as she passes I glance down  
and back  
sometimes after she has passed  
I need to stop  
and get my bearings

## Rant O Rama

naturally the edge of discussion is slender  
the wide flat mallet of declaratives encroaches  
only a few atoms thick the cut part of the argument  
can be seen / perhaps just from one angle / in its splendor  
meanwhile I dream up explanations  
for how your scope can be thus limited  
and every dread flat and unflattering



## Why Big Boats Sink and Logs Don't

no one doubts nor borrows the future  
the ship that famously sank  
carried even the haughty to the depths  
the most trustworthy things  
are the most lowtech

## What Was Learned

35 years ago I married for the first time  
looking at the young today to compare  
I was nothing but stupid  
though it was love  
I'm sure of it  
she is probably  
crying tonight  
we lasted only 7 years  
perhaps it's better to forget  
yes learn to forget

## Coldity

perhaps tonight she  
lies in her bed weeping  
her children wondering  
how someone so remote  
and so remote  
could cause their great sturdy  
mother to spend all day alone  
in her bed

## In the Strange Dark

nowhere is it like here  
the voice she wants to use  
can't pronounce all the sounds  
in our shared language  
in the night I hear her  
practicing I see the outline  
of her body balanced and tense  
later her sheet rises  
pauses and falls and she  
makes little sounds  
in the morning she prepares  
a song for me

## Linger Just a Little

just beyond the last road  
a long oily beach reaches  
out to the receding oceanline  
and though it looks dirty and abused  
it has looked like this  
for thousands of years  
above the beach a whitehot sun  
behind wet white clouds  
is just a blowout above the scene  
of reminiscent love and something  
tried just once

## Escaping is Always the Last Part of the Game

when no one else would  
she believed she could  
and the end of it came  
after the train pulled out  
after the waving goodbye  
after the curve where the station  
track aimed its way  
to the other end the line

## Hard Search

so hard to parse the records  
and check the memory  
to guess who's who  
and who I might be

## I5

speeding 75 past  
an orchard  
of thin small young fresh trees  
in early Winter  
I'm trying to count the ways  
I can look down open lanes  
at angles related to the 2-d symmetries  
of the planting plan  
 $22.5^\circ / 45^\circ / 67.5^\circ / 90^\circ$   
maybe more  
some showing deeper lanes than others  
at their ends gray mist  
then we're past and it's rusted  
farm equipment  
the beauty of such work



## **Tortures**

no one fights like the fighters  
the purpose of cleaning is response  
we never take what is our own  
the sleep you sleep is never regained

## Hiding a Year

written the wrong year  
this is a comment on endings  
a cardinal on a snowy branch  
liking the seasons in the wrong order  
a year to forget bad nighttimes  
strange beds / strange people  
too many performances  
time to retire or at least return  
to the way of hiding