

ASYLUM FOR MY AFFECTIONS



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May 2015 - June 2017

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wish

wish i could live
like the red bird does fly
no thought to the future
never wondering why
pure joy on the wing
under bright awning of sky
blue lakes and rivers below
his nest in the marsh
among cattails and reeds
when at rest hidden at home
only then does he sing
no more no more than this
does this clever one need

lily of the valley

smallest of the small
in You lily of the valley
like some lost land
i relive my childhood long gone
my mother and my father call
you tiny grand perfumier

your fragrance stands
the titanic tests of time
small but most elegant of all
mighty in may's fragrant rhymes
on you so many springs have shone
eons-lasting as quarry stone

favorite chair

what a clod what a dud
he plops himself down
like the thickest book on a shelf
put back in its place with a thud
mindlessly adjusts my back pillow
to conform to his stressed-out spine
he lets out a wordless animal sound
closer to a rattling mutilated gasp
more an ape-like grunt than a whine
juggles some books in a pile
deciding which is less full of crap

and finally thinking only of himself
like some guttural beast pretends to read
when in fact reading is his excuse to nap
settles in moves no more and in a while
snores dreaming of water turned to wine
how i envy my lucky cousin the sofa
whom he always avoids across the room
and the gentle company of his wife
she knows how to bring a room to life
quietly elegantly sitting so softly down
i can almost hear my cousin sofa sigh
oh! to exchange places i would die

hair brush

one thin afternoon in a rare stroke of clarity
pondering a few of my old master's hairs

nothing else to do in my boring bathroom
two days after cold december's balding moon

his hair in my bristles more silver than black
when i saw this lack his loss with a rush of despair

it was then that his sole denial inspired dull me
to always serve his thinning follicles happily

i his steadfast brush

the poo-less cat

instead of air-lite kitty litter
shag rug towers or tunnels sold on twitter
or t.s. elliot's "cats" on olde broadway
someone should invent the poo-less cat
that way one day cat lovers would say
none can recall when their cats last shat

ducklings

clouds above hudson so low
spring rains falling so hard
the tops of silver bridges
cannot be seen

the river a tarnish of flows
three anchored rusted barges
and there at river's edge
a mother and her addled charges

ducklings! eight in a chaotic row
barely keeping up - their one reward
paddling frantic fledged by fledged
chasing down some downy dream

a man with nothing

just outside central park
six a.m. museum mile
surly dawn banishing dark
concrete bench his bed
sidewalk his open living room
he was throwing crusts
stale bread on cold ground

starlings sparrows
street wise city birds hopping
about a trusting congregation
they seemed to know him
feathered guests brethren
no thought for tomorrow
no fear no sense of doom

some were cooing
some brightly chirping
some singing this new day tune
some missing toes or feathers
doing just what vagrants do
proving a man with nothing
will still feed a sparrow

the lawnmower

i can't repress my well-oiled siege
yet nothing i do seems to restrain them
my weekly mowing barely contains them
summer long i am their dedicated liege
each estate's votary order-wielding rotary

each day i can't wait to roll out of garage or shed
to wreak havoc my art lopping their green peon heads
the tragicomedy of their communal foreshortening
like ozone on hot august days after a heavy rain
fresh cut their chastised scent freshens my lawns

my motorized knives trim crop shape and mulch
in sync with goldfinch cardinal and robin's songs

they my chorus as my engine roars summer long
still each stem and tendril thinks itself adorable
as i mow my chattel down the grass grows stronger

aging gracefully?

lawless as snowflakes
their hair whitened
their pale skin gone slack
their time shrinking
causes those few thinking
to bank on a new currency
of forgiveness and mercy

imaginary birds continued

the nickel-plated nougat sampler
uncle tom's watermelon wastrel
jockey's gastric jamboree gull
the quaker quack quack
the dunking donut darter
the greasy wig warbler
snooki's sea shell babbler
the dalmatian dollar dimwit
the nocturnal moon stud
the starry-chested marsh tyrant
uncle gibroni's bulbul
the befuddled foot inch
the nouveau gnat nicker
ed sullivan's silly shearwater
the dunderheaded door dunker
the emasculated wee-wimper wing
the stony stank cranker
the philodendron say sip
the erroneous felon stalker
the gibbous moon martin
horowitz's viola veery
ignacio's idle cronk itch
darjeeling's imperial toad tern
the twitchy rump rump
the itchy rump rump
desiderata's desert doodle bomber
the backstage book blabber
the reverse-engineered bleep barbet
sonny bono's lollipop lark
the dusky fryer friar
pavarotti's plump punk lark
dr. doody's doo wop

the delicate didactic dingle dove
the fuzzy-eared rifle egret
the peckerheaded checker puffin
the swallow-all swallow
the bungling bitter bittern
holy horoatio's hornbill
the not-so-hot toddy tooter
stinky's surcharger
hollygolightly's lute lurcher
the mountainous mump muzzle
colonel sander's slop thrasher
the twinkle-toed tap hen
wunderkind's wild hog walloper
the fuzzy nutzel
woozy's fuzz finch
the dreadlock dickisil
shakespeare's shrieking night shrike
shakespeare's dawdling day digger
the seditious lurch
oldenburg's oily octopus owl
travelocity's tomahawk turkey
the dilapidated dowager duck
dudley's dip dunker
the instigating imp thrush
stinkwad's pustule petrel
the polymorphous peckerhead
the tyraasaurus tea tit
the tinsel-backed turtle tickler
garibaldi's groan goose
the gregarious gosling herder
paperdella's ant pipit
the egalitarian equestrian egret
julian nicolini's nubian nuthatch
mario batali's bread buzzard
napoleon's nit slurper
the fudgy-the-whale-jus'-folks finch
the tiny mischievous wheee
the soft-tufted buffer fluff
the vivacious fluffy thump
the october outage ouzel
the cretaceous crust cruncher
the burlap bee catcher
segovia's guitar grebe
the plunk plunk
the flabbergasted goop goose
the avaricious albatross

the impecunious albatross
the bibliography bluejay
the polka dot dot
whimsy's rubber rump wren
the ribald rent a wren
the cod scrod
the nicotine-orange organza-chested pinky pigeon
the hickory-smoked rumple hen
the tousled tin foil finch
the salinated saltine psalter
the dusty desert diddle dribbler
the pugnacious pillow puncher
the no-exclamation-point punctuation peregrine
the sho nuf flo mo
the significant lost serendipity pee tee
the bo jangles jingle jangle
the metropolitan museum sir merganser
seignor studlee's stud jumper
the sway-tailed cricket dancer
the delicious dee dee chee
madame envelope's push pecker
the culinary crank cuckoo
the instigator ibis
the alligator-toothed tick snippet
the ivory beaked ignatz
the hopalong cassidy bud hopper
the roy rogers red rotary rook
the silver throated ticket punch
the three-ring-necked vole puncher
the vermilion vested bellboy bird
samson's hair lock lock
delilah's deceptive scissor beak
the thin stick-legged stump thump
mr. nobody's snood sparrow
the simon says saw-whet skeeter owl
the wheat-grass-shearing wax wing
beestingoe's bee snatcher
chesterton's chimney sweep tweeter
the sawtoothed hog slitter
the cellophane geek canary
the octagon blue punch
the wooly-crested crack jammer
the ululating unguent cassowary
the fetid gulch flicker
baudelaire's badminton bunny buster
the hydraulic lick pipit

the off-white whistling whittle warbler
the by bye and buy beetle bustard
mother theresa's truculent toast trouncer
the syncopated puppy petter
the dusk chanting chump chump
the Caledonian chop mopper
muppets moth smotherer
the irreconcilable twee
the hook-beaked scurf
sidney's scrottle blurb
the syrupy skunk caddy
the sonorous snork
the some day some day
the eleemosynary chortle burp
the rambunctious rook startler
mickey rooney's rune swallow
the nomadic neutron scullion
aunt matilda's mush jumper
the wool pull
the stentorian snort
phlegma's flea hopper
the fudge-bellied clown thumper
pirandello's poke thrush
the glabrous helium shaver
braggadocio's pot swaddler
the scandinavian crumpet crusher
sid caesar's chalk chat
chuckleberry's cave canary
the witless pump pigeon
poltergeist's stump sparrow
von hindenberg's cinder chuck
van buren's bronze bell buzzard
the yellow-crested glue stalker
mimic's mirror mime
the elephantine ersatz egret
the needle-nosed eustachian tube borer
the stationary blue blazoned app
the snide snood scrounger
the v-necked vernacular vireo
the crustaceous curd chicken
waymoor's way more
the pink boletus pecker
the wiley whim wham
the seditious once was

drowning bee

trapped wings leaden
glued to surface tension
blue-pool doomed
could neither stop nor start
my hand a sanctuary
i lifted him up
on to a blade of grass
he crawled no clambered
shook his wings like
light leaded glass
in the august sun
and quick away he flew
then true knowing i knew
in saving small him
black and yellow fellow
i saved a part of Thee

woodchuck's resume

woodchuck groundhog whistle pig
meek easily spooked and smaller
than bruin-brown grizzly
lawn beaver no waffle tail
shy chary wary
scared of all shadows
including birds' and my own
won lifetime van winkle award
(*marmota monax olympic gold*)
for good hibernation habits
stands soldier tall in summer sun
runs with a waddle fast as rabbits
but don't be deceived
runs faster than you
claws like front end loaders
moves tons of earth
big rocks small boulders
when guarding young or home
fierce and totally fearless
can swim climb trees but rarely
has two coats of fur
appears beauty-parlor frosted
whistle-warns chubby cubs
footballs with no-gel mohawks
to all gardeners a terrorist
best friend of the NRA
best marketer of rifles scopes

and cartridges in the USA
(deserves a monument)
all their munitions and double barrels
aimed right at 'em dawn to dusk
global positioning system tuned
to burrow with two doors
gives a fighting chance
of surviving their killer blasts
face washer extraordinaire
in the manner of squirrels or men
clean mean clover mowing machine
sometimes seen outside the den
standing tall paws on old oak stump
a brown-robed preacher
at pulpit prepared to preach
to a bored and squirming congregation
of little birds and blindest of men
wood chucking rodent family
could chuck would chuck wood
fence your tomatoes carrots and flowers
what's yours is truly theirs
every woodchuck prays
night or day: "I find and fill my bliss
in every gardener's plot. I invade.
I blow every perfect vegetable a kiss
as I devour like a ravenous dog
every entry in Burpee's seed catalog.
I, woodchuck, groundhog, whistle pig."

ed's shoulder

ed's shoulder
had bone spurs
big as a boulder
as he gets older
let's hope those curs
stay far far away
so his presence on stage
with every new play
just gets cooler and bolder

bright bird

bright bird of Soul our mother
shaken by thunder in dark we wander

through these treacherous valleys
adrift across these dangerous seas

far from home and light of day
to you bright bird we pilgrims pray

great sea

i am moved
put to a great test
by a great sea
borne away

this great salt thing
has set me adrift
has set me free
i cannot hate
only love or be loved

as i reach out to be
shouting thanks for this trip
the best i can be
here i briefly linger
here i briefly sing

one finger in the many
gloves of all eternity
my truest point of rest
to make it new each day

luck

luck is a wish
chance dream of a fish
etched in the sand
becomes "Look!
fresh caught fish!"
from the end of a hook
gills pumping dancing
live in fisherman's hand
to filets lightly grilled
with butter parsley or dill
served on a plain white dish

*• photo of a fish drawn in the sand –
sent by my youngest sister
from her ocean vacation*

white birds

white birds rise up
above a world of green
a crooked cross

an empty cup
a parenthesis
a form of love
only gain nothing lost
nothing but blue
wide air in between

dreamland

dream a pun
and after All
the words
then worlds

dreamer dream
a pen of sand
and the morning sun
from dreamland spun
for Justine on her birthday 9-12-2015

venus

softly brightly
small sister to Luna
through my window
past black bars
of maple oak and willow
from my pillow
you make me
count each breath
you drive the moon
to another death
slow horse and rider
rising sun follows
hunting your horizon
then blinding noon
wherever TIME goes
all big or small
who is most alive
may only follow

carbon

diamonds are forever
but do they remember
their birth from coal
their ancient carbon soul
diamonds in the new
diamonds' mare and foal

headstone

when my day is done
given all to give
lived all to live
then will i join You
all who ever lived
now when so many
decomposed into one
no when nowhere no who
no worry nothing left to do
the wind in the maple trees
with the doves do sigh
roo hoo hoo roo hoo hoo
great solitary One
with you we fuel the sun

those that went before

inundations
transubstantiations
as if to bedlam
as if to bethlehem

voices at door's jamb
naïve ideas and flowers
apparitions affectations
their echoes and ours

early spring

oil-paint hues of shimmering greens
as if no shade of green before had ever been
skies cerulean as an ancient japanese screen

the plurality of penises

because i'm small and cute
more a giver than a taker
i have more than a few
fans who are stuck
on my little candy man
petite i stand my point moot

so glad i was average born
smaller than dong and schlong
heroes of voyeuristic porn
my size is my strength

not something i lack
ecstatic entry front or back

thick extravaganza
earth shaker top of class
bongo stick to many lusty drums
floppy crass bonanza
a thrusting tyrannosaurus
big conundrum for tiny bums

what the violet said

by many names i'm known:
tickle my fancy dog violet
come and cuddle me
johnny jump up wild pansy
three faces in a hood hearts ease

the thunder of the peepers in the marsh
rolled over us from dusk through dawn
with lion-headed dandelions and accepting daffodils
i was among the first cut down
with the first spring mowing of our lawn

autumn sun

october winds are shaking
all the leaves from all the trees
red and yellow the bright cusp of fall
this flaming brilliance remaking all
the fire behind this great diamond His
recharging yellow battery of the sun
all things leaving all things on the run
this conundrum of light a mystery
to you and me in our short run

conjunction

waking from a troubling dream
beyond the darkness of my room
through the syrup of the dark
see venus jupiter and mars
on fire one above the other rise

no surprise i realize
nothing do i need
nothing do i lack
few things do i fear

across the pond from blue cedar stand
a barred owl hoots and screams
who cooks for you who cooks for you all
october leaves do fly beneath the moon
as do the leaves of days and nights
and bubbling cauldrons of the years

no surprise i realize
nothing do i need
nothing do i lack
few things do i fear

tippy's jaw biopsy and teeth removal

after all his life an ideal cat
he gets jammed into a cage
with some catnip his master's shirt

poor comfort scent as he's wheeled
to a saintly vet used to animals'
outrage and master's fears and tears

he's thrown into another cage
knocked out cut open teeth yanked
as thanks for all treated like a rat

the wild one

oh to be the wild one who nests poised at the tops
of weeping willows and the wild cherry trees
the one who doesn't give a holy cheep
the one who looks so calmly down
with compassion on the clowns
of gaudy fad and silly fashion
one not haunted by irony or jest
sun shining brilliant on his wings
the one whose truth is go never stop
the one who flies high above all others
who shows how to soar and call and sing
like the arrow's feathered fletch that drives
the arrow's razor head swift to hunted hearts

lost and found

found
little white dog
blind

what popped up when googling “oddities of international time zones”

man addicted to tearing holes through his face
sets record for most flesh tunnels

man with world’s longest fingernails
hasn’t clipped them in over sixty years

man celebrates his birthday
for forty-six hours by flying back in time

guy kicks himself in the head
one hundred and thirty-four times
sets new world record

woman known as ‘bouquet slayer’
caught forty-six wedding bouquets
is still single

chinese athlete’s sets sights on butt skipping record

fireflies mid july

come summer they fight their battles wage their wars
crushed foil in flight blinking green-yellow off then on
the semaphore of their cold firing a secret code
in their short lives an ancient light lives here then gone
now is their time a battalion they charge night’s oppression

their ebbing and flowing their swarming warring
full moon to gone moon their military strategies
celebrating as if in a rush the crickets’ calls to arms
the hush of anticipation just before the owls’ rally cry
in the indigo dark they attack commandos to the stars

spot of blood on our window

red evidence that things conspire are deceptive
or in a trance when the evening light is low
our fine-winged friends ravenous for mulberries
who in their frenzied feeding mistake the darkness
of our unlit living room for an open door

and against the clear permanence of window glass
are hurled into a darkness of their own
the only telling marker a single spot of blood
warning all that in our hungry flights of fancy
a darkness can sometimes lead to deeper darkness
and instead of welcome be passage
to something darkly more

cat dream

black toupee white face
nose that goes pale pink to rose
his severed paw smelling like decay
impossible to screw it back
as against the dark one may
a new light bulb in a socket
lies severed in my hand
i pick him up a beaten boxer
flecks of blood on his face
he limps away undaunted
when i awake horror haunted
i feel that dreams are in a race
to demonstrate mere waking up
is preferred to the nightmare cakes
the dreaming mind keeps baking
i pour some coffee into my cup
and steel myself against the day

early spring

the chipmunk laity
each a little Lazarus
groggy they emerge
shaky on their chipmunk pins
from snow tomb tunnels
crazy eyed squinting
against the laser sun
groping their way half-blind
in their tattered roadster furs
newly risen this april day
gnawing on dried maple keys
born again paying who knows
for what chipmunk mortal sins

in summer

hour when butterfly takes his masters in *advanced hovering*
his silent Amens shake every trembling pistil and stamen
testament to his power - from chaos a fine order uncovering

morning light

opaque glass holding a half-spent votive
the way the morning light falls through it
makes it shimmer and softly glow
an unexpected thing that stops you short
like a great line you remember
from frost or stevens or cummings
reminder that even the banal sings
if only we could bridle ourselves
and look as if at a favorite book
fresh from the dust off our shelves
and go slowly enough to feel
like a paper cut that stings
all things illuminated
and deeply shining

thanksgiving pies

pies oh pies oh me oh my's
how they doth make my pupils
dilate and goeth extra wide
pies doth banish all scruples
maketh mouth waters rise
and putteth all diets aside
please doth not us chide
pumpkin custard mincemeat apple
one more tasty slice your choice
please saveth for us most grateful
an extra treat super nice
before this coop we must fly

sore wind

a sore wind blows cold through a small hole in all our hearts
and mine has proven no different each finish a new chiseled start
shot by a sundown's gun as clouds pray their sundown prayers
how else to say with each hushed dusk and diminishing of our day
always wishing for what we can never have all that vanishes

you have to love

you have to love
the 21st century
and our little Buys
when your e-order
from HSN arrives
and the box says

on its two flappy sides
“This package is HAPPY
to see YOU too.”

lament

all the leaves on the old pear tree are trembling
in a chilling autumn breeze they shiver
like small animals on a day turned cold
as if the sun great giver gave them will to fall

to a decomposing poem of earth and raw rain
how sad somehow to go how glad to leave
as cloud shadows cleave their way across the pelt sky
how the old land smells like a moonshine mountain still

the purpose of dreams

the purpose of dreams is to show us
we think and see even when asleep

if nothing but good dreams
you'd never want to be awake

if nothing but bad dreams
you'd never want to sleep

so in dreams as iron rusts
no choice but to trust

troop of skunks

near our mailbox end of day
none in a rush a troop of skunks
five young ones plus mother
were lollygagging on the road
their playpen oblivious
scattered all naïve and curious
no notion of cars as injurious
or a roaring form of doom
the mother stymied on guard
as to how to herd her wards
sees me coming to get the mail
and in a flash turns the quintet
from mayhem to “yes mum”
made orderlies they forward march
black and white pawns advance
from evening's open chess set
to the densest roadside brush

the swallows

the swallows are so excited
cheeing swooping swift-swerve diving
hunting in speedy arcs almost colliding
under a teal-blue canopy of cloud and sky
sun and green fields below their accomplices
their sweet whistling they might be signaling
as they turn and dip and seize and glide
whatever hatch of what has inspired such fury
slick-winged split-tailed never derailed
houdini's honing in on this temperature-induced
harvest their every hurried parry and thrust
their flying arcs and bows like flying violins
in their diving flights sing in august we trust

toothpaste tube

to toothpaste tube

just a few brushings left
mornings follow nights
nights follow mornings
i stare at their mugs
as they gape and jaw
and lift their brushes
from their toothbrush jar
just wait you too will dream
of the blessed day when
you have few brushings more
when they have to buy
a new replacement you
from a local convenience store
my advice my sequel to you:
no need to feel bereft
be prepared in every season
there's a reason why 'tube'
always rhymes with 'rube'
our job's deadly boring, dude
the best part being when
you are all squeezed out
empty as the air and
can join me at the dump
where all are equal
and all at last is fair

feel bad for god

feel bad for god
it's all his fault
being in charge mostly sucks
spelled backwards he is dog
even worse he rhymes with clod
fraud flawed scrod and sod
invisible invincible infallible
never needs to wash or pay a bill
doesn't bleed is never ill
he's never wrong always right
can never be just here or there
because he's everywhere
always giving or taking
(who knows if or what he eats)
grand chef et piece de resistance
a cosmic groundskeeper
direct reports: angels and seraphim
only enemies: devils and grim reaper
he never takes a nap or sleeps
our souls he's always raking
not known to laugh or cry or dance
will-o'-the-wisp always ghostly
he's all seeing yet never seen
doesn't break never begins or ends
never kowtows or bows to the lash

being at once more and less
one and many yet never stressed
our dire last-minute prayers
may serve to ignite his ire
or make him feel badly used
no present past or future
he's stuck in the infinite
his own design and making
his breath moves the seasons' sparks
shooting stars' planets' sails he fills
so when he fails to take your call
put aside frail human reason
stay calm! it's not his fault
his truths most ancient of all
fire's maker grand olympic vaulter
no land no galaxy he can not vault
the world his ark from bugs to ducks
(who knows he may have claws and fur

if things keep up we'll soon call him 'her'
end to White Beard though still to be feared)
given arcane dogma and holy esoterica
trumps cash and lucre He The Mighty Buck

the snoring of cats

the snoring of cats
is semiphore
to fat mice and rats
code quite magical
gives them casuse to play
vermin maniacal
no matter night or day
safe zone sabatical

pigeons

life is hard in manhattan
if you're a pigeon harder

just look most are missing toes
walking on stubs and stumps

in their scumble for scarce crumbs
admire their pigeon will

crumbs dropped are their larder
they live and hobble none bitter

no pigeon ever known to kill

cover ups

nothing like a pair of calvin klein boxers
covering the genitalia of bull moose in rut
now that's civilization in all its regalia
a mad magazine of no dicks ands or butts
banning shows of all animals' colloquial nutz
except of course all maine lobsters'
royally displayed at bacchanalia in italia

reply to email from 'flat freddy'

*There was an "effort" years ago
to put clothes on naked animals.
It may have been instigated by
"MAD" magazine or a similar
publication of serious thought*

to sleep to die to not ask why

each night tucked in bed we sleep we die
always children on our metaphorical knees we pray

of those who close their eyes a sleepless few ask why
and stay up staring through their windows at the sky
feeling like the end of the world will surely come
when it's just the end of one day's world unstrung
dead as lead or an idea forgotten by a dunderhead
so why then is the final sleep (put pain and suffering aside)
so different than the close of each day's ride as we slide
cheated into the theatre of gone from which some think
there is no wake this final thing no figure of speech
rhetorical as a pen's last stroke indelible as the black in ink
as we fall down the funnel into The Well each by each

celebration of a solitude

red tail lights flicker all else end of day umber gray
the past is melting mounds of snow mother-skunk yellow
her car curves elegant down the empty bend
past our country road she's off to meet an old friend
optical illusion of christmas tree lights reflecting
through our window projected onto the macadam
onto the wet road shining slick shining black
in the mist red squirrels play catch-me-follow
in glee scuttling down and up the red cedar's trunk
fireplace flames happily hasten firewood's end
the cats curled up like caterpillars in a huddle
comforted by their own cat smells and maybe mine
the end of the year but one short day away
those that think trying to sum it plus or minus
what dreamed what done what wasted what failed
in old year's pail memories drift and dart like minnows
past future present blend luminous into a kind of halo
not an end but an augury of things to be but what
rising up like moths out of a long-unopened trunk
or optimistic geese escaping the prison of their pond
four swans elegant in the marsh their necks as if carved
their Carrera white against the slate of quarry waters
whiter than salt on snow their feathered bottoms upended
paddling they feed on what roots or tubers they need
warm december inspiring them to flight procrastination
soon they too will disappear as will this punctured year
all things flying if not south to some well-dreamed juncture
a place of no fear a rich center a nerve of inspiration
each unstoppable day a chance to fly a new migration

new year's eve 2015

domestic animals

sent from a good god's far-away place the animals
we love are Joy's filters heeling to our every turn
best mirrors best models of how each day to show
how we feel for those we love and each day trust

they are compassion's hand in the glove of now
they know how calmly to live when all seems bleak
their mere looking up is truest foil against most grief
wish like them we could find instant healing sleep

depends on how brave we are how well we see
if so we'd find ourselves by measures more merry
we'd hold their animal ways deeper within us
we'd better practice their lore of animal love

captive bird

alone in my cage solo
moon and the stars
gifts my captors gave me:
protection from the household cat
and the dark and endless sky

alone in my cage solo
i thought of all of you
sky and stars slowly moved
like the heart of some small
frightened thing close to the ground

alone in my cage solo
i dreamed of being held
and of holding you and
how that makes years gone by
and years to come always fine

howl of the homunculus

the germ of the spermists
before birth in all wombs brief
i grow on tomb-blood and piss

i never wash my sheets
i crap in and never comet my tub
am proud to be a filthy schlub

i don't look both ways
when crossing any street

don't obsess about what i eat

i pee on peoples' lawns and rugs
wake way before dawn
scheme all day out-slug slugs

my ambition is to spit on peoples' food
my dirty secret definition
of the ultimate good in nutrition

before i do my daily evil duty
take twenty sugars
in my tea or coffee

i love to poison domestic pets
wake before dawn to ladle out
the lethal dosage each one gets

i'm always bitching and complaining
about the smallest inconvenience
my list of phobias is a form of genius

i'm always picking nose and scabs
clawing at anything that's itching
demonic or metaphorically stitching

always late never on time
don't give a damn what people say
or how i squander dimes and dollars

i blow out all candles
on everyone else's cakes
spit on everything people cook or bake

i wear the same socks for weeks
my BVDs until they reek
wile away my minutes hours days

my months and years too
wish i knew where time goes
never polish my shoes

don't believe what's on TV
the bullshit of the news
wear browns with blacks and blues

never wash my hands
i like to keep it gross
after every single poop

when i walk my dog
i always fail to scoop
wet brown logs on every stoop

i fart in church in elevators on trains
in airplanes i shriek on my cell
quiet cars can rot in hell

i stumble aimless from here to there
do everything half assed on rote
i chew tobacco drink smoke pot

i'm democratic in my hate
i fear and loathe all peoples
niggers jews chinks brits or yanks

i hate to shave never bathe
i only love to listen to my self
projectile vomit tantrums rants and raves

i disdain all soaps deodorants and gels
use no brushes combs or Q-tips
think my shrinks are full of shit

through all history you'll find me riding
with four horsemen of the apocalypse
with crows and vultures savaging the dead

goya did me justice in his disasters of war
which inspired me to viciously do worse and more
to widen the meaning of (D)evil in my dictionary

i love to curse and swear
"fucking" is an in between-every-syllable
habit i don't intend to break

the more totally miserable i get
the more i explode delirious with joy
not sure if i'm a girl or boy

i'm fat as a pig
and getting fatter

i'm losing all my hair

i stink so much i empty busses
i never wash my hernia trusses
me myself and i THE only thing that matters

do-gooders miles and miles away
smell a prodigal salvation day
with me freud'd have a hay day

i despise work as much as play
i mope about waste time day dream
do nothing break mirrors spill cream

animals and children deplore me
no limits to my foolery
mayor of the village of Idiocy

in public i pick my nose
scratch my balls eat my snot
all things i like a lot

my teeth are rotten my breath is foul
hate smiling love to scowl
tout each movement of my bowels

i'm a walking booby prize
for me self-hatred is the way to go
when picking scabs i pick them slow

i put dishes away half washed
when it comes to clean i'll take dirt
i like stains on all my ties and shirts

i'm apocalypse and pestilence all in one
biblical whale that lives to kill human krill
in the same way god made oranges

i create cancer pustules and STDs
spawn of war torture and despair
i am THE rabid dog unleashed beware

i believe in unprotected sex
i drink and drive do all drugs
i eat bugs that are still alive

i deprive all drowning men of air
i greet all life with a hateful stare
amazed i turned three thousand eighty-five

for me joy in all things' perdition
is the highest form of erudition?
i take great glee in the law of entropy

nightmares misfortune disasters pain
species extinction global warming
crazed politicians anthrax nuclear war

nuts putting cyanide in candy bars
hooligans random slicing folks with razors
lasers firing down on planet earth from mars

cops killing everything that breathes
with choke holds hoses clubs guns and tasers
beggars in our parks living in the trees

just like god and my best pal the devil
i'm always there generation on generation
seeing some die in despair in that i revel

the one best thing on which i thrive
is feeding on others peoples' worst calamities
i'm sure i can't be killed will never die

rainbow chasing

the year was nine days new
at dusk the horizon deep teal blue

mild as spring this early winter eve
sky now all turquoise lemon tangerine

following the downpour of the storm
light gained weight a shimmer of celandine

by sleight of light some magician unseen
drew a rainbow arching its back like a siamese

stretching stronger the feline prism blushed
at day's end even the song birds hushed

knowing how fickle winter light can be
of the photos i rushed not one was caught

what my eyes saw camera's eye could not
proof that chasing rainbows often come to naught

fragment

lost in memory a dream a maze a midden heap
peering into a massive high-ceilinged long bar

a mural of beaten copper pots and pans gleaming
in the dark lit outside-in by the headlights of a car

things reek of wet concrete mildew musk and rot
dank piles of newspapers bloated with dust and grease

things seen as if through a negative in half light
a ruin held up against a rusted sun at end of day

urine of cats and flea-ridden rats trying to sing
processions of the dull and drab wandering through

thin shadows of souls searching in this vast cave
open to what for what hidden elusive thing

roué

given all i can take
soul now old and riven
in music i still hear courage
find small magic in the stars
and from time to time
frail consolation in art

i calm my rage and ire
a pale wrinkled staring geek
by admiring beauty's fire
aflame in women passing by
fine women of every age
bitter sweet my sweaty palms

first version

couraggio !

given all i can give
my heart now old and riven
in music i still hear courage
still find magic in the stars
and from time to time
weak consolation in bars

an old geek staring
i mute my rage and ire
by admiring beauty's fire
aflame in women passing by
women of a certain age
my last sweet psalms

listening to a fat cat snore

outside it's freezing rain and snow
other than watching those you love
sleeping children husbands wives
few things as joyful seen from above
make most cat lovers feel more alive
than hearing a napping fat cat snore
plugged into a deep kind of buddha peace
no worries not wanting one thing more
no thought for next dollar own or lease

a drunk royal dreaming on his palace floor
expressing what catatonically sounds
like two balloons rubbed together hard
or the ungreased hinge of a creaky door
this simple sound brings cat lovers
around to the reason why cats are here
just for us they groom entertain and show
mostly it's the simplest things that reign
things that can't be bought don't age or rust

for squeaky (aka the squeaks, squeak-meister, squeakster,
mr. squeaks, squeak toy, squeak-oh, squeaky-deaky, catso, big boy) 1•17•2016

some day

some day
down our street
everyone will get along
everyone will sing
in many different ways
the same sweet song

some day
down our street
everyone will be a star
there will be no war
lion and lamb will lie down
together in fine or stormy weather

some day
down our street
no one will die of hunger
no one will be shot
the sound of childrens' laughter
will silence all gun's thunder

some day
down our street
the homeless will be sheltered
the sick made healthy
the poor shown mercy
all hardened hearts be melted

some day
down our street
there will be one language
all will be understood
like sunshine on brightest days
best memories of our childhoods

some day
down our street
skin color will not matter
not money but kindness will talk
grudges will be erased like chalk
on blackboards or penciled letters on a page

some day
down our street
each of us will live in peace
deep within our little souls
find some place so much larger
a place of ease a calmest gentle harbor

some day
down our street
there will be no sadness
no terrorists driving our worlds insane
no prisons no prisoners no inmates
no locks on the doors of joy and gladness

some day
down our street
there will be no terror or fear
no concrete walls no limitations

no barbed wire no electric-shocking fences
no ego pride attitudes or bloated pretenses

some day
down our street
beyond the shores of death
everyone will meet again
and all will find a truer breath
a place where there is no pain

some day
down our street
there will be no second guessing
no fear to follow your dream
no worry about the differences
between what's real what's seen

some day
down our street
there will be no fat-cat bureaucrats
living off the poor and disadvantaged
but governments that serve
never treating the poor like gutter rats

some day
down our street
media and religion will not be
forces of control and domination
keeping the lowly in their places
but guides to all souls' elevation

cartoon hudson

ice floes in slow motion sashay up river on an incoming tide
a zip-a-dee-doo-dah disney animation of oh what a wonderful day
you can almost hear jiminy cricket's voice his chirping oration
two clouds hippopotami-gray in pink tutus plié sauté relevé
get ready to begin their winter ballet oh what a wonderful day
all but a few amtrak pilgrims blind to the magic of their ride

driving home on 84 east

after buying a new car

enchanted by the first flash gordon
naïve sparklers spewing from his rocket's tail
now a laugh compared to today's effects

when i was five i used to sculpt

racing cars and spaceships from play-doh

(for youngsters too young to know
a nontoxic barely-edible modeling clay)

and picture myself inside them
and dream of driving dream of flying

yesterday on CT 84 east driving home
highway right out of central casting

into the horizon eating up the snaking road
the winding road an exercise in vanishing

into an ever-vanishing perspective
humans in multi-colored metal bugs with wheels

like terrestrial astronauts
my wife in one car and i in another

i behind her then she behind me
like a childhood game of leap frog

in two steel bubbles on wheels at 65 mph
low on gas i have to break away from our

vehicle dance and do i imagine or did she return my wave
see you later wave thinking this is Marriage

two separate vehicles speeding down the same road
maybe listening to two different channels

one leading then one following one following the other's lead
and confident that we'll see one another at home

for dinner and an evening fireside with the cats
but in the instant i turned off the main road

realizing that at some point there will be a turning off
the main road diverging and at that turn only

one will be following the other's lead
for whatever is left in the other's drive home

and then I think maybe we do more trips to the same
place in separate cars and celebrate our arrival and return

more enthusiastically a small form of happiness and bliss

photo of 'the glow' (eight months)

'the glow' that's what we call baby grace
chin dripping with a glaze of gerber's pears
eyes content round as pies in that after-meal adagio
electric hair more like reddish fuzz or cotton candy
as if a sneeze or wind of breath could whisk it off
on the back of her high chair image of a teddy bear
her breakfast buddy her angel guardian always there
how she looks out greets her world is a kind of judo
where she the weakest most vulnerable dependent one
has the tribe kowtowing to her for their own sheer fun
the pace at which she learns absorbs crawls and grows
irrepressible ferocious full of life and tiny animal gusto
this is what our world has forgotten and needs to see
shows us what we've lost most need to feel and know

for Jonathon and Alycia

the captain

my sister justine had one of new jersey's ugliest dogs
sandy her name eye-bulging love bringing her game
chubby as a bratwurst on a plate of kraut and 'taters'
toothpick legs plump hors d'oeuvre knew no tricks yet rules
among a least comely few ordained to the order of the bark
priestess she made the rest look like a pack of hobo woofers
no matter good or faithful above all others how sandy shone
high above - a chihuahua sun breaking through heavy cloud
sandy sandoo how we all loved You YOU mixed-breed mutt
you'd roll over pee daintily with glee when greeting company
just a tiny drop or two when your merry bladder lost its grip
but that didn't keep your friends from feeling glad and chipper
paper towels before the invention of the scented wee-wee pad
was all it took to sop your past-the-brink tex-mex breed's overjoy
you swam like a pint-sized seal with my two nephews and me
in your backyard pool made us so happy we'd laugh like fools
then just today at a garage that did car inspections there he was
The Captain was his name Protection was his ankle biting game
no badge no cap no gun sharp teeth-n-growl male sandy-'n-thinner
in a bipolar-way friendly soon as you spoke no more savage hollers
he'd take off his security guard collar and become your buddy
he must have come from your cool gene pool, sandy (RIP),
with friends like you two who wouldn't want to swim and play
mates who keep all dog lovers (you? and me) from being sad

for justine and sandy

timothy edward faver PhD

now that my nephew timothy has finally graduated
with his hard earned PhD and his braniac brain largely intact
having spent more time in libraries than most unread books
he can now opine on mathematical fiction and mathematical facts
expose fermat gaus ptolemy bernouli turing newton euclid
archimedes lebniz the whole numbers gang for who they truly are
a bunch of egg heads now dead to hungry hordes of einstein wannabes
tell how string and transcendental number theories are vastly overrated

go back to his good old days at grandma agnes's when he was five
don flowered aprons put pots or pans like top hats on his head
not because he likes to cook but just because he likes the look
take a break from burning midnight oil be free feel totally alive
best of all he can begin to live it up have some fun and dedicate
more time to sleeping in drinking wine wild parties and pick up bars
or take a break shave his head become a monk and avoid all libraries
and lastly, kudos!, tim, for getting paid to be who you will be and are

what counts

what counts means anything to me
not a damned any other thing
than love nature music art and poetry

call me a romantic fool
all arts are born free freely given
driven frantic yet always cool

so as i look back and back
no thing worth more than fame or money
than love nature music art and poetry

the world-wide web

o tempora o mores o world wide web
ya gotta love the times we live in
when all you have to do is google it
anything anything anybody anywhere
and there like a strawberry pop tart it is
what power what access but is it knowledge
who cares if the omnipotence it gives is a rocket
when as kids we thought we were really cool
after running to the dictionary (a book!) to know
among the longest words in english were
antiestablishmentarianism or from marry poppins
supecalifragilisticexpialidocious now just punch a key
and shazam and kapow you are as smart as any PhD

causing old geezer me to quake and swear and drool
i a dunce most babies more tech savvy than me

**on earth ten million living
things unknown unnamed**

somewhere deep in the caverns
in the mummy-musty bowels
of fusty natural history museums
are small tribes of troll-like classifiers
three hundred thousand who year after year
keep count of new or vanishing species
heads down in the semi dark seldom looking up
then only to straighten their *pince-nez* wires
their daunting task avoiding bars and taverns
their mates - cold tea or coffee in antique cups
adding deleting counting coup - diligent classifiers
caught in the flux of who's come who's gone
crocodilian reptilian mammalian large and small
the hardest part for them is proving ones just
found are found and ones just lost are lost
and ones that disappeared are truly gone
most unfound are bugs and microbial
crying for a name and to be cataloged
not a hectare of jungle forest truly scanned
will take half a million trolls two thousand years
each by each they sharpen pencils in their jars
true to the Linnaean way memorializing all the ones
that once gamboled and ran then slain by The Poison: Man

**starling on top of radio tower
outside rhinecliff train station**

how he held his perch in a strong winter wind
on the needle tip of the antenna was one thing to see
how he drew his mates and family there another mystery
his eye on the mighty hudson and upriver kingston bridge
his gaze on the shawangunk their smoky blue and silver haze
six fuel-oil storage tanks below like giant pepper shakers
we small passengers shivering on platform in wooly bunches
bright scarves waving flag-like in the cold to greet the train
and his flock shinnying up the guy wires like black beads
an ad-lib live abacus doing what all starlings do best
watch the morning sun wake from dreams the sleeping clouds
their crazy-quilt recitals of virtuoso cheeps chortles and mews
masters of mimicry the only time they regress to Starling Voice
(the precise sun casting rectangular shadows on the tracks)
is when less operatic near their nest at dusk they quiet down

for their day's-end oratorio and crazy-quilt ska-fest colloquy
their tower standing tall from thin to thinner telescoping up
in the blue early evening light they rest more blue than black

aubade

days lighter
full moon
rays brighter

falling down

falling falling way way down

down through mickey mouse star wars and a second house
down through mexican starving dogs beggars and artificial fire logs
we feel it fly by in a blink hardly time to give it a dirty look or a think
and looking back it's gone like a puff or a toke or a last-call drink

falling falling way way down

down through big name architects pop tunes and many ghostly moons
down through emails tweets instagrams mobile devices and italian ices
it's all melting as we speak the tide is going out all our boats have sprung a leak
looking forward storm clouds are rising high on the horizon it's looking bleak

falling falling way way down

down through pistachios hazel nuts academia macadamias and fat people with big butts
down through pesto pest control luxury pet shampoos voodoo and urban taboos
it's all off and running some where some way ahead of us and we have missed the bus
it's raining cats and dogs we feel a chill and have failed to take our happy peppy pills

falling falling way way down

down through the sewage of reality tv and dumbed-down self-help shows and idiotic tips
down through weight loss brain loss cat loss dog loss love lost damn the cost and scripts
the toll it takes is imperceptible until flat out one day the mirror says "unacceptable!"
and the rain like tears is streaming down the windows of our eyes asking why o why

falling falling way way down

down through train rides bus rides plane rides watching barren landscapes stumble by
down through ticket stubs holistic body rubs cruel snubs someone else's blood in tubs
we know the police and IRS are on their way can't find one shoe are just half-dressed
the jailors laughing in the corridors the prisoners gnawing pigs knuckles on prison floors

falling falling way way down

down through a circus collage of surreal dreams and half-remembered molten memories
down through driver's licenses inspection stations root canals and serial colonoscopies
time to charge our batteries but no outlet found every hole square and sadly we are round
the jigsaw puzzle is missing the last piece the deck is stacked the consequences profound

falling falling way way down

down through wishes aspirations accusations procrastinations many raw inflammations
down through trendy hairdos tooth whitenings liposuction dry skin and sore incrustations
the legs the belly the eyes the feet the knees the hips the maw off on their own crazy trips
no postcards poems songs prayers exhortations incantations will calm this foundering ship

falling falling way way down

down through yesterday today and tomorrow and tomorrows we late and latest to follow
down through misunderstandings inconsiderations hesitations and the latest play stations
the difference between yes no stop slow go red green or amber too rapidly dissolving
present future past are a blur a *catasrophe* a short stop before that last good to last drop

falling falling way way down

down through good intentions desperate prayers faux inventions belief suspensions
down through late payments credits debts strange arrangements unbalanced books
somewhere a blind accountant that has the key but lines cut or blocked from you and me
the mind a barrel of crazy apes in a zoo without a keeper fighting for a bunch of grapes

falling falling way way down

down from a tower of babbling politicians recuperating from a bloody democratic nose
down with no answers to poorly phrased prayers like naked *triste-tropiques* nude dancers
in a painting by matisse all piggy pink in a circle hand in hand on a hill of fauvist green
a form of joy The Imagination painting through his hand what no one 'till him has seen

falling falling way way down

down from propaganda blitzes of smug so-called experts who think they can think for you
down from all the data in the world with one key's press an i-pad will tell you what to do
all the while Knowledge stands shivering naked and alone antiquated as a rotary phone
or statues of martyrs in catholic churches or Frost's stands of solitary bending birches

falling falling way way down

**eleven english words
that beat counting-sheep**

honorificabilitudinita (27 letters)

antidisestablishmentarianism (28)

floccinaucinihilipipification (29)

supercalifragilisticexpialidocious (34)

praetertransubstantiationally (37)

hepaticocholecystostcholecystenterostomy(40)

pneumonoultramicroscopicsilicovolcanoconists (45)

antipericatametaanaparcircumvolutioirectumgustpoops (50)

osseocarnisanguineoviscericartilagininervomedullary (51)

aequeosalinocalcalinoceraceoaluminoscupreovitriolic (52)

bababadalgharaghtakamminapronnkonnbronntonnepronnt-

uonnthunntrovarrhounawnskawntoohoooordeenturnuk (100)

july july

july, you are really shaping up
showing yourself like first love
or a radiant poem
or a lakeside summer home
you carry summer calm and light
so seductive that your fragrance
awakens and rules a continent
so beautiful you frighten

i blame you, july
for my lost working notes
written while driving
stopped at traffic lights
it was all about you, july
i was too busy trying
to translate what i saw into words
that like many photographers
who too busy framing and shooting

was blind to truly seeing you
and when i read my notes
i knew i had to look again
as is too often true
with seasons people things
so, july, here's why i love you:

birds or dragonflies ask the sun to rise
mightiest clouds our eyes can find
the pizzicatos of children laughing
bringing echoes of childhood back
the alchemy of white catalpa
blossoms against chicory skies
the translucence of mayflies backlit
by Great Projector the setting sun
the facts of bicycles canoes rowboats
sailboats yachts motorbikes firecrackers
smells of burgers on charcoal grills
coney island fries bubbling in lard

beachside mobs and suntan lotions
people in lawn chairs napping in their yards
the smell of youth that brings us back
the sounds of waves and people laughing
dogs' and seagulls' barks lawn mowers revving
waves imploring radios to change stations
the shock of red-orange day lilies roadside
bees mosquitoes ant lions ants of every size
worms dropped by clumsy robins from the sky
bull frogs' croaks night heron's sullen honks
the complaint of rain giving leaves their sheen
boulevards' and lawns' monopoly boards of green
new corn swaying to rusty tractor's roars
fireflies still new and i still loving you

moon over my shoulder

so bright
moon over my shoulder
early morning moon
sharpened sickle
or shallow bowl
spilling night's end
or new day's light
into the toy of my soul
few things as untiring
or bolder than you

moon over my shoulder
early morning moon
so bright

the etymology of BOOGER

whatever did the romans call them?
their sneaky kids like school kids of all times
gluing proof of their ancient nasal archeology
to bottoms of slate tablets on their laps or
under seats of amphitheaters or dusty coliseums
remains fresh to drying ever green a mystery
no latin word exists even shock jock catullus
poet of profane penetrations is mute on this

“booger’s” roots are obscure:
1800s British “boggard” (nose goblin?) or
medieval Bulgarian heretical sect The Bogomils
(notorious for their deviant sexual practices –
sadly no mention of nose fetishes in their erotic lore)
leave a trail from “bugger” to “bogger” (bothersome)
rarely heard in board rooms synagogues mosques or churches
still worshipped in grade schools “booger” onward lurches

in english other orifice words more privileged
have formal names for polite public use
“farts” are “flatulence” “poop” is “stool”
“piss” “pee” “tinkle” “whiz” is “urine”
less immaculate “come” or “jism” are ejaculate
poor orphan “booger” owns no proper word
just a phrase “fresh or dried nasal mucus”
summed up by uninspired scientists among us

too busy to consider kennings like "nose slider"
or "Kermit-custard" "nose-splodge" "snoot-slime"
"citizens of the nasal village" or "external excrescence"
the thing that gives kids joy to dig and pick and when they find
even sing to the nose gods of olde who also are not named

interlude

for all of this Amtrak is to blame
as nature hates a vacuum train trips
have an alpha and omega to them
a similar thing on planes and ships

alpha

on the early train to rhinecliff
i pulled down the seat-front serving tray

and on its outer edge touched a crust that lurks
under school childrens' first grade funky desks
and like proust was flown back through the nose of time
radiators clanging steaming up the windows
watching the clock for recess bell to ring
surrounded by a gang of compulsive nostril pickers
a bunch of bring-em-back-alive deep-diggers -
rhinotillexomaniacs
(will they ever get their index fingers back?)

omega

returning from café car with a coke
and a bag of utz's barbecue potato chips
the aisle blocked by a *skinny-ma-link*
(my mother's phrase) three feet short
gremlin so thin he'd hardly cast a shadow
on a bright day on an old barn wall
his index finger so far up his nose he
could have been extracting his frontal lobe
eyes rolled back in blissfull treasure-hunting reverie
my shadow's tower made him step aside
then in a flash thanks in large measure to
eager excavators like him i saw a Grand Tradition:
the power of leaving something small behind
like an operatic aria an old religious hymn
continues preserved on his fold-down tray as he
eternal proud miner savors a perfect way to start a day
for billy collins and my friend bill prout

the pumpkin

the pumpkin
that once sat proud
on our highest step
autumn orange
lit from within
deified each night
with a toothy grin
outlived all the leaves
the treat or trick of Halloween
braved snows late winter sleet
is a flattened sack of seeds
and mold and sallow skin
a sand-brown burst balloon
no differences now
between out and in

proof

god is just good god thing
that when he gave us farts
they don't burst out in quarts
but only stink and sing

nocturne

ever wish you were the moon?
glowing down on Oceans Uomo
softly inspiring chopin or debussy
glistening off backs of sleeping geese
your alchemy of night and bone
and blood of stars and cloud
shining down on barns and farms
forests mountains fields fresh mown
night to day Witness all alone
everlasting galleon stubborn hope
cold antidote to man's old lunacies
your unbroken celestial dance
mocks all man's vain contrivance
grand generalissimo next to you
armies of stars but dim archipelagos

ever wish you were the moon?

ever wish you were the moon
enlightening emperors kings and queens
civilizations from Neanderthal to Qing
waves of assassinations assignations
muting darkest deeds with softest light
making poets and lovers tremble
touched by your unearthly lunar light
trick or treating little ghosts on Halloweens
commanding the tides' ebbs and flows
against night's black vault our great shining O
giving night hunters light enough to kill
and shivering prey reason to be still
you are a planetary switzerland
never judging mans' hallucinations and
on snow your shadows winter-moon blue
after eons still you rise and set so true

why poetry

for warmth against the cold
like a caveman at his fire
and for those that love
words with no idolatry

like the experience of gloves
taken out of the closet
off the shelf and put on snug
to keep one from freezing

first dandelions in may

from the yellow orb of an eye
spring's most hardy ground flower
so common yet with such distinction
to the intricate architecture
of their delicate geodesic puffs
parachute seeds that fly
a form of drifting rapture
that children try to capture
each of them are guaranteed
in their humble hierarchy of need
that a strong wind will liberate them
freed to their delicate destinies:
immunity from extinction

happiness

the bush that's blooming bone white
across our field near edge of marsh
stays white for only a week
and then turns sour apple green
like many kinds of happiness
a memory of a memory
of how delicate spring can be
pale as driftwood ocean side
bleached gray by an outgoing tide
betrayed by the traitor Moonlight
then gone like a favorite dream
on Holy Saturday (*Sabbatum Sanctum*) 2016

music lit from within

certain music ever-new listens
in the same way a great steak eats
the opposite of stained glass
in the gothic cathedral of Chartres
as if lit brightly from within

certain music ever-new listens
so deeply felt none need ask
ferrying a few open hearts
to where note-smith's soul still beats
merry One that forever lasts

for my friend fred siesel

did you hear me, Pain

please take your finger out of that imaginary hole in my brain
or the one in the cavity that causes my eyes to bleed imaginarily
or the one in the patient sky the pale round wound of the moon
leaking white blood and blue shadows down on the plowed earth
that nocturnal magic that genome that some refer to as moonlight

did you hear me, Pain

you heartless shit stop tormenting those i love and know and those i don't
bring it all to me defeat me lay it on my shoulders like job's or frida kahlo's
and leave everyone else alone including goldfish horses dogs cats and hamsters
give it up already stop your demonic sadistic insatiable game
we know you for what you are: Evil with no brakes a cancerous runaway train

did you hear me, Pain

stay well away from the little and most gentle innocent ones
bring your worst to the ones who carry and can fire back their mental guns
the toughest (richest, oldest) who have a bank of stubbornness callous to your worst
why don't you take a nap or a long vacation or a trip to another planet
why don't you invent another less vicious way to spend your nights and days

did you hear me, Pain

you keep hurting all of us and whatever have we done to you but accept
my mother accepting her end away from her home in some ammonia stinking room
my father dropping dead upstairs on the bathroom floor with a last pathetic sigh
complete strangers killed by the act of hanging up a phone or choking on a bone
the unlucky ones that linger in exquisite agony one after the next forgotten memories

did you hear me, Pain

are we just bloody crumbs of toast falling off your cruel breakfast table
brushed flying to the kitchen floor while you nonchalant walk out the door
your butter is blood your bread is us loaf on loaves of the sliced and broken
your indifference to the scrim of skin that covers us was goya's worst dream
you pare us back dress us down demolish us like third-world fishing shacks

did you hear me, Pain

clearly you are a mindless torture-robot a heartless mastication machine
mercy or compassion are not words saved in your dictionary of foreign terms
you keep no count you count no coup lives are just numbers no matter to you

there are scientific terms medical or mathematical definitions of what you do
nightmare cellular armageddon aids cancer nuclear war flesh your horror screen

did you hear me, Pain

it's time to account to at last come to justice for your cruelty and blind disdain
what if you were the trembling one in closets or cellars hunted ruthlessly down
the one hiding in some paleolithic cave hoping to outlive the tyrannosaur's reign
whose dumb puppet are you? is it god or satan pulling your strings making you bite?
don't you get it wouldn't you prefer another role and stop flaying our gentle souls?
for the courageous and enduring brother by another mother, my friend, bill prout

gray squirrel vulture hickory nut and me

a young pup squirrel struck in the other lane
killed by car or truck likely felt little pain
next to his sleeping head a hickory nut
a prize from last autumn he clutched as he crossed
nut's meat exactly what his winter diet lacked
naïve not knowing his gain would be his loss
like a dark hard pillow beside his gray head
bald vulture perched in hickory tree looked down
vulture eye foresaw all clearly long before me

the crows

the crows fly south at end of day
i ask and wonder but do not know why
they fly north at start of day
i ask and wonder but do not know why

it is the same with light and dark
it is the same with day and night
they fly and we from them from light
to dark until the end we wonder why

good company

do you ever look up
at the passing panoply
clouds on clouds on clouds
in all their majesty

if it makes you want to shout
then nothing can interrupt
your dance to your divinity
the wake-up call of you to Thee

crime's victims

crime has such beautiful teeth
its victims stricken or razor bitten
they barely know what hit them
they lie beneath a berth of earth
reap their rewards of hell or heaven
a stone a prayer is all they're given

let's assume

let's assume
after all of this
there is nothing
below or above
not hell not heaven
so just before
the closing of the door

it comes down to this
(less or more
poetry or prose)
a very small list
of those we love
the few we chose or
those few who chose us

here's to

here's to naysayers, game players, idea slayers
bureaucrats hiding in their computer vaults
vicious cynics their dismissive assaults
those that answer the phone rude as bots
the ones that keep you chilling your heels
closed in the comfort of their tiny cubicles
hiding behind the boulders of tried and true
cozy in their offices with no respect for Time
(or you) the ones that lord it over 'little people'
and kiss the bums of those at the ladder's top
the smug humorless self-important icicles
control freaks who look down their noses
on the untried the innovative and the new
sticklers who live by letter not spirit of the law
those who rule by title fear and petty politics
safe in finding fault and always saying NO
ever suspicious ever suspect dead in eye
to any spark of enthusiasm energy or joy
the know-they-know-it-all too closed to learn
do nothings who pass the buck and still they earn

those who have misplaced their moral testicles
the arrogant takers too cheap fat or lazy to give
there must be a favored spot in hell for them all
where white-hot coals to their thin skins stick and
cherubs sipping sodas watch them burn and stink

the role of poetry and art

the role of poetry and art
is to shake us up
to make us wonder why
to bring a tear to the eye
and strength to the heart
strong tea in a porcelain cup

the ant says

the ant says
season after season
i know well i know
though less than zero
how well i know my duty
with friends to carry
bodies or wings of moths
or flies or wasps or bees
to sustain our family
in our living labyrinth
a choreography of codes
an intelligence of roles
our colony the Hero
my small destiny to bring
a single body a single wing
into our tunneled abode
where giving all dark citizens
the no-vanity swarming-many fair
One in our subterranean maze
simple reason to sing
to breath the air and live

when first ever i held you close

when first ever i held you close
a V of geese winning true north
made gray sky their canvas
a grateful moon watching down
on us showered the grateful river
with softest stalactites
tier on tiers of waning light
on a wandering april day

wondered who to thank
might warmly listen if not reply

when first ever i held you close
an ancient gate creaked open
to fields of new alfalfa and sweet grass
lambs rams ewes and their only-weeks-young
rushed out in a dance of such exuberance
the young ones leaping and head butting
running in silly circles to and from the ewes
as if crazy for approval and demented with joy
such a dance with you

when first ever i held you close
a hearth fire flared in a first salute
to the perfection of our embrace
that our cats sedated by the warmth
failed to see sheets of rain pouring down
demanding silver windows pay a tariff
daffodils bow their gold heads down
pay tribute to the rain's transparency
an honoring like violins and cellos
a showing of respect and even awe
a following of some brilliant score

when first ever i held you close
a new sun greeted this new day
the demented chorus of birds in spring
their crazed tweets chirps and warblings
shaking the dawn waking the world
made Morning Light wonder if apple blossoms
forsythia and little leaves of baby green
or old white flowering pear could see or hear
time was braked bracketed and broken
no such thing as past future days months or years

when first ever i held you close
to an imperial city of imperial dreams
our train on shining rails
rode beside a shining river
to the choruses of far hills far on
and their oratorios of spring greens
their nettle-purples blues and roses
gave the dry point of the land's engraving plate
a fine intaglio etched by pine needles and burrs

when first ever i held you close
i saw us in the mirror of my mind
each seeing each seen in seeing
a single point as in donne's compass
that served as proof that no matter
how far our souls our fast feet move
so like the pursuit of moon by sun
we are one center ending and starting again
at this true plumb point from which we run
and now matter mattering not a jot
we in one another's arms have just begun
for Wanda - April 27, 2016

content

content content
who needs another poem
who to live needs more art
poor content you dull cement
joining the voice to intent
caused by the bugaboo
the human hullabaloo
of knowing we all rent
ourselves will be rent
so why even start
why bother to give
given the horror
of the closing door
hope and faith answer
only to honor
mother and father

wager

you can see the line
waiver

and that's where beauty lies

fine wager
between artist's hand and mind

scolding God

hey! God Who
Whatever You are
god of bigs
god of smalls
son of god son of man

god of death god of bliss
wakey! wakey!

hey! One Who Sees
how about more give
less takey takey
on You we call
go easy easy
shower mercies
on us one and all

as each like leaves
we flutter fall and leave
we hope we pray
we beg PLEASE
on each of us bestow
however unworthy
one small kiss go easy

san juan before the party

outside the torrential downpour of warm rain
the conversation of birds wind tiny frogs and rain
inside and behind the reception desk
were hundreds of branches of sanded driftwood
suspended by near-invisible monofilament
flowing horizontally miming ocean waves
or the random play of schools of ocean fish

the american press has been cruel to puerto rico
the zika mosquito and an economic collapse
gutting the economy and devastating the people
yet in a week only one bug a tiny fruit fly
appeared un-phased by chattering guests
hotel denizen drawn to sparkling martinis
or its wish for olives or a tangy lemon twist

there were only thirty people in the airport
objective correlative if ever there was one
for men fashion was cartoonishly plaid jackets
expensive distressed jeans bespoke plaid shirts
think loud cerulean blue or opalescent green
and pointy bertolinis or black suede gucci loafers

who'd've thought the sushi and shrimp nagi
spicy tuna rolls could rival nobu's finest or tokyo's
all of san juan only ten minutes away and the clouds

the great, ascending, birthday-cake-extravaganza clouds
rise up like big cartoon bubbles singing “Caribbean!”
or “*muy agradecido mi amigos mia amigas!*”
so many soulful dark eyes so many bright smiles

late dandelions

on thin hollow stalks
their soon-to-be bald heads
their geodesic globes
their fluffy follicles
blown by the wind
gone puffs gone zen
seed hair mobbing
the air to their home Dust
Fluffs that can’t be killed
though laid low by the mower
an *om mani padme hum*
a mote tide of less to more
a door an invitation

to a decapitation
so patiently they wait
their delicate friends
the smallest flowers
so close to the ground
beneath them swarm
their brightness sings
have no fear stay calm
back again next year
a hello a resurrection
a win a walk in a park
a dark to a light a swing
a salutary pendulum

liberté yogurt

my wife always finds
the good stuff
new foods new beverages
coconut yogurt
so peel back the lid
you foodie heathen you
and yum ! dig in
coconut yogurt
so good you even
scrape the last creamy
tip of a teaspoon

from the underside
of the lid and hidden
printed in gothic bold
gold across the divide
of packaging and marketing
and years and ! here's old
Tolstoy (died in 1910)
speaking from the flip side
of a plastic yogurt top:
*"There is no greatness
where there is not simplicity,
goodness and truth."*
coconut yogurt
liberté leverages
for wanda

osteoarthritis

as i go i must go slower
across the stubborn floor
up and down the hostile stairs
ignoring aching hip and knees
pain is my traveling companion
talented hellion makes me rant
a guide that makes me believe
by thinking and moving slower
my mother and father flower
frequently in me i try to see
aging as just another door
my body but a room i rent

two phoebes' nest view of their pool at midnight

do they feel it like we might as a planetary apparition suddenly seen
a spasm a sudden invasion of an alien click of a being's electric illumination
that with flip of switch lights from below transform the heads of their chicks
into fuzzy hobgoblins like children holding flashlights under their chins on halloween

the barn red now a nocturnal beak-red deeper than barn-end-of-day red
the royal ferns below swaying in their sea of a late-night memorial breeze
the adult phoebes taking turns sitting on their nest built atop two floodlights
that illumine the pool and capture the aquamarine tidal looping longings of light
the changing shimmer-chain of turquoise and bright so well held by hockney
that illusive hypnotic rhythm of light welded to water in his paintings of pools

what if anything do the adult phoebes feel or remember of this shock of bright
ever vigilant and protective do they await the next visitation of the security light
upon which and under which come each summer they anchor their tight wattle nest

and once dark returns feel the deep cerulean reflection of stars breathing over the pool
or the white fingernail of a thin crescent of a waxing moon and the silent ons and offs
of the end-of-may fireflies lulling the two phoebe mates and their chicks back to sleep?

crow

when crow speaks
his whole body pulses
with each staccato call
morning bows down in awe

two turtle day

one an eastern painted
ear and claw cadmium yellow and red
bright as a boy scout's merit badge
top shell elegant as abalone
bottom side a puzzle of ivory
smells the air for water like a dog
makes his way through tall grass
to the frog muck of our pond
where in the sweltering noon
he bakes in sun on rocks or logs

the other an ancient snapper
black barnacle shell moss-covered rock
his miniature mountain range runs
top of spine to tip of alligator tail
fu manchu nails dark as mold
vulture beak cruel gimlet eyes
inbred rage from a paleozoic age
evil fury of antediluvian design
made to snap a rabbit leg or
make fingers go from ten to nine

my wife and i

my wife and i
are forged and tempered
of fired years
a two-edged sword
ask and give no quarter
hard-scrabble Polish
some battles won
together we have grown
in all we've done

as we age together i wish
we'd grow a bit wiser

each day avoid pride
strive to afford more
gentleness and mercy
grow bolder in tenderness
so when Death steals me
one will live pacified

**the at-first-smiling face
of all that's sad and terrible I**

the profound indifference of all living things to each of us
our mite-like shows of empathy so small when most care less
dawn brighter closer clearer as the end comes nearer in razor focus
the mirrors say it best: most ignore or choose a form of blindness
perhaps it's wise to feign a smile to repress the worst not make a fuss

to whimper and cringe with self pity or worry is to be a bore
like borers' carved labyrinths in logs when bark's peeled back
the map is on the wall if there really is a wall if there really is a map
no way to comprehend or justify the whittling down of us all
striving to sum it up mere proof that words are just a flight of birds

of no more use pick your poison than drugs or booze or whole foods
no way to close the ever-open sore we stumble into the ring of every day
wealth fame righted wrongs the vendettas of revenge the meals of love
wisdoms of the bible tarot kabala and koran the i-ching tallings of all tribes
of all times like picasso's gypsy minotaur and his wobbly cart of worldly stuff

the determined seizing of a little patch of joy by every girl and boy
old testament to our species' old will to play it rough our role to live
hold dear the ones that have mysteriously disappeared find a part to give
one small thing in the living room of Ever Mind that can stand ebullient
in the moon tides of dark and light to make each moment a monument
to savor each breath against the aching tooth of God's joke of death

**the at-first-smiling face
of all that's sad and terrible II**

summon us to this moment that You own unseen Lord
like faithful dogs who see us as our god and never look away
unlike cats forever half-engaged never will tell never will say
their love withheld all-conditional full of charm out of play

make us your hammer nail and saw plain builders of this day
even as you know we know each day you will take it all away
though hidden so often cold distant and eternally invisible
don't remove our small hopes of conquering the invincible

let us find that place near impossible to find like bugs in a bed
under a quilt or mice sleeping cozy under a crazy quilt
old hound of heaven track us down sharpen our souls' swords
quell our fears shed light on our words our worlds inscrutable

most perfect strangers now

in your fine presence if i am
or ever will be anything at all
i am held momentarily by your gaze
grateful for your eyes your time
none of these words are truly mine
just crusts of bread cast upon a sea
syllables lent back to me to transcribe
in this troubled time and age

for you to make them briefly yours
these words but opening or closing doors
whoever you are i imagine us together
side by side most perfect strangers now
having stood or standing on this mystic shore
taking one another in like the air we breathe
i dreaming how you may never leave me
even after you leave this book this page

the mind

the mind is a well
one star shining in it
well waters muddled
by wind and weather
and each flying day's light
shines better when troubled
in that dark flowerbed
below the black milk of Night

a thing that me didn't hurt

the other day i saw a pigeon
rare bird looked SO determined
i didn't have the prescience to question:

“could he be that one that shat
on my friend fred as he sat
there transcendently on his patio?

what's the likelihood of that?
like winning the ontario lottario
reverse prize – a pigeon curse

at least, not on fred's bald head"
ok ok - his shirt was smattered
that's why 'curmudgeon'

rhymes with 'pigeon' and 'wigeon'
so on your birthday be sure to duck
and stay inside, safe under your bed
for fred siegel - june 19 2016
*contemplating our phone conversation
when fred told me he 'ran into a pigeon'*

adage I

adage that bodes well:
love your good wife
love your good home
love all the good you've done

love your own good self
your own agendas minimize
place them on some lesser shelf
when it comes to married life

nest your two best selves alone
not worry who's on who's phone
who owns what hers or yours go easy
on the one you love forgive your lies

this will lead to a ripe old age while
not a dance but a one-two punch
your lives open doors a renaissance
before your lives are over and done

adage II

if you just
sit damn still
in one spot
the whole circus
dam will burst
and flow over you

like a cold
just before
you know you
are truly ill and
full of sniffles
floods turn into rffles

bowl of water

bowl of water you mirror the open sky
the open faces of parched passersby
calm when alone and patiently waiting
each thirst you quench a bold awakening

fireflies

fireflies never shout
fireflies are entering
our home outside in
how their lights do sing
turn our home inside out

takahasi cried

“my hand is the universe!”
takahashi cried, “so soon!”
as he cut it off and threw
it over a bright sickle moon

goodbye

the sky still blue
the sun now gone

this much is true
as you lose me

as i lose you
we must hold on

merilly merrily

ant

you can never criticize him for not being determined
on a pheromone track invisible as the power source of Lionel trains
with a fluidity of intention not to sun or moon or stars beholden
the filament of his legs devoid of musculature rapid as living twigs
defies all gravity and picks up speed in bright summer's friendly light
his three bony segments his wasp-like hind black as brogues well-shined
helmet head a symmetry a scary mimicry of a samurai warrior's
battle mask fierce mandibles feathered feelers furious with intelligence
often seen carrying a dead companion or lugging a too-heavy moth
dried worm or crumb of bread applauded by softest breeze back to den
to mother ship to colony to the congratulations of the telepathic swarm
formicidae hymenoptera in may nestled deep in peonies drunk on their scent

his ability to snuggle into summer's warm hundred-petal blossom-bed
how smartly his ebony disappears into the opiate center is a tiny wonder

in autumn in wet woods holing up 'round mushrooms or in rotting logs
underground colony super organization exoskeletons compound eyes
soldier worker drone something about him reincarnate never dies
like a pinewood derby racing car he moves with gravity and gravitas
formicidae hymenoptera close to a fourth of our planet's biomass
i watch him cross the tightrope edge of pool and try to calculate
the speed at which he runs hell bent on getting past a dandelion patch
proportionately faster than any man yet thrown off by a strong breeze
more a diversion than a pain he never will be seen walking in the rain
relative of wasps and bees in spring hitchhiking indoors his varnish
dark stark against country white-pine kitchen floors so pick him up
his pincer nips telegraphing "set me free to my great outdoors!"
a delicate alien sci-fi subterranean union leader of his working class
wingless he can fall from great heights light enough to glide and sail
hard not to admire his ability to land unscathed and soldier bravely on

and then there's his unwelcome family and their battle cry: *Picnic Well!*
they send out one small scout one sneaky little beast and then they start
an unbroken line of confident black confetti sneaky creeps zoning in
peppering chicken cakes and cobblers seething on crème brûlée or custard tarts
that they herd and milk aphids little insect cows is unlikely as it is ant art
"dairying ants" a dogma-free sort of mutualism or symbiotic dualism
in the fall they gather aphid eggs and in the spring place them on plants
they and aphids both like to eat so summer long they can milk and feast
he is a wanderer tight-waisted as a corset-bound victorian dowager
he is a gypsy voyager a hardened gladiator a tireless investigator
curious hiker he walks under arbors of pachysandra and bowed blades of grass
through jumbled jungles of violets and wolf spider's webs like trampolines
avoiding his nemesis voracious cannibal green knight Sir Preying Mantis
nearly erased by a pallet of shadows he is camouflaged and disappears
and escapes smaller than the smallest bean into a tunnel of umber green

oh ant when you see grasshopper play and sing all summer worry free
you must hate Aesop and his moral tale of *Provide!* when you talk to your shrink
when you give it a think grasshopper grasshopper must be a thorn in your side
while you and your hoard remain obsessed with labor in the heat of summer
grasshopper grasshopper sings and eats and naps like a fat-cat lottery winner
sure you'd like to take a break like grasshopper grasshopper and enjoy enjoy
he sits back legs crossed carefree while you work like fools to provide for winter
come the cold why not be contrarian old boy and invite grasshopper grasshopper in
(neither of you were ever enemies or jealous of who you are or in the wrong)
feed him well then over cigars and port you can both tell Aesop to go to hell
praising the fruits of industry and the merits of art poetry idleness and song

lastly your nightmare glass-and-plastic prison The Ant Farm (food and 18 ants)
cruel science lesson taught by heartless no-soul white coats to voyeuristic kids
their punishment to live forever trapped like the ancient ant trapped in amber
seeing happy you and grasshopper grasshopper free on the outside staring in

mirror of night

pair of mourning doves gray on the wing
owl leaves nest to start his hunting thing
in the dusky theater of the setting sun
to what do we aspire when our day is done
and Who Whoo asks Owl Whoo do we love

if goats could fly

if goats could fly
(their poops *plus grande* -
they out-poop pigeons vastly)

let's hope they only poop on land
or else all of homo sapiens
and other lesser shitters

including pigeons would
keep looking to the sky
our eyes would never rest

to keep from getting blessed
by goat poop falling truly ghastly
from goats with bad intentions

so the next big invention
in a world where goats could fly?
aerial pooper scoopers would be super

what kosher dills and espadrilles have in common

espadrilles go well with sexy 'feets'
kosher dills go well with smoked deli meats

centipede

thin dirigible with a hundred legs
centipede quickly turns centripetal
when poked he rolls into a ball
tight as an egg impenetrable
what gall!

time and time again

deluded i pretend to act
like i have all the time
in the world entire
can barely catch a breath
down to the last dime
down the long last bend

then one Hard Fact
intervenes and hurls
a penalty brew at me
just the brutal truth
a cold dish a flat tire
no heating or pumping

will warm or inflate
Life's last joke last goof
The Vanishing of Youth
when i ran like a gazelle
days of infinite energy
now just boring yarns to tell

near the bottom of the well
i still desire am inspired
to be like philippe petit
walking the tightrope wire
between life death and hell
wish i had no fear of jumping

rabbits

who knew the word for baby rabbits is 'kittens'
come dawn half asleep they feast on clover blossoms
they and the adults stretched out snow-white bellies up
on carpets of grass and dandelion greens fresh mown
still wet with dew on the cologne of our gravel drive
damp fur patchy as thrift-store moth-eaten muffs
their eyes dark as black marbles hold two dots of sun
flush with summer they laze in the open playground
of their own amusement park breezes their lullaby
little ones asleep one under our car one on the lawn
when startled the mechanics of their lanky hind legs
thighs like olympic hurdlers' haunches like high jumpers'
wobbly crankshafts slow-locomotive into drive then explode
to high-gear herky-jerky rocket sprint to a dark sanctuary
to lush cover of densest briar patch and blackberry bush
feeling safe facing in they almost hide their bottoms

cotton tails tucked into the camouflage of rear-end brown
big ears floppy as deers' ever-alert reaching skyward
something imp-like about them one with bird-clouds that sail
incongruously sweet their huge hind feet and puffballs of tails
and here's the catch vital to these hip-hop-mobsters Please!
boycott all pimped-up sales of incarnadine day-glow rabbit feet
jackalopes lucky key chains hare-fur throws and rabbit mittens

raindrops

how subtle sweetly
you build in frequency
and fall in multitudes

on the calm surface
of the turquoise pool
widening you expand

raindrops dancing
stubborn ever opening
one next one next

circles wide then wider
illuminated text under
clouds of parchment gray

ozone-infusing scent
my friend july do you feel
in your hint of autumn

that drunken summer reel
calling this dizzy day
to this your summer ballet

raindrops we love you
you are our youth
you are life returning

beauty and pain

red fox barks at midnight
barred owl's sad hoot
indigo bunting's arc
by design a loop-de-loop
a chance? evolutionary
magical-survival flight
of black swallowtail
and scarlet tiger moth

DNA's full of tricks
like an NBA player

driving to the hoop
in fine summer rain
haunting reminders
of an overlooked truth:
beauty holds pain
and pain holds beauty
in my dance and yours
lives a sure-sharpened blade
a bomb with a burning fuse
an ache that gives and takes

lighthouse

an obelisk of guiding light
i rise above a vast and open sea
and faithful cast my silent beam
over my ocean who roars or dreams

whose waves rage or drift with ease
my duty to be a ray of calm
to serve as savior and sanctuary
a central compass point of brightness

when moon and stars are hidden
from fair ships who've lost their way
whose cargo slaves heroes or knaves
sail blind to hope or despair given

alone every night i confess
chained to this mighty Mystery
my light wanders as i wonder darkly
"Who is it that enlightens me?"
as i taste the fog's salt-air balm

gull

that speck of white
on hudson's vast blue
a laughing gull?
drifting south
on ebb tide silently
almost lost to the eye
a small goodbye
to me and you

chickadee

black cap
black chin strap
loves sunflower seeds
one of the tiniest
most clever of all
the number of 'dees'
signals emergency!
hawk fox or cat
an alarm call for all
other birds to flee
your signature song
chickadee dee dee
boasts nothing wrong
with being small

kennings for liar

twist tongue
twist speak
word blinder
fact burier
heart hider
distort snorter
fact scrambler
fact dodge
varnish speak
muddle mouth
fact twister
fact fuck
calumny carrier
tripe teller
perjury promoter
stink syndicator
shit spinner
fallacy planner
fib founder
fib flopper
spin nabob
mendacity magnet
fog shoveler
miasma maker
light blocker
dark spreader
truth poisoner
shade shaper
slant siren

whiteout witch
truth shredder
fact flamer
mush marketer
muck mother
pig lipsticker
falsity floozie
crap creeper
propaganda plotter
pundit polluter
publicity ponce
twist tongue
hide truth

to hold the august sky

alone on this open sea of days
in my attempts to hold the sky
i spread my arms like flailing wings
of the solitary albatross
or the cormorants' outstretched
who after preying prays and chants
or that brave man nailed to his cross

my attempts to hold the sky
summer clouds the face of eternity
are a dream a silly kind of lie
truth told i'm embarrassed by
only to find what lost i call "I"
is a gift a tutorial in humility
embraced and held fast by Thee

after a rainfall

that night a dark and sullen downpour
hid the saucer edge of a broken moon

that day sun shone through a thousand drops of rain
sparkling on the edges of a thousand leaves

clouds in awe stood still under a dome of blue
all in wonder that Heaven showed up so soon

the two thunders of success

the climb to success has two thunders
going from wondering what to do
to having no time to do or wonder
how you juggle this is up to you

**on seeing a photo of my nephew celebrating
the first month after his daughter's birth**

is it the man that rocks the child
or the child that rocks the man
each being the very best they can
fine calm and something very wild

August 25 2015

for Natalie Ann, Melissa and Dan

buddha and the beetle

against all inhuman cruelties
against history's Shoah car
of the dying and the dead
against eternities of infinities
the Buddha cries
Compassion!
toward all struggling beings

flailing in the ocean
of the suburban pool
on lone raft of cherry leaf
the beetle silently cries
"forget the Buddha
forget all theologies and philosophies
wake up Gautama! save Me!!"

remembering 9/11

I
what point all our tears
all follow the same cold road
salt point oh salt point

II
black and white movie
turns suddenly to color
then the reel goes blank

III
rogue planes two scalpels
trepan twin towers' steel skulls
stave small human hulls

IV
bite 'till you draw blood
taste our sad saline ocean

from our pulse flowers

V

couple holding hands
leaps from the divorced towers
the world trade center

VI

this sadness now one
without curve or boundary
systole diastole

VII

ticker tape parade
for the unaccounted souls
the world trade center

VIII

the rain of bodies
falling like hitchcock's mad birds
or magritte's dark hats

IX

one tooth and braces
an arm a wrist a rolex
the world trade center

X

children flee day cares
look up! the birds are burning!
the world trade center

XI

eight molars capped
porcelain on enamel
tell the truth dentists

XII

fill their mouths with screams
they've joined the order of sardines
stacked like thorny dreams

XIII

flies trapped in honey
september an accomplice

feel wings tremble

XIV

nature will heal it
or end it in its own way
small reason to pray

XV

top of a skull
wearing an ashen toupee
the world trade center

XVI

now in the white void
the white ash makes all things ghosts
the world trade center

XVII

inside the stations
people betraying no fear
the world trade center

XVIII

near the twin towers
dusk wind bends the fall marsh grass
the world trade center

XIX

bridges now different
structures approach an absence
the world trade center

XX

they ran out of flags
people started painting them
the world trade center

XXI

two three days after
interviewing architects
the media circus

XXII

no eyes examined
for dread of truly seeing

the cruel plot now real

XXIII

cyclist a bomber?
all we have is the now
simplest things hold fear

XXIV

the salt of the earth
mostly ignored
elevated to heroes

XXV

those forgotten rise
from the fire and the blood
the press black with it

XXVI

in all the corners
the spiders continue to spin
not knowing the news

XXVII

melted steel landscape
smell of burnt asbestos brake drums
red leaves still fall

XXVIII

babies' feet still small
cool and pink warmed by hands
loving moms and dads

XXIX

the sun misses them
their red windows shattered
the world trade center

XXX

the sun misses them
the memory of sun light
plays on lost windows

XXXI

overhead monitors
drop from the sky being watched
new insecurities

XXXII

souls from bodies blown
melted steel crushed glass
the pilgrimage continues

XXXIII

cruel prison warden
shows prisoners open doors
lost souls seeking air

XXXIV

a winged migration
people flap wings they don't own
tenderness rising

XXXV

anthrax envelopes
it's not bills we're afraid of
the world trade center

XXXVI

to talk or not to talk
either way tragedy
drowns out the loud stars

XXXVII

surely we would die
if we could comprehend at all
the world trade center

mens style ny times magazine

two stevie wonder in-his-youth lookalikes
one thug rapper in gold lame slacks skin tight
the other in prisoner-chic blue-black shades
against the softest rain of purple light
the thug EYE CRUSH
the other I AM FAMOUS

ralph lauren's filmmaker son
cobblestone street in Gstaad
Porsche gleams ebony in foreground
of double-page prime-position spread
who wouldn't want to be here
nabokov's enchanted Switzerland
gives credence to the brand

the stand of white birches
frozen lake drifting snow going blue
dusk dusts the rolling distant hills
young man in dayglow orange runners
Youth brought to us by hermes
hermes compliments of Nature

three Armani boys
faces like david by michaelangelo
the only light against sleek geometric
charcoal gray and black twill
of their layered ensembles
is light that falls upon their faces
putti-pensive beyond their years
a strained and feigned intelligence
that we forgive and embrace
the staged trick of this fantasy
the idyll of their beauty is such
that it serves every sexual dream
like some kind of silent bomb

the cliché tousling of locks
the looking to the side
the self-conscious
the self-absorbed
leaning on the Jaguar
loafing by the pool
the Moment captured
the diamond of the mundane
the spontaneity of an airport garage
the peak achievement of youth
requiring no effort or study
beauty born the studied look frozen
on this faux-reel fun house ride
back stage something wholly feigned
and heroically vapid

brioni meets metalica

a failed attempt to fill the slot
that rock stars always own
and transfer the magical
to shoes in light and shadow
so serious the camera's stare
that there can be no disbeliever
since all wish they could be there

a white shirt shot in black and white
guaranteed to reset fashion's clock
take us back frame us save us
in the manner of irving penn

people torsos topless hatless shop-less
in search of eros eye or eyeless
a circling around a wander-lusting
for a return to something new or better
classic sleek time-honored
effortless functional independent
memorable raw and intimate
a new infatuation for women and men
a stew of inference social insulation
designed to give gusher status to and tap
what in a year will just be crap

hummingbird

the hummingbird flew so fast
to a pink butterfly bush
hovered by the screen
of the screened-in porch
and in a blink of a blink
of a second was gone
seen then seen no more
all our lives on the wing
under outlaw skies of blue
a hummingbird gone
after each visit a hush
this our hummingbird song

suicide 2.0

all channels opened
all blocks removed
so clever now moot
he hit reboot
and disappeared
forever

only a dream

the kitchen smelled good
mommy was baking
daddy was working

i was my age - sixty-nine

she always happy in kitchen
in the dream much younger than i

neither of us spoke
she held me a small child
her embrace said it all

things will be all right
knowing i was in a dream
not wanting the dream to end

touched while sleeping
still churning in dream tide
hoping to return i woke

wondering how so
soon our old ones all gone
our elders now we've become

hitch hiker late summer

chicory so blue
yellow butter and eggs
also known as
sidekicks two
line country roadsides
parades of pretty girls
who hoping to win a ride
show their pretty legs
stop! they seem to sigh
to passing cars speeding by

brideweed, bridewort, butter and eggs (but see *Lotus corniculatus*), butter haycocks, bread and butter, bunny haycocks, bunny mouths, calf's snout, Continental weed, dead men's bones, devil's flax, devil's flower, doggies, dragon bushes, eggs and bacon (but see *Lotus corniculatus*), eggs and butter, false flax, flaxweed, fluellen (but see *Kickxia*), gallweed, gallwort, impudent lawyer, Jacob's ladder (but see *Polemonium*), lion's mouth, monkey flower (but see *Mimulus*), North American ramsted, rabbit flower, rancid, ransted, snapdragon (but see *Antirrhinum*), wild flax, wild snapdragon, wild tobacco (but see *Nicotiana*), yellow rod, yellow toadflax.^[7]

sun and moon

sun lives within the moon
within the moon lives sun
we all sing amen pray all's right
it all comes around too soon
above beyond losing or winning

suns and moons we too
brothers or sisters as bright

pinwheel

the pinwheel of one red leaf
failing to join it's fallen friends
shows that in each fall so brief
there's no such thing as lasting grief
when galaxies of spinning leaves
shine red with joy in falling

what the hawk said

up and up rose the red-tail hawk
as if to say with his proud display
of talon pinion wing and hooked beak
drink deep from october's bright cup
go slow savor my flight and look
see how my savior-red wings rise
negate deepest darkest Night
are a flight to eternal Day

sailboats in the fog

the hudson's damp sheet of gray
rocks sailboats silent and blind
fog-shrouded in their marinas
keels still as river's still hills unseen
like kneeling nuns with no habits
quietly locked in their novenas
all singing praise to the river's God
that ever-flowing water Mind

hunters hidden in their blinds
shotguns cocked and ready
wait patient muted as the sun
warming wings of migrating prey
grand lottery of takers or givers
how many will die anybody's bet
fog surrounds devours rises up
calls all into its flimsy circus tent

boy in black with a sharpshooter's eye

used to be when daylight savings first began
all farmers saw Death in Autumn's Round
knew Death in all things sown when reaped
the scythe their tool was Death in their hands

The Season of Scythes cutting all things down

urbanites suburbanites in harvest time
city fools removed from land's best end
have lost touch with harvest days gone by
when the skull in the hood with a scythe
once Horror is now just the mask of a clown

b-movies scaring kids at Halloween
dated as typewriters or virgin prom queens
now Death pops up in malls and schools
streets and byways with a new haunting mask
and frightening smile: a desperate boy no fool

hunting in suicidal black sporting guns not toys
with a sharpshooter's eye out for some Fun

different types of falling

there's the falling rain
which falls to wash away all pain
there's december snow
which winter-softens where we go
there's october leaves
red orange yellow and rust
which fall like mercy take their time

there's you and i
who fall knowing we'll fall
unlike seasons rain snow or leaves
when we leave we sadly rhyme
we suffer Reason the pull the pain
the siren call the endless chain
of full knowing we must go

fading in fading out

it took me seven decades to see
all i've ever wanted to do is dream

fearing to own that daunted tract
i troubled myself with less important things

less raided less haunted by mortality
i wish i knew long long ago that

i am a just braid of oceans tides seasons
moons suns stars rewoven dust reborn to sing

to wink back at the Soul's wink of eternity
to hear that voice rewind that softly calls

that unseen breath that says forget Reason
and follow the call of the mighty hidden All

the studio

the studio is the inside of the artist's brain
every scribble of pencil of word of brush
is a hieroglyph of search for glory through pain
evidence of each imagined flare extinguished
each imagined rocket of each imagined gain
a persistent form of stubborn blind ambition
slow transition to the razor edge of erudition
a daring fragility an old moon on a new wane
after every failing run to perfection run again

leaf on a screen

this leaf held by this autumn wind
outside this screen facing in
suspended in this shifting drift
of an orange october's crooked grin

this leaf we believe feels no pain
in its trip from birth to death's spin
from its home on mother maple limb
breeze going thin in going-naked trees

this leaf is not a metaphor for mortality
not a symbol of leaves at death's door
this leaf is a live leaf at this leaf's end
and since we think it does not feel

or understand or see having no eyes
not looking back from where it came
seized in fall by a Force greater than all
by a Force on this gentle october day

poised in its last magnetic drift to ground
with no soul not knowing it's falling
may teach us in its falling that one day
sooner than we souls know sooner

than we souls care to know or say
we each will find ourselves in leaving

leaves on a screen facing a great Divide
and know we face a knowing at the end

that we are leaves facing a final "Help!"?
the one end all face wondering what
it means to fall so freely to be erased
each leaf frantic a waving golden yelp

each a broken stem a story never told
waves a gentle goodbye goodbye
falls fragile down on dark parched ground
to die? or just a ticket to an amusement park?

to return with no memory again and again?
this leaf held by this autumn wind

the words

the words the words
rested re-drawn reborn
witnesses witnessing
as brancusi's celestial birds
as mountains and cloud tops kiss
that sing remembering
from the heart fresh are torn

poems that tippy wrote

#1

i love the cello
as much or more
than yo yo ma or
tuna-and-liver jello

#2

i run around like a crazy monster
from window to window guarding my home
from feral cats coyotes bobcats foxes
all wild mobsters security's my jobster
no confidence in what the lock says

#3

i clean and wash myself so thoroughly
raspy tongue on q-tip paws so deft
a wonder i have any fur left at all
am not yet a feline elf completely bald

#4

after doing what i do in my litter box
i cover it all so diligently you'd think
i was digging to china for golden rocks
maybe that's why my paw pads are pink

#5

sometimes i go completely nutz and bonkers
like the ghosts of rabid wolves were on my trail
possessed i sprint from room to room unhinged
scared of shadows being chased by my own tail
then spent i calm down have a drink of water
find a cozy spot and sleep off every binge

#6

sometimes in midst of a self-cleaning frenzy
i stick my back leg up so straight and high
like a furry flagpole reaching for the sky
my flexibility such a wonder is the envy
of kundalini-yoga masters worldwide

#7

from room to room to room upstairs and down
i go from window ledge to window ledge
standing tall on my hind legs looking out
down country road past maple trees and privet hedge
day and night head twisting left to right like an owl's
once i've viewed every window in my house
seen no intruders no outsiders friend or foe
antennae ears like radar dishes tuned in tuned out
two swivels hear faint breath of uncaught mouse
worried sick i howl an awful belly-aching yowl
and still distraught once again resume my rounds

#8

what is it why is it i cannot resist an empty box
no matter how small how big i'm driven to climb in
and sit and wait and wait and maybe doze for what
i'm mesmerized like iron filings to a magnet drawn in
the temptation too great drawing killer me to sin
hidden in my fort safe in my own safe with no lock
the promise of what's to catch better than what's caught
the predator in me waiting for some clueless prey
clueless to wander by and make my murderous day

#9

i'm almost embarrassed to give you my advice
but do listen: forget your fancy dime store toys
all those cutesy manufactured slick distractions
wallmart-catnip-stuffed cigars phony iridescent birds
fake-feathered fish on monofilament tied to bamboo poles
costco hollow plastic balls with bells inside anything rubber
mice and rats of every shape size and denomination
ship them back insipid from whence they came
give me instead used wrapping paper tightly rolled
small aluminum foil balls a few new leaves
sticks twigs or branches (not too thin or brittle so i don't choke)
anything that still smells of pine cedar maple moss or oak
pebbles from nearby streams things peed on by cats or dogs
or other strange foreign country animals like skunks or possums
any scat of deer chipmunk mouse squirrels or other pussums
empty boxes of any shape or size ample bags i can crawl into
expensive fabric arms of armchairs antique table legs i can claw
flat cardboard strips old towels placed mat-like on the floor
the tips or heels of socks stuffed with catnip
and sealed with rubber bands scotch tape or dental floss
any type of plastic bottle tops or corks
from a good bordeaux or chardonnay
a handmade-by-you mouse of yarn with a woolen tail
a sprig of mint or some fresh cut grass
a blue jay pigeon chickadee or junco feather
stuff with smells that linger stuff that has a lasting funk
things organic in the early stages of putrefaction
if you're going to spend your hard-earned dollars
and are really serious about your fussy cat's satisfaction
don't be duped by all that tartered-up slick plastic junk
spend it on things that i will truly love like
broiled langoustine boiled shrimp sautéed liver chicken fingers
or fresh catnip sprinkled on those great scratching pads
don't be fooled into buying phony feline luxuries
please i beg you don't buy for YOU buy for your cat ME

#10

when i drink i drink to drink
but also drink to make a statement
like a camel from the old testament
i make such a slurping commotion
i slurp with such gusto you'd think
my water bowl was moses' red sea
a parting feline commemoration
a celebrity millennial's blog

a truly biblical anointed celebration
of all cats' victories over Pharaoh
Dog and his slavey egyptian dogs

#11

sleeping yes falling asleep at once
a major talent of mine maniacally
i carry no fears no anxieties
i don't over intellectualize
unlike worried dogs no skittish dunce
when i dream fat mice my wish my prize
i snore growl unconsciously i rumble
my masters always charmed mostly humbled
by my gift to leap off sleep's cliff instantly

the funnel

one antidote to existential pain
and overthinking is to serve
as conduit for an oceanic voice
a voice bigger than mine
pouring down and down
into bottles cans and jars
not a matter of choice
accepting whatever's poured
a rising tide begin begin
echoes in the tunnel of my brain
just a conduit to what's stored
distilled bottled brewed
canned pickled in rine
in bottles cans and jars
i the funnel

for all suicides

when suicides string the rope
put knife to the carotid
or gun to the poor brain
swallow pills an entire jar
how many before closure
driven to a final rope-a-dope
ask when compelled by so
much pain what's the gain
if they don't wonder before
last closing that last door
before leaving body's *land*
the meaning of *sleight of hand*

or which one loved one's task
which dear one still standing
will leave kill rope in the barn
kill knife back in the drawer
take kill gun off the floor
pills back in the jar
they fail to see they're not alone
to see what those thinking know:
death's a bandit cold ashes in a bowl
a not-pretty plot writ by a cracked pot
a knot that will for all time be cut
a little misunderstanding star lit
and after hell again and again that's it

sheep

just shorn grazing shy heads all down
not as white as the thin hoar frost
that varnishes their field's damp grass

they go about their morning tasks
rapt in some shared eternal calm
backs warmed by a november sun

rams ewes lambs days move slowly on
meander in some new-born round
time a dream nothing lost nothing won

newton the turtle

is it me really?
must i feel so soul sick?
is the fifth estate in trouble
our culture like desert sand
when sunday's times front page
features me newton the turtle
and the role we turtles played
in the annals of new music?
or am i just feeling my age?

jello song

jello jello jello jello
you know you have to have it
there's always room for jello
makes you want to sing
shake jelly-shiver bellow
imitate the sweet concentrate of
jello jello jello jello

some water plus jello powder
stir it up in a bowl or cup
stick it in the fridge and wait
be patient just a little longer
then tap it with a spoon or knife
and see it jiggle-jounce to life

moms dads brothers sisters
fat thin young old bald or hairy
rich poor no matter buy some more
behind every supermarket door
jello beckons so don't be wary
it separates us from japes and apes

jello and science fiction
and the race to outer space
neil armstrong our hero and guide
like astronauts and rockets
go together like moon and tides
space food for kids' fantasy rides

jello jello jello jello
you know you have to have it
there's always room for jello
makes you want to sing
shake jelly-shiver bellow
imitate the sweet concentrate of
jello jello jello jello

in candle light it glimmers
tap it lightly watch it shimmer
poke it hard watch it dance
in the right light with right glance
look! reckon you can see your fate
in the shade of your own jello face

orange pomegranate pumpkin
raspberry apricot cherry
pineapple watermelon lemon
vanilla banana cream melon
chocolate butterscotch grape
lime peach mango all in a race

instant or cook and serve
in a 50's heirloom mold

now worth their retro weight in gold
canned fruit salad or tiny shrimp
teeth or gums are all you need
don't skimp on the whipped cream

jello jello jello jello
you know you have to have it
there's always room for jello
makes you want to sing
shake jelly-shiver bellow
imitate the sweet concentrate of
jello jello jello jello

J-E-L-L-O!

la vaca

from the cloaca
of la vaca
comes a vile pile
so for a stroll undefiled
look front and backa

be like the alpaca

oohs ahs and ohs
the cloaca of *la vaca*
drops concentric piles
still warm always vile

i wish you will as you go
that you pilgrim child
will be like the wise alpaca
cross your pasture's miles

trust your wits and wiles
and with an alpaca smile
skip the squish between toes
looking more forward than backa

full moon

owl moon
who who whoo
how i do love you

full moon
deer moon
soon i will be you

after a new snow

after a new snow
once its dusting's done
on every black branch

one suddenly sees
so many dusted branches

shivering one on one
on all these naked trees
as a winter wind blows

bird feeder in december

from god or hands of gods or some wizard's hand
from whatever that powerful always invisible Will
placing them like chess pieces on His chess board
frozen white outside past our kitchen windowsill
blank movie screen the snow beneath the maple
in finest white of gray like an ermine shadow
on the cloak of kings or queens at the end of day
bowed body of the land cloaked by chasuble of snow

the birds driven mad by their cold and hunger
careening royally into arc of seeds' black compass
summer's melon pumpkin same size and shape
on carpet of snow seeds falling dark and random
like some high-school-freshman physics test
each by each by each from the feeder are taken
by chickadees jays juncos sparrows titmice
red or gray squirrels fierce frantically focused

rapt gamers at a vegas crap table enthralled riveted
on the throw of dice with nothing to win but life
a nourished collective mechanisms of a fine watch
species differences find a truce as side by side
they hunt and peck crack shell find seed eat fat
dense nuggets of protein in their cold cafeteria

that hold them harmless from the arctic cold
that put the spring into their little wiry feet

leaving the record of each hop on the palimpsest
on the blank canvas of the open receptive snow
and the low sun the feeble sun shines silver against
the stubborn black of the limbs of leafless trees
and upon all of them in their bustling joyful clusters
of fur or feather in ones and twos and threes
and what is this their magic in the growing dusk?
what is this anything-but-mundane enchantment?

the simple yet complex hunger of their joyful hunt
defying an early Darkening - creatures of wing or tooth
of feather or fur forever will do by instinct and hunger
what they do best: bear witness to the beauty of the small
the glisten of eye bird's flight squirrel's leap and then
against december's drear gray then as a match struck
glows the fluttering halo of one proud cardinal's red
the *raison d'etre* for december and falling winter snow

near yet far

the way the cardinal
red on his branch
just outside our window
intent peers in at me
as i peer out at him

in the falling snow
gives truth to the notion
that though so near
between our patronyms
swells an endless ocean swim

winter solstice sun

when the winter solstice sun casts the longest of long winter's longest shadows
its blinding light through the lead glass window of our living room its icy white
give fire to the rhododendrons and their tightest pencil curls how short day flies
the sun's beams drive stalactites to the iris of the eye a near-death-tunnel flight
and in this wordless stunning bright there lives a wishful wistful mumble of spring
faintest hint of some understated underrated unanticipated joyful thing

who?

who is it who?
who speaks to me?
i His scribe

feisty elfin recorder
of small hints of eternity
wee glimmer
on a dog a flea
no such thing as time

for phyllis and joe

there we go
i recall the days
when phyllis used to say
to wanda me and joe
there we go there we go
where now are they?
we miss them so
and still we say
there we go

possum ergo sum

just down the road where
penned-up piglets in the snow
almost pigs almost fit for slaughter
plow the field with hungry snouts
red tailed hawk road-killed possum
are center stage and steaming

the way the hawk dips his beak
into the still-warm bowels
looks up refuses to budge
to oncoming cars proud defiant
as i slow to witness his primal scene
he stares at me without a jot of fear

in his small act i saw God in him
a starving god eternal judge who lives
Deep Heart of all things that live
a neutral god a god that's not daft
a neural god that finds bliss however cruel
in recycling all creatures living or dead

calf cow pig fish mouse or owl or us
a god who has no need to win our trust
who as a carpenter makes his tools makes us
who smiles or weeps with sacrificial laughter
over this his ever-shifting ever-fickle altar
over this his world this his never-ending dream

snail

finger in Aeon's glove
a man of my times
of no greater rank
than a simple snail
insignificant i pale

i do my best to love
hope to pass this test

i work i rest
i paint i write
i leave a little trail
against all evidence
truest testament

held in my microscopic cell
small slime that shines
Aeon: Life, Force Vital as "Eternity"

the mouse that crossed the road and lived

six a.m. before this new day dreams of morning light
freezing rain road glistening black in my car's brights
reminds me of the medieval metaphor of the sparrow
the one who flies so fast from night to black of night
window to window above and beyond the castles' walls
past diamonds dancers dangers profane and sacred loves
for briefest burning moment flies by health wealth and joy

flies over beauty music romance and royal entourage
then back to black from whence he came unseen by all
as in a dream of fleeting youth and age a feathered arrow
a dream that slips by as we sip our cups of coffee
in wonder i hope i'll hear that sparrow's flutter wing
whose wings against my door will fly me on to glory
bring back to me those i've loved in one final magic story

beg borrow or steal

beg i say beg!
all compassionate muses
for their finest music
for grace each day
to live not obsessed
with money fame or in fear
or worried by world news
each day so sick

we might be blown away
in a cheap alarm clock's tick

borrow borrow
whenever in need
have courage no shame
to live proud in today
on the road to tomorrow
in the play land of hooray!
on the bus of faith hope and trust

steal steal
take for the taking
right off the shelf
the very best things
very few if any see
most of them mostly free
like stars rise of moon
dawn light's call of loon
or the silent posse of the clouds
boldly bringing back to you
your personal wonder
like a long-distance runner
sees the cloudy finish line
at the end of our game
let each of us pray
reinstating einstein's question
(he said it made him "HAZY"):
"am i or the others crazy?"

on pee-wee herman

just 'cause he got caught with his pants down
avid onanist wanking in the dark in a seedy theatre
to a porn flick in 1991 in the company of other fans
tuned in to many members in members' avid hands
is no cause to discount or dismiss *Pee-wee's Playhouse*
where all things inanimate live joyfully animate
and that time of childhood when every day is new
when a magic mr. sun smiles and tantric clouds sing
and skies sparkle and are bluest robin's egg blue
and the toaster warmly welcomes the perfect toast
and breakfast is a Rube Goldberg engineering wonder
of interconnected weights pulleys and levers that leave
a perfectly fried egg sunny side up on a perfect white plate
and with one fastidious bite saying *goodbye goodbye*
to globey, dog chair, mr. window, clockey and mr. kite

Pee-Wee mounts his beloved beach-cruiser bike
his red-and-white royal steed 1941 Schwinn charger
and with his inane signature explosive zen-clap laugh
skinny knight cloaked in a cloak of innocence and bliss
bravely cycles into the cold-war terror of each cruel day
so naive and radiant with joy that he actually is protected
and greeted by grocer baker tailor banker candlestick maker
as the embodiment of Christ tomb-risen or Bacchus at play

seminary

you can take the boy
out of the seminary

but never take the priest
out of the boy

sink ant

crossing the sahara of the kitchen sink
ebony against porcelain white

he has not the foggiest clue
that Cyclops Man is God to him

his chances of escape uncrushed
stacked in favor of none to slim

as instinct kicks in his pace now rushed
neither faith nor hope count for shite

running for his life no place to hide
is sink ant from us such a far cry

or lion's red hold on antelope
soaked in morning's predatory dew

only the Monster has time to think
in Muerte's armory all must abide

if

ah! he thought he caught a whiff of quiff
lingering on his middle finger
like some egyptian hieroglyph

bah! she thought wish he had been better
put the bowl lid down when he was done
did a tenth of what he said he'd do

the cardinal

the chinese character for red
is cherry blood rose and flame

each time the male cardinal lands
on the snow-covered cedar limb

he's framed by deepest forest green
his flight a function of pure chance

he puts all haughty reds to shame
always new vanishing too fast

beyond the frosted window glass
few friends do sit and wait for him

red red red red he proudly sings
winged fire blazing on a branch

two swans

to see the swans
two mates rising up
wings so close together
white above bright blue
river hudson's mighty cup
you and i - i and you
flying so close together
thru night and light of day
fly on my Love fly on
for wanda

aging

then one old fine day
looking at a tattered book
or a nineteen-twenties movie
clip of a daily desk calendar
pages flying off like leaves
of a cold dry november
or road dust off an old rolls royce
i see the ranting of my days
slip by most so fast flown by
egg larva chrysalis crystal butterfly
more lives lived than to be
present future past pluperfect

in the mirror that tells no lies
shows surgical what it is to lose
hoping to recreate to reinvent
that you that used to be new
now less OWN more like RENT
while hearing an internal voice
chanting i must i must i must
like any four-star retired chef
hold all recipes in your heart
a precious *roman à clef*

moon by moon season by season
always choose faith over reason

old marriage

when we're old and fat
and have mostly stopped talking
about any fusty this or muddy that
like two manhattan subway rats
clinging to a stale piece of cheese
imitating burns and gracie
let's hope we can wave a white flag
grant one or two small mercies

while one of us is still walking
fine time for another glass of wine
so much for romance horse or carriage
proud souls to earth's final marriage
and your frail heart that in mine
i clown wear like a sad funny hat
hold as in a sturdy shopping bag
ballets of memories and other dances

beg borrow or steal

beg
all muses
for compassionate music
for grace to live
not obsessed with money
fame fear or terrorized
tormented by world events
somes days sick some so fragile
feels like we might be blown away
in a cheap alarm clock's tick

borrow borrow

whenever in need
have courage no shame
to live proud in today
on the road to tomorrow
in the play land of hooray!
on the bus of faith or trust

steal steal steal
take for the taking
right off the shelf
the very best things
very few if any see
most of them mostly free
like stars rise or moon
or dawn light's or call of loon
or the silent posse of clouds
boldly bringing to you
a celestial wonder
like a long-distance runner
sees the cloudy finish line
at the end of our game
do recall einstein's question
"makes me hazy
...am i or the others crazy?"

out from under the boot heel of night and oppression

out from under the boot heel of night and oppression
god grant that there always will be one fearless
one soul drunk with mercy one sober one
to drive the ambulance of compassion
nine one one

memory

once long ago upon a time
there was a stained-glass window

that caught the alley light
on sunny afternoons

and cast a ray
that lit up her living room

what i wouldn't give
to go back there right now

to where she used to live

and hold her one last time

it's spring, baby

it's spring, baby
when all is MAY BE

bright as a newly-minted
limited-edition coin

when a thousand greens
shine like old gold and

old joints and loins
are feeling a hint

of a sirloin tingle in
this spring's busy jingle
for ee cummings

who

who is it who speaks to me
i his scribe and recorder
smallest glimmer of eternity
of smallest shimmer of eternity

flea of a dog spelled backward
god's flea hinting at order

a piece of sun

my only baggage

through the window
of the ancient glass
of my dream
i still can see
above the line of trees
against the planetary map
of night's great sky
the handle of the dipper

and like a piece of bread
in the pocket of my memory
i carry a piece of sun
for my journey
to another day

i still can hear
the loving thread
of my father's voice
ursus major
so clearly say

son
look to your heart
to always know
that though
beyond this line
which i cannot cross
my eyes like the stars
shine down upon you

bright to bright
voice to voice
heart to heart
to join you on your way
beyond *ursus minor* to me
dreaming of my father (stanley vincent)

saturdays

from the time the cat lands on my stomach
and starts contentedly kneading our blanket
and purring like a compassionate alarm clock
i am seized with a kind of apprehensive joy
at the prospect of a day completely all my own
and the daunting imperative of using it well
when phone rings i might choose not to answer
i can postpone coffee in the interests of observing
tunnels of dust mote roiling in the morning sun
or the tropic drift of hypnotic light across the floor

over the crumpled himalayas of the bed sheets
facing today of which there'll never be another
i'm suddenly seven in a warm bath Frogman
(special offer from kelloggs corn flakes which
with two box tops took eternities to arrive
powered by baking powder or was it baking soda?)
red plastic motorboat and a white birch bark canoe
rocking on waves created by the paddle of my hand
and that moment when the tub became the ocean
and in that sailing moment i am sailing free

spring rain

no umbrella no hat
walking in april rain
to retrieve the mail
emerging from winter's cellar
it's simple things that
(not the fanciest which pale)
own the mojo to expel most pain

coming out of penn station tunnel heading north on Amtrak 63

the burning stink of steel
wheel on rail rail on wheel
damp funk of old cement and sunless dirt
wafts faintly through the too hot car

the elephant graffiti graffitied over
with tag on tag of lesser artists piling on
bottles broken glass empty spray paint cans
the rag beds and trash of the invisible homeless

the train's relentless chug a chug a chug
muted voices of passengers on cell phones
chatting while still waking up fleeing the hustle
the rustle of hostile newspaper pages turning

the coming out the always-new shock of sun and light
a revelation the reflections of weed trees in puddles
and dead grass giving the illusion of another world
the early sun unruly and dull winks on the tracks

and at last! the New Jerusalem of river Hudson
and the palisades rising up to sky and low lying cloud
a determined tide coming in as one white gull celebrates
with one slow red tug boat and an empty garbage scow

two geese at water's edge leave Vs under the GW bridge
most of this by most mostly missed a secular resurrection
the visual sum of it a single cell on the drawing board
of a friday's somewhat hopeful epic animated cartoon
as some slick Animator breathes in deep silence and brutality

late march

somewhere in all our childhoods
a place some might call "heart" or "soul"

as if emerging from a darkened wood
as winter rows away on thin rafts of ice

from marsh pond river lake or stream
bright songs of red wings and cardinals ring

each year (heard so well when young)
now older i hear them better yet again

much more urgent now than then
the mornings no longer cathedral-quiet

the irreverent birds mating a racket
over dripping trees muddy fields and marsh

the mist rising smoky off the haunch
of the snow-covered land like steam

off the back of clydesdales or percherons
after a long hard day's arching plow

the clouds they seem to weep with joy
and earth bows down to spring new born

after the blizzard

the morning after the blizzard
the rising sun was a ball of snow
backlit by a round of light some call god
soft and round as night's slow fall
furnaces groaned snow plows like wizards
banished drifts made roads reappear

the morning after the blizzard
when the new day's gauze flew off the sun
turned acres into a blinding white escapade
a canvas lined with shades of winter blue and gray
tree shadows ran vertical and horizontal true
across earth's frozen crumpled sheet

the morning after the blizzard
a puzzle of snowflake hugging snowflake
a conspiracy of all those interlocking edges
intricate metric tons on tons of them
brought the blanket of winter back
to cover every steeple barn and home again

the morning after the blizzard
cold hordes of dazed landscape painters
were confounded by blinding mounds of white
striving to capture what nature in a blink
effortless as a child's sketch made light
summoned and sewn seamless in a dream

the morning after the blizzard
conventional wisdoms were shed like skins
the lion of march roared out like a lion
the lamb of spring stuck in winter's jamb
bleating strayed berating snow's cold redefinition
of fields roads and the wet cacophonies of crows

the morning after the blizzard
seven a.m. a stubborn moon still shone
broken free from its moorings at dawn
cast doubt on the potency of spring
in the marsh red wings continued to sing
to Moon frozen stiff and clean as a bone

a piece of sun
my only baggage
through the window
of the ancient glass
of my dream
i still can see

above the line of trees
against the planetary map
of night's great sky
the handle of the dipper

and like a piece of bread
in the pocket of my memory
i carry a piece of sun
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to another day

i still can hear
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son
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to always know
that though
beyond this line
which i cannot cross
my eyes like the stars
shine down upon you

bright to bright
voice to voice
heart to heart
to join you on your way

to *ursus minor*

dreaming of my father (stanley vincent)
february 25 2017

saturdays

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and starts contentedly kneading our blanket
and purring like a compassionate alarm clock
i am seized with a kind of apprehensive joy
at the prospect of a day completely all my own
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(special offer from kelloggs corn flakes which
with two box tops took eternities to arrive
powered by baking powder or was it baking soda?)
red plastic motorboat and a white birch bark canoe
rocking on waves created by the paddle of my hand
and that moment when the tub became the ocean
and in that sailing moment i am sailing free

hollowed hallowed

think of a desperate man holding on
for all his life to a hollow box and bow
thins of cat gut reinvented as strings
and what this man becomes
when holding in his hands wanting
for all his life this empty varnished box

this fine-crafted thing to live to sing
to give this hollowed box a hallowed voice
each keenly mortal each with their flaws
hollowed box and man held and holding
each given a set of taught strings spring
that resonate fly fall pray and defy time

reply to pain or joy or *grande ennui*
like fencers thrust and parry in the valley
of that vast divide between dream and liberation
a duet of flesh gut wood man and violin
one pulse played one playing elemental
together both reborn one and transcendental

crucifixion

the hourglass bleeds sand
the loyalty of friends
fickle as the flights of birds
mary mother mary magdalene
lost in shadow of the cross
oh where has Martha gone
the guardsman jeer his pain
a game of torture and loss
the thunder of the Word
thunders through the land
golgatha golgatha

what it might mean to die

out of the corner of the corners of the all-cornered eye
darkness subtracted bite by bit to light shining the center
thinking you own a memory but the memory owns you
what it might mean to die the stubborn relinquishing of I

reducing your chicken stress

reducing your chicken stress
is about moving from more to less
or being loved by kristy and chris

crow

crow at top of dead elm branch
black back so cold-midnight black
above a dance of hudson hills and trees
in their luster seeing what they lack
will surely each by each in envy blanch

catbird

cat bird pilgrim gray
hunting on our porch
bows down to grab a bug
then will you see the scorch
of this bum's rusty rump
his way to say g'day

portrait of my father as a young man

before returning home from the war
before mommy and daddy married
before my three sisters and me
never dreaming what should never be
the ovens the skeletons borne living and dead
barbed wire louse-ridden barracks guard towers
the dull eyes of the well-fed dogs
blood tricked and locked in the bloody
stew of the jackboot steel-winged nazi clock

in this worn black-and-white photo
scalloped edges going yellow
no fear in his eyes this new recruit
shoes spit shined to a soft glow
khakis pressed to a razor crease
standing self-possessed at parade rest
he private first class signal corps
smiling with a kind of uniformed pride
dreaming of coming home before he left
anticipating the good life oddly unafraid

then and still now fresh joy in my father's smile
as if knowing the Spite of all that he would see
could not poison his faith in the good life
hard work love sacrifice and family
would set this his greatest generation free
strangely calm as if he saw his own return
behind him massive rolls of telephone cable
a jeep and eyes still bright
three dead rabbits (hasenpfeffer) on the hood
fur glistening not a drop of blood
k-rations and dehydrated mystery meals
hanging on a fence a stack of boxing gloves
he no lightweight with a bayonne-bayonet-jersey jab
the only fight the men enjoyed fighting

africa morocco rome the camps not-so-gay paris
attic souvenirs – a fez a program from a cabaret
braless belly dancer overly posed clearly bored
german helmet dagger luger arm band with swastika
and twenty small-format images smuggled in
bergen-belsen buchenwald chelmno dachau flossenburg
(forty thousand more 1933 through 1945) tombstones
of hitler’s for-all-time-incomprehensible insane sin
piles of hair eyeglasses watches teeth of gold
bulldozed bodies on bodies just bones and skin

sniper shot won purple heart
promoted to sergeant first class
his Chopin smile lit up rooms
a gentle man a gentleman
no hint of macho
no fear of tears
permission to feel granted
how he loved to say
“we’re Polish not foolish”

in this our small plot of time
in this worn photo
father’s days and father’s days
being born and reborn
reappearing and disappearing
slowly as memories yours and mine
that all our fathers be here now
my fondest foolish wish
for Stanley Vincent Furman
G.J. Furman
father’s day 2017

pine beetle

shell shining like shellac in the morning sun
the mahogany pine beetle transfixed in my hand
much smaller than the tip of a knitting needle
small intelligence to giant! Einstein? me
instinct kicking in he knows enough to flee
i appreciate his panic so i set him free
to the diamond dew of the just-mown green
if the smallest of our brethren like he
created and reincarnated so street wise
in the hands of God how vain are small we
to ever imagine a more sinister enterprise

wish i were there

O three blue folding chairs
O lapping Lilliputian waves
O barking gulls and stick-fetching dogs
prancing in the surf like happy seals
O snoring sunburned nappers sawing logs
radios playing bach cantatas
or funky ghetto gangsta rappers
O copper-toned babies
producing messy sandy diapers
or copper-toned babes
winning five-star bikini raves
O trashy novels junky snacks
O slimmest sliver of a daytime moon
pale as a fingernail clipping
O great bronze gods of summer
your beach chorus august keeps singing
whoever wherever take me back
for lacking the iodine ocean air
or ocean fragrance of rugosa rose
i fear my pale nose might despair
please fly me to the outer banks
where all our woes so quickly heal

the thing about the ocean

the thing about the ocean
is the sky

the thing about ocean sky
is the sea

gray blue white infinitely
defies horizons and all time

as polka-dotted orange
is it octopuses or octopi

drawn by little muses
delight the eyes of passersby

the dot over the i

the dot over the i
is called a tittle

oh to be smarter
just by a little

FOR I WILL CONSIDER MY CAT TIPPY

With apologies to Christopher Smart (1722 – 1771) Jubilate Agno

For I will consider my cat Tippy who:

With sea-green eyes blinks softly up with the innocence of Eden to inspire joy in those, who transfixed by his gaze, simply love him.

When he puts his face close to mine, teaches true trust.

Seeks no praise, in humility and peace lives out his days.

Covers his eyes with pink paw pads to block sunlight for soundest daytime sleeps.

Gives voice to his deep content by sharing with those he is fond of his deepest rumble purr.

Flatters human stomachs or laps by using them as pillows preface to cozy naps.

Reverts to kitten-hood by nostalgically kneading front paws and ever so gently claws on master's laps or bellies.

Has no interest in what the mirrors or televisions say but is intrigued by what lies behind them.

Though spoiled and never starving, demands to be fed with the fury of one pretending to be the most pathetic, the most ignored, the one at death's door.

Craves all forms of table treats and manufactured crunchy sweets in small bunches.

Is enchanted by the static electricity of dust bunnies and the peregrinations of the smallest of bugs.

Needs no words. Without them, makes his wants clearly known, clear as flights of birds.

With sandpaper tongue diligently grooms his master's arm, all wet hairs in a row, granting him fellow-cat status.

Some say, is a Bodhisattva, enlightened being, who's chosen to leave paradise to return to earth to bring peace and compassion to our frantic human race.

Is eager in his hunt for spider webs under chairs and couches and windowsills, for him a form of cotton candy often hanging like Will-o'-the-wisps from his drooping whisker tips.

Does not suffer mange, ticks, filthy alleys, briars, thorns, dense woods, predators, starvation, sadistic kids, harsh weather, speeding trucks and cars, a hard world, cat haters' shouts as you, indoor cat, our friend, safe inside, look out.

Watches with tiger eyes the passing ark of squirrels, bees, birds and butterflies beyond his screened-in porch and let's forth a predatory yak-yak-yak.

Diligently, season after season, follows and makes his bed on every patch of sunlight that moves warm across the living room floor.

Brings a mouse-head, tail or mouse to your bed a gift sometimes half dead.

Has a dozen types of calls to telegraph what mood he's in from "Food!" to "Being here is good!"

At dusk and dawn serves as self-appointed security patrol, defender of hearth and home, desperately running from window to window head swiveling left to right looking out into the dark for things that claw and bite, caterwauling and, at last, after two full rounds, then exhausted settling down for the night.

When entering a room shakes his tail like a maraca to telegraph the ecstasy of being there with you.

When petted in pitch of dark his static coat sends out tiny sparks.

Flees, until out of breath, thunder, lightning, loud trucks, engines revving, generators, gunshots or fireworks as if pursued by hell's demons or the four-horsemen of the apocalypse (pestilence, war, famine, death).

Likes few things better than using a clean litter box.

Loves to give chase to small aluminum balls, paper wads, tiny pebbles or rocks.

Presents his face for gentle stroking and petting; bumps your head with his to mark you as his domain and friend.

Rolls over and stretches offering the gift of his soft belly reserved only for those most trusted.

So blessed within his animal self, he has no need to exalt his spirit, no want to earn transcendence since he is already Transcendence at every step and turn.

Cottens to an adult tone and conversation not some baby-talk, taw-a-puddy-tat, cutesy-wootsey, pussy-wussy infantilizing rap.

Worships the Divine in him through his inscrutable eyes and the movements of his nimble, limber dancer's body.

Plops down as if shot by a gun and elegantly stretches.

Takes in the outside air all year round, before the rain or snow and, in the morse code of the wind, deciphers the many stories that abound hidden there.

Leaps with abandon from floor to table or chair to floor; falls self-correcting when falling from any height, anywhere and always lands fair and square.

Often consoles himself with the most thorough cleanings: his paws, between each toe, his back, his belly, his legs up and down like flagpoles, his delicates, and finally his face which he washes like a little man in a suit of fur, then spent, curls up and has a sleep.

Dulls his claws on table and chair legs, arms of sofas, sisal rugs, scratching posts and pads.

Takes on a form of mighty-mite madness when ingesting catnip. Licks catnip-coated toys till soaked, runs around insane and passes out to sleep it off having taken a crazy trip on the catnip-adylic rocket ship.

Once in a blue moon will deign to be carried upside down for a playful tour of his domain, room to room.

Bumps his head against your arms or legs or chest like you're the hitching post he likes best.

Does the front-paws-toes-splayed-out-back-arched-high stretch of stretches followed by the same back-half, hind-paws-and-toes stretching game.

Though smaller is of the Pride of Lion tribe, equally fierce, alert and noble in demeanor. Has a yawn that's cavernous, his teeth and claws like razors ravenous.

Likes to nibble a blade of grass, a dried-out leaf, a flower petal and often in a fit of praise regurgitate a bit of each.

Embodies stubborn willfulness. Rarely comes on call. Will fetch as he sees fit. Demands and wins attention on his terms only. Is never needy or desperate to please. Knows he is a good cat. Is an angel to those who admire him. Ignores those who don't.

In his stride carries himself with a musical, balletic grace.

When spooked, who knows why, by forces totally unseen, he takes off, his suddenly-panicked sprint a hilarious form of comedy.

Rarely is out of sorts. When offended will give a firm slap with a paw, no claws. If pressed, a hiss and then a scratch.

As he falls asleep is the sweetest show to watch. Not wanting to miss a thing, his eyes weighing heavier, then out for the count. Sometimes twitching to his dreams. Sometimes making tiny grunts or growls or meows.

Aided by the roughness of his tongue has the cleanest of coats and sweetest of smells. Never requires a bath. Never stinks like unbathed dogs.

Suffers with long standing patience and courage, forgets any injury and heals most quickly. Anticipates only love and, unless trained otherwise, never cruelty or pain.

Is gentle and affectionate on his own terms with his brothers and sisters. Often on cold days, after a thorough mutual grooming, curling up together in a cozy clump.

In his own skin, bone, fur, marrow is totally self-possessed. Has no drive to seek perfection, no ambition. His every gesture always moving in an always-right direction.

Is fascinated by the bums and delicacies of his siblings, often receiving a clawless Q-tip pop for lingering.

Loves the olfactory offerings of toilets and bathrooms. Attends the doings to savor the smells.

Is an always-entertaining and unpredictable mixture of kitten and big cat, a large part of his charm.

He neither requires nor seeks approval but goes his merry way and without saying a word makes his agenda ours.

Distracts from someone else's work by sitting on it – computer, notes, note books or assignments making himself the center of attention disguised as office manager and wordlessly saying, "Look! What could be more important than me?!"

Is magnetized by any empty box, napkin, towel, magazine, flap of cardboard on the floor, will sit or occupy serene for hours.

Believes in God because he knows he is a God and God in him trusts us, like the Egyptians, to know and follow our duty to worship him.

Is very Zen, never looks back or worries ahead. So natural he's supernatural. His present the only world he ever lives in. His time, Time Eternal.

When hungry he eats. When sleepy he sleeps.

When he creeps, he's not creepy.

STAGECOACH OF DREAMS

APRIL 15

Stuffed jack rabbit in white winter coat mounted on a split, pine-log table in an Adirondack cabin.

For commercial reasons (the first client had 'shallow pockets'), the taxidermist of record decided against turning the carcass into the legendary jackalope, stuck with the jackrabbit and got paid by a second Adirondack client. Much to the chagrin of the first client whose imagination exceeded his bank account.

The jackalope, a much desired mantel piece in certain circles is, of course, that imaginary animal of North American folklore, often called "a fearsome critter" and described as a jackrabbit with antelope horns or deer antlers and sometimes, rarely, a pheasant's tail. The word "jackalope," as those who've driven the great Route 66 know, is a portmanteau of 'jackrabbit' and 'antelope' (the archaic spelling of 'antelope'). Some say tales of jackalopes were inspired by sightings of rabbits infected with the *shope papilloma virus* which causes the growth of horn and antler-like tumors on jackrabbits' heads and bodies.

Behind the cabin home of the jackrabbit was a forest of great white pines and cedars. Out front a long, curving silver bay with brown sand beach. Nothing but trees and cloud and water and the occasional white gull lazily gliding above. The sound of small waves lapping against the shore punctuated by the call of a morning dove and the occasional caw of a crow.

Out of one of the jackrabbit's glass eyes impeccably chosen by the taxidermist – actually out of a small hole at the edge of the one eye – like black tears streams a trail of black carpenter ants marching with the robotic determination of an army after bivouac, breaking camp and marching on automatic pilot with the robotic determination of a some complicated but deadly efficient machine across the table, down the table legs, through the cabin, out on to the beach and marching, marching in a thin, uninterrupted, black conga line stretching out as far as the eye can see.

One of them unseen but heard in the dark forest is whistling one of the snow white and seven dwarfs signature songs: "Hi ho, hi ho, it's off to work we go...."

And one by one the ants go marching on. The ants go marching on to the tune of the song of the same name. Undeterred. Implacable. Maniacal. Efficient, passing under a giant billboard of Salvador Dali in a bathtub full to the brim of milk.

"To what end? To what end?" were the words ringing in my ears when I awoke.

MAY 4

All my books, all my things, all my clothes, all my friends - gone.

All my old ways and old ways of doing things – gone.

And now I'm late for a meeting where I'm expected to present, pitch some fatso corporate arrogant client, totally lost and long overdue with no way to contact those waiting for me all of whom, I am certain, are all also soon to be gone.

I wander through interconnected warehouse after warehouses full of gigantic computer screens with strange art and strange programs playing to the accompaniment of atonal music and gamelans. People taking no note of me, scurry about like robots who seem to have a purpose, wear strange fashions including white plastic suits wired to one another with strings of small lights and tubes that inject some kind of chemicals that monitor and regulate bodily functions so that everyone's most intimate biorhythms are regularly adjusted and controlled by some all controlling force. As they walk their lights blink on and off, on and off. A massive globe which is an all-seeing eye hangs above the enormous space spinning like a sinister-cyclops, disco-crystal ball.

The sawdust-covered floors are teeming with what look like roaches but roaches made of metal and wire that are responsible for removal of crumbs, dropped parts, screws and bolts and metal filings. The all-seeing eye seems to direct the crowds of people and roaches as well through the sawdust on the floor, past vaults and screens and more screens and people working with blow torches on machines that look like printing presses. The cavernous space smells like sawdust, urine and burning rubber.

I can't stop thinking about this meeting that I'm late for, that I suspect was cancelled, that no one told me was cancelled, that I'm not sure was cancelled, the location still unknown to me. So I continue to wander aimlessly, stupidly looking for a sign through corridors of video screen stacked on video screen everything under the glare of a greasy artificial light, no windows, no doors anywhere in sight. I continue to search for my old department, my old office and my old things and my old colleagues, feeling like a spectator watching myself searching for a specter, a spectator, a lost member of a lost tribe that forgot where and when the meeting was and where we were supposed to gather. That or they or chose not to tell me.

More and more people, robotic droids, are now teeming through the warehouse canyons where products and machine parts and chemicals are stored. First dozens then hundreds then thousands ant-like, glassy-eyed milling through the warehouse some on electric carts, some climbing ladders to access this part or product for this or that customer. I envy the fact that they have something to do, a direction to take, a place to go. They all know their jobs. I seem to be the only one without a mission, without direction, without a department and colleagues to go to.

How could they fail to reach me? I need to find a way out of the warehouse but it is like a contained, suffocating hive of an industrial metropolis and there are no doors, no indication of any outside world other than this maze I'm stumbling through. It seems that I alone am driven to find a way out. I know I can never abandon my search but at every corner I turn I find myself at the identical crossroads I just left.

I look lovingly at my last possession, a beautiful crystal timepiece, and realize it now has no hands only numbers. I see a hairline crack across the diameter of its face and then that I truly understand things will never be the same. All the old routines and calls to action and communities are just lost memories. I will never be who I once was. Never. My only choice is to wander aimlessly hoping for a sign as I continue my search for the old life, our old life, all the old lives and all the old things of those old lives, a life which seems far, far away, a life which eons ago, full of natural light, open windows and open doors.

MAY 5

In an Egyptian bazaar. Narrow alleyways smelling of curry, urine and burning dung. A standoff. I'm armed with a futuristic bazooka, a red torpedo at one end. My adversary is pointing a double-gauge shotgun at me. He pulls the trigger. Dull click. His weapon jams, a misfire. I try to fire but can't figure out how to work it. He rushes me. In the struggle I drop my weapon but manage to kick him in the face. He falls back blood pouring from his nose.

I pick up the bazooka and once again have him in my sights. This time it fires. Not a blast as I expected but a laser-like ray of green and purple light. My enemy is transfixed, frozen. He begins to tremble as if afflicted with a violent palsy or Saint Vitus' Dance. Moaning he stumbles back like the living dead blood now pouring from his mouth and ears.

His wailing awakens his kin and from doorways and alleys and shops they emerge, a ballet of zombie-like assassins lurching toward me. I take off running through the narrow streets and passageways until at the very end of the bazaar down the longest and narrowest of lanes I come to a magnificent temple gargantuan in height rising up like an ancient stadium/skyscraper to the open skies. Intricately carved stone pillars wide as six men three hundred feet high stacked one on top of the next. A courtyard, vast as a small city empty but for some ravens feasting on the half-eaten carcass of a camel. And story on story of galleries looking down on the amphitheater of this vast coliseum. The vultures high above looking down on it all as if in anticipation of a feast.

At the very top of the stadium just below its open vault to sky is a massive platform that can be reached only by climbing a winding, precipitous staircase of a thousand stairs each no wider than a child's foot. No handrails or balustrades and connecting the highest gallery to the platform a narrow plank four inches by four some fifty feet long that leads to the platform, my best sanctuary and position of defense. I manage the stairs and cross the narrow bridge to the platform and peer down on the ant-like assassins growing larger as they ascend toward me.

My weapon has one more round. I can only wait and hope that as they walk the narrow plank to reach me one by one I can throw each off balance to their deaths below. Like the Spartans at Thermopylae I have the advantage of a narrow access point and could only hope to destroy as many as possible before plunging to my certain death as well. Soon they would be upon me. I am overcome with a feeling of dread. In this

battle I know I am going to die.

MAY 6

I held the tiny orange cat, a tabby, in the palm of my hand. It was no bigger than a mouse but of course fluffier, rounder and full-grown. And it was always smiling a full, broad, toothy, almost human smile. It was like no other cat I have ever known. Almost human except for the fact that it didn't speak. It would just look up at me with the most intelligent eyes that seemed to say, "I'm happy to be here with you. That's my job." So I was happy. Very happy. I had always wanted a cat that would fit in a shirt pocket, a cat that you could take to work with you or anywhere you go. A cat that content to accompany you anywhere and everywhere you went and would never run away.

MAY 25

At a convention. A job fair? In my underwear and black socks. The dry cleaner was supposed to have delivered my suit and never showed up. I'm not embarrassed. The fact, I surprise myself to find myself thinking, that I had the courage to show up in my underwear, the boxer shorts printed with a medley of cat faces of different breeds, will distinguish me. And in the dream I think to myself – I know I am in this dream and that's why I'm thinking this so confidently.

To my disappointment I'm not creating even the slightest stir: an emperor with no clothes in my own mind – slightly clothed. I'm terribly congested, that variety of congestion at the end of a long cold when everything loosens up and the expectorate is almost solid (I want my Musinex!): a pudding of stringy, swamp-green slime, the ridding of oneself of it holding the promise of finally! clear lungs and a return to regular breathing.

In that exact condition I am compelled, as if squeezed like a pop can by an invisible hand, to rid myself of the clog in my chest. Ignored before by all, I start to cough like a cat about to retch. Uncontrollably. I'm surrounded by a crowd, all curious, waiting to see what I will do.

I hack and gag and with relief, even pleasantly, cough up a massive expectoration of shockingly silver-green, stringy goop. It's a gusher producing a geyser of horrible slime. It's all over my cat underwear, my T-shirt, my black socks. The crowd gasps and moves back disgusted yet fascinated. Now I AM ashamed. There is nowhere to run or hide given the circular wall of the wide-eyed onlookers surrounding me.

I'm trying to use the palms of my hands like squeegees to cast the fibrous, spaghetti-like ooze to the convention center floor. In between convulsions of retching I can hear the sound of those mop buckets on wheels and the arrival of the janitorial staff and clean-up brigade and in the distance the sound of police and ambulance sirens

Now I'm angry. Some of the crowd are laughing. I'd like to kill them all but I can't stop throwing up or wondering, worrying about whatever happened to my dry cleaning.

As they strap me to the gurney to wheel me into the ambulance through a tunnel of cruel

gawkers, just before they affix the mask to my face before turning on the sleeping gas, my last thought was relief and something akin to joy that they hadn't delivered my suit and that I'd have something to wear when I finally get out of the hospital.

MAY 27

In a race, a strange kind of marathon, starting at the lakeshore finishing at Yonge and Bloor, Toronto, Ontario, Canada and I, yes I, exclamation to myself in this dream, am incomprehensibly in the lead.

The competitors, hundreds of them all in blue, numbered track suits, all on their bellies like marines at a boot camp obstacle course are getting ready to snake-slither under a low net of electrified barbed wire but in this case without the accompaniment of live ammo and machine gun fire.

Somehow, and the oddest part, each of us was strapped into this futuristic contraption that worked like roller skates but instead of wheels was driven and charged by some sort of hydroplane technology made of credit cards – Amex, Visa, Master Card, Diner's Club – which were activated by our frantic, slithering motions.

We were all on our bellies slithering as fast as speed-snake humanly possible. The faster racers slithered the faster they went. The effect of this frantic slithering on the carapace of cards attached somehow sled-like to hands, elbows, chests, stomachs, knees and toes was to turbo charge by a massive multiple the speed of the horizontal contestants.

To the crowd of marathoners looked down on us from above, we must have looked like a thousand blue human worms all on their bellies slithering maniacally, speeding down Yonge street at a blistering ninety miles an hour and faster. The scariest part (no one had protective headgear) was hearing behind me the watermelon-like splats of contestants as they veered off the street and collided face first into telephone poles, mail boxes and storefronts. I could only imagine the blood and the brains splattering the onlookers but to look back was to crash and die.

Still leading I could hear my carapace-sled of plastic cards making that exact sound that credit cards make when rubbed on concrete or macadam. I was worried, even though leading the pack by a good margin, that my 'machine' was wearing down. I could hear the scraping sound of my nearest competitor not far behind me and see the finish line just ahead.

It was going to be close but I was sure I was going to win. At the same time I could feel myself in the dream waking up, being pulled from the dream.. I didn't want to leave the dream and was fighting not to wake up until I crossed the finish line and was able to experience the exhilaration, the triumph, the thrill of victory. I wanted to hear the roar of the crowd's approval, and almost as importantly, to get out of this infernally weird credit card contraption I was hitched to, to stop slithering, to stand upright and victorious, a man in full.

But it was not meant to be. Like a diver no longer able to hold my breath, no longer able to stay down, I found myself rising to the surface from the bottom of the darkest, deepest pool, floating back up to consciousness. Against my will I woke up feeling bereft, disappointed, deprived unjustly of the joy of winning, being recognized and admired by all the world as a true champion..

Outside my bedroom a garbage truck drove by, the roar of its engine sounding very much like the roar of an approving crowd.

MAY 30

Towering dunes and red clay cliffs overlooking a vast expanse of ocean and shallow flats stretching turquoise far out into deeper dark-blue, almost purple waters. Looking down from on high I can see great fish cruising in the shallows – sharks, barracudas, dolphins on the hunt, patrolling and enormous schools of baitfish flashing in the sun as their massive geometries shift in response to who knows what stimulus from circle to oval to figure eights as if their millions had but one mind.

I am with a guide and we are ascending to an even more precipitous view up the soft edge of one great dune after the next. The going is hard work in the sliding sands. Half a step gained for every step taken. We are in what I've been told is a pristine wilderness. My guide by now, accustomed to the hike and trusting me to follow, is far, far ahead of me.

I have been hypnotized by the view and realize, strangely without any feeling of dismay, that I have been stricken by what feels like a form of snow blindness except that in my case it is from the intensity of the sun off the white, white sands. As much as I try to focus by squinting or rubbing my eyes, my vision is blurred. Like looking through the bottom of a thick glass bottle.

Perched high as I am on this narrow trail of sand and soft clay which crumbles easily and careens in big clumps down to the surf hundreds of feet below, I am somehow fearless. I'm standing at the very edge of a treacherous and unforgiving path. Clearly the combination of my impaired vision and precarious position on the cliff path should give me pause but I'm totally and surprisingly anxiety free.

I have that restless, nervous sensation in the pit of my stomach that one feels when looking down from any great height, that instinctual recoil at the possibility of plummeting to one's death. But this doesn't stop me from peering out over the edge in wonder, blurred vision and all. Or from continuing my climb on and up to the very highest point.

Now I'm so high up that I can almost touch the great-black-backed gulls suspended motionless, without a flap of wing, hang-gliding in the thermals an arm's reach, curious and eye-level from me just inches from the edge.

When I reach the summit, well past the meandering spine of the red cliffs below me, I see to the south in a blur the rusty corrugated roof tops of a thousand shacks, the encroaching

sprawl of a shanty town far below and a vast metropolis beyond. My heart drops with the realization that this 'wilderness' I'm exploring is not pristine at all but an illusion. Nothing more than the remnant of what once was a wilderness and now not much better than a theme park for would-be outdoorsmen and well-to-do adventurers – most of whom fail to climb to the highest peak and are deluded into thinking this beauty goes on forever.

I'm overcome with a sadness of mind and sickness of heart and think, looking north and down on the pristine sea, the sun glittering off the wave tops, the encroaching urban sprawl behind me, that perhaps it is a good thing, even a gift of sorts, that my vision is going and that soon I will be blind.

July 4

I was eleven years old. It was Holy Saturday afternoon. I was in the confessional having confessed my usual mortal sins. Impure thoughts (code for jerking off): "Bless me father for I have sinned. It has been nine days since my last confession. I had impure thoughts twenty nine times." A stockpiling of mortal sins, one being enough to guarantee eternal damnation and the fires of hell forever. Father Racklee was the confessor. He always wanted to know all the specifics and had a disturbing way of dragging it out of you. I tried to avoid getting in his line but this time failed. He was giving me my penance – five Our Fathers and five Hail Mary's when what sounded like exploding cherry bombs, shots shattered the silence followed by people screaming and running. He was out of the dark box before me.

We were running, he in the lead, for the nearest exit door which was through the sacristy. He leapt over the body of a nun, order of the Sisters of St. Joseph, a single bullet in her head, blood running down her white bib. In the sacristy a priest shot multiple times in the back was slumped over a gold and white chasuble. I dipped my fingers into the pool of blood running black on the floor and drew down three straight lines like tears of victory and let out a howl like some demented dog and vowed to exterminate all assassins, renegade academics and pederast priests no matter the cost.

dream of magdelene and apis – herald of ptah

In a tawdry slum of a room surrounded my mother, my father, my grandmothers, grandfathers, father and mother-in-law, all dead, and, still living, my wife, my sisters, my friends, my nephews, grand nieces and friends, a communion of them. At the center of the room was the most beautiful woman I've ever encountered reclining on a lush divan wearing only an open white linen shirt. Her eyes! The contour of her breasts under the cloth, her legs an invitation, as if it were just the two of us without shame. Not embarrassed by the witnesses around us, living and dead. I was drawn in; soaked, drenched, drowning in Her; aware only of a magnetic descent into a magnificent kind of ecstatic wholeness.

She was Mary. But not Mary mother of Jesus but Jesus' other Mary. Mary Magdalene. The whore Jesus forgave and loved. In Her, experiencing a form of the sweetest naked light, I was taking off my body in the same way one takes off a shirt, leaving it behind on

a warm beach before entering an open sea.

Floating, I felt on the tip of my tongue what I thought might be a hair, no, a thread, a line which, as I tried to remove it, resisted as if it had a life of its own, a tension like that of a line with a fish on it. I realized I was the line and the fish. The more I pulled on the line, the more it painlessly played out, the more I thought of Ariadne and the thread of Ariadne and, fearing the Minotaur whose steps I could hear not far away, I pulled the line harder and knew that as I pulled I was pulling myself through a labyrinth to safety, to a place of supreme joy and almost unendurable happiness, pulling myself inside out, weeping with the joy of loss and discovery of myself. I woke in the dark to the sound of rain and a light breeze softly blowing through an open window and my bed, white pillows and sheets.

I returned to a waking state desperately wanting to return to the dream with Her and never to awake to this real space of bed and sheets and pillows with rain falling outside and the night breeze in the flowering apple near the open window of my room. What woke me was my own voice, not singing, not chanting but strangely intoning a strange Word from the depths of the dream, a strange Word floating like Christ crucified devoid of nails, blood and crown of thorns, like the Christ of Salvador Dali's painting *Christ of Saint John of the Cross* floating over and looking down on a vast body of water and far below a tiny boat with fearful fishermen crouching in their tiny boat beneath a darkened greenish sky, a sky anticipating a big summer storm.

That strange Word, I, still sobbing with the joy or grief that woke me, even as I uttered it, that Word, the Word that came to my lips and woke me was APIS.

The echo of it in the room like INRI, *Jesus Nazarenus Rex Judaeorum*, Jesus of Nazareth King of the Jews nailed by the soldiers to Christ's cross, echoed in my silent room. The word APIS. The sound of rain. The silence of the dark.

Awake I imagined APIS to be the APIS I knew in Egyptian mythology: the bull made sacred and whole by the total love of the whore mother lover whose haunting and hunting arms and body and embrace I lost on waking and now longed for and lost but, perhaps, not lost forever, please not forever, I thought on waking from this seduction of a dream, this dream of Magdalene and Apis, herald of Ptah, the pharaoh, the king spitting me, spewing me out, tearing me back from her sacred embrace back onto this pity of a darkened world. Through her from bull to man to a god.

two in september

I

for who knows whose graduation i had to stay in the basement of an outer borough chop shop - the bed was a lift with a cot on it - and below me surrounded by muscle-bound guys with lots of tattoos welding - sparks flying - pounding on fenders and engines - i couldn't sleep with all the noise - as a snack they gave me a rotten peach which leaked motor oil - i threw it on the oily floor below me - and regretted it - when i heard the bald headed bearded gorilla of a slum lord proprietor - telling another 'guest' he'd better keep

the floor under his lift hospital clean or he'd be out in the freezing night with the "clothes" he was born in - i was too tired to push the down button and pick up the peach - and was afraid he'd see it and evict me too - and still i couldn't fall asleep - then somewhere as if from the bottom of a deep well or from across a vast canyon- a small, high pitched cartoon voice like that of snow white's dwarf grumpy shrieked - that's because you already are asleep, you fool!

II

in some foreign country lost in the underground - like those in london or moscow - those alpine grand canyon-like disastrous descents that go on seemingly forever - except for the disconcerting fact that the escalators were moving at a breakneck speed - and people had to leap off them before they got to the end for fear of being catapulted on to the tracks - one after the next after the next - some i watched land on their feet and others on their heads writhing bruised and broken in bleeding piles - the other feature of the escalators was that they had giant sculptures - tsunami waves naked cararra marble men and women - giant aquariums with tropical fish and cages with exotic wildlife - albino tigers and pythons - the guinness book of record albino raccoon - in the center meridian - which somehow followed the speeding stairs down and then recycled back up to the top like some amusement park ride - i remember trying to concentrate on getting my leap off the speeding stairs right so i wouldn't crack my skull and being distracted by the scale and intricacy of the speeding meridian escalator sculptures, cages, aquaria and riveted by what a feat of engineering was required - i suddenly realized i left my cell phone and my wallet - how!?! - at the top of the escalator near the ticket booth - which was at the edge of and looking down on a subterranean cavern with dripping stalactites and turquoise pools lit from below to astonish the tourist strap hangers - as i was getting prepared to leap - and do the whole thing all over again - in the dream i thought to myself - curious - that in this dream - knowing i was in this dream - at the ticket booth they managed to spell POUGHKEEPSIE correctly

9/18/2016

in shinjuku

in the shinjuku district of tokyo outside a shop selling cheap tourist souvenirs i come upon a florescent green and yellow plastic frogman in a fishbowl on a pedestal for bathtub and next to it a smaller Beatles yellow submarine - at a café sitting outside a boy and a girl one wearing ny mets one wearing ny yankees spanking new baseball caps

plastic frogman doing breast stroke making unpleasant battery-op grinding toy sounds doing imaginary laps - in Japanese a Japanese highschool girl passing by says THAT'S REALLY ANNOYING -no subtitles in dreams but magically i understand

a group of Japanese punkers with blue and tangerine hair drinking lots of cheap saki from cans they tell me they have a

craving for plum wine plum chicken and garlic and can i join
them please - they take me to a late night hole in the wall diner
and the cook has neither plum wine nor chicken

i'm thinking they can't drink they're minors –
but no one seems to mind and the chef is pouring them
Japanese beer after they finish their saki -
it's 5 a.m. everyone speaking japanese and i no longer
can understand have lost my ability to translate a word
- then enter three japanese strippers with low-cut, silk-flowered
dresses pert breasts, no bras, nipples up under thin silk -
i'm in the corner staring, wishing i spoke or could understand
japanese again

diner chef murikami looking at the girls –
thinking i think the same as me – silk and
breasts beneath - wishing there was plum wine
for chicken wings garlic plum wine sauce

then one bending low enough to stoke desire
- young girl walks to us - i wake up locked in that
moment – holding on waking - as if someone shut off a projector
and it stuck on that one frame of the walking girl -
feeling burned by reality i stare at the silent alarm clock
10-21-2016

beulah and beauregard beecham and their mad maid hattie mcdundlebee

beulah and beauregaard beecham and their mad maid hattie mcdundlebee were good
friends of mine - hattie who tags along shrill as a pet pomeranian is as tiny as beulah and
beauregard are massive (both haystack calhoun size) - beulah had a mail order business
that specialized in rum cake so rich in rum you couldn't unless suicidal smoke near them
when opening the fedex box for fear of blowing yourself to kingdom come - beauregard
was a retired mixed martial arts champion turned world-renowned blues musician in the
tradition of leadbelly - they were invited to the white house which in the dream was just a
few blocks from mommy's at 143 east 8th avenue roselle new jersey to perform and
wanted to celebrate the occasion with us before meeting the president with the whole
furman family in tow - i was 11 in the dream - so we were all wide-eyed...

when we got to the white house there was no security - we found our way down to what
looked like every suburban basement you've ever been in - mad tiny hattie all bubbly lead
the way - shoed out by the president's social secretary by mistake left beulah's purse on
a tv dinner tray

beulah was really upset with hattie for leaving her purse behind and charged like a water
buffalo back to the white house with all of us ducks in a row to reclaim what was rightly
hers - beuregard who had had more than a few shots of jack daniels to calm his nerves

was three sheets to the wind - followed reluctantly along and when we got to the basement - no security again! - beulah started shrieking at the president's social secretary and beaugard in the interests of calming her down gave beulah what amounted to a love tap that sent her sailing to the white shag rug with a lump on her forehead that would require ten stitches - we couldn't believe it was happening - the social secretary was screeching like a democratic banshee for security - exit rapidly rapidly all of us - except for beulah who was still unclaimed, unconscious on the floor...

we came back to get beulah and, horrible to behold, all that was left of her was a heavily bleeding left shoulder as if severed by a chainsaw, the left side of her neck and her head intact - the only way to reclaim her was to stick your hand in her mouth and lift what was left of her by grasping her upper teeth and lifting her head, shoulder and neck like a suitcase off a baggage claim in a third-world country - which i did - we were all running to escape - by this time they had called security not far behind us and shooting - in the hail of bullets that followed the only thing i could think of was that i left no fingerprints and hoped this embarrassing breach of protocol would not trigger a tax audit by the IRS....

10-24-2016

dogs' ears dioramas

once upon a time - in this dream to be exact - there was a Caliph, a very bored Caliph who commissioned three marzipan miniature artists, the Yoyo Ma's of marzipan miniatures, who used all natural ingredients - plant and vegetable dyes no artificial flavorings - to create three exquisite miniature dioramas in each of the Caliph's three dogs' ears - a bloodhound, a French bulldog and a pug - the dogs were anaesthetized by a supervising veterinarian anesthesiologist and the commissioned artists given three themes: for the pug: mountaineering in which the inside of the pug's ear was a miniature Matterhorn with climbers - for the bloodhound (you had to lift his floppy ear to view it) a modern three-star Michelin guide chef's kitchen complete with sous chefs, tiny sub-zero wolf appliances, copper pots and kettles - and for the French bulldog a barbershop like the one in the movie starring Eddie Murphy

the dogs were lined up in small tents, the only thing showing was their heads and ears facing the viewers on an eye-level platform so you could look right into to each dog's ear and see the intricate work of each artist - the viewing only lasted half an hour and no animal was harmed in the course of this production - the marzipan dioramas, once carefully removed from each dog's ear, were served as a desert delicacy with some kind of coffee, the beans of which were consumed by bonobos, shat out, cleaned, then roasted, then ground to fine espresso and served at a banquet celebrating the event that evening for those attending - i woke with the words of groucho marx ringing in my ears - "inside of a dog it's too dark to read."

10-24-2016

in algonquin

Dan and I in Algonquin. The reason, indecipherable, untranslatable, obscure, forgotten, as to why we decided to leave all our gear and canoe at the second portage by the monument to some Algonquin ranger and in calm water swim to the first of three goals,

past the three bear islands and then to shore – by then the wind had blown the waters high to past-safe canoeing and yet through the heaving swells we arrived exhausted but safely sheltered by the arbor of pine and hemlock and balsam - a roof over shivering us as a shivering sun dropped down

We woke wondering why we ventured out this way knowing we'd have to swim all the way back to our canoe to get all our gear - tent food wine scotch – so, determined not to spoil our trip, we headed back – the long swim, again, the way we came not knowing why we decided to swim out in the first place – but this time the lake was calm

When we reached the shore our canoe was gone and in its place was a flimsy raft left by someone that had been through the same test, the same trial - and taken our canoe

So we took the raft, made two primitive paddles and set out to return from where we came and begin yet again our trip to our favorite place – the great smallmouth bass and moose crossing at the end of the hardest portage – with a great view and easy access to great fishing – only gains in charm and beauty and magic as the years wear by – a holy place, as sacred as the most ornate cathedral – and more so for its simplicity

Full of hope and anticipation we Pushed off and then STRANGEST of STRANGE Daniel was no longer Daniel but his father Alan and Alan and I were on the raft paddling back but through a maze of canyons and high cliffs and islands that we had never seen and our choice was either to go back and hope we'd find our way and that it would return to the way we came and that Alan would become Dan and we'd pick up where we left off before we were compelled to swim and resume our trip again

And we - Alan and I paddled and paddled and it was like going back in time through a maze of islands and land mass that were totally unfamiliar to get back to where we began and find Daniel and our canoe and resume our trek as we always had resumed it - but we were impossibly lost and paddling and above us were cliffs and beyond us were a series of lakes on lakes that we had never seen and we were on the water in a place where we had never been

It was as if someone some larger power had a finger on a power point and had changed the slides and Dan and Dan my canoe trips and Alan and my and Dan's canoe trips had blended into one where the direction for all of us was uncertain but we kept paddling and I kept thinking of Dan on the island waiting for us not understanding how he had become his father and how Alan and I were back in time to where we were when it was only the two of us that traveled Algonquin before any of his sons were born strangely lost looking for a place we all much loved

fox kits

we were on the way up north for an illicit weekend where we'd spend most of the time in bed and the rest cross country skiing, drinking good wine and reading good books – our first time together for more than a night – she was unhappily married –

i was between marriages – driving north we didn't speak – a comfortable silence – she saved her conversational skills for the bedroom

we arrived at the city's edge having taken an out-of-the-way route to avoid the weekend traffic jam to cottage country - having missed most of it, we were heading back to the main route north – the sun was going down – the landscape, if you could call it that, was treeless, a desolate waste, leveled for the development of the exploding housing needs of a voracious metropolis - a light snow falling on the unpaved road was turning to freezing rain - in the dim light of dusk we approached a massive, half-frozen river below us and a drawbridge which was slick with ice

several cars that failed to make it across we're frantically revving their engines, uselessly spinning their wheels – even with windows closed the crossing stank of burning oil and rubber – as we got half way across the bridge we saw a teenage boy in a black parka holding two tridents one in each hand – the kind used in ice fishing for spearing muskellunge or perch – gamboling around him were two fox kits – we thought pets – then without warning he speared them both – they wriggled and bled like some kind of live bait – horrified we rolled down the car windows shouting - *how could you do that you bastard!* – unmoved, smiling even, ignoring us completely, he threw the kits still squirming and the tridents into the dark river below.

halloween 2016

albino tiger

among the many black decorative wood panels in the mahogany library wall – a loud scratching sound made him focus on one panel in particular – a panel that something on the other side of the wall had clawed open – first he saw the stripes on the paw and then the claws each as large as a large man's hand – it was a tiger - an albino tiger that had discovered the sliding panel and was pawing and fishing for what – an escaped mouse? freedom? – it was also a very patient tiger and given the deep rumbling of its saber-tooth purr a very calm one – all these hours months and years studying, reading writing - and never a hint that on the other side of the wall beyond the shelves and books lived something very large, something very dangerous – he didn't dare get too close for fear of being clawed – still he feared for the creature and worried about its survival – who would feed it – would it eventually claw its way out – and then what?

november 1, 2016

to

i was finally being admitted for hip surgery after a year's painful wait - the head nurse looking very impatient was waiting for me to fill out a very simple half-page form – name, address, birthdate, telephone, social security number and medicare number - i kept trying to write my name but could only write my first name – not last name or even middle initial – frustrated i tried my social security number but couldn't remember all the digits – i kept trying, kept writing and trying until both sides of the form

were filled with the same trail of incomplete information – the nurse was now looking at me as if to say what’s the matter with you – the form both sides were black with my attempts – at which point i thought if i did some doodles over top of the mess i’d made that i’d be able to finish the now not so simple and frighteningly frustrating task – i drew blue faces with clouds and crescent moons and stars in magic marker yellow – and then tried to write my name and social security number – to no avail – even more terrifying than not being able to accomplish this elementary task was the thought that i’m having a stroke in my dream – a dream from which i’d never wake up - and still have to pay for the hip surgery

october 29 2016

winter

a modern glass house - inside stacks of linens ironed and neatly folded fresh as cold air - a silent geometry that complements the austerity of the interior – bare white walls – steel and glass furniture – ceiling-to-floor windows and sliding glass doors open out on to a view of a succession of clothes lines on which white sheets dried in the sun and stiff with the cold are swaying slightly in a light breeze – the lawn is covered in snow - the sheets where their folds meet the clothes line and clothespins are topped by a thin line of snow – the breeze and the lines’ delicate swaying is not strong enough to dislodge the snow - noon sun low on the horizon – sky shroud white

a lone figure casting a surprisingly long shadow methodically removes sheets from the line placing them in a large wicker basket shattering the thin line of snow on the clotheslines which falls in bursts to the frozen ground – a small dog streaks around in crazy circles chasing its own shadow and celebrating its release into the frigid outdoor air - looking down on this scene it occurs to me that outside of a french laundry, open air drying is laundry’s best friend and inside a bichon frise, it’s too dark to launder – seen from above, in a salvador dali like effect of light and shadow, the sheets piled randomly fold on fold in the basket uncannily look like the face of an old groucho marx just before he died - all in exquisite variations of folded-sheet white.

november 7 2016

catch no release

He was a monolith: once upon a time 52nd draft choice, the very last pick, the first ever Indian, seven foot two, 300 pounds and in his first two years averaging six points, seven rebounds in seven and half minutes play time. He didn’t make it in the NBA and at the end of a downward spiral eventually wound up a hit man for the mafia, pulling heads off delinquent offenders like corks off champagne bottles in a single twist. Oddly, the fatter he got the stronger he got. He was the FBI most wanted, toughest hit man out there. The Indian.

And now, now here he sits thanks to a snitch, a rat, unseen forces, cruel fate, handcuffed to a chair interrogated by the feds. Not for long. He stands up, crashes the chair against the cell wall and still-handcuffed to what remained of the chair’s

armrests uses the shattered wood like clubs to splatter the brains of his captors all over the walls and floor. And, uncaged beast, makes his break for freedom stampeding down the stairwell, eight floors to the emergency exit. Like some rabid rogue elephant full of blood lust and murderous intentions escaping the circus.

Eight stories below our oblivious dream protagonist was having his daily constitutional happily in one of the precinct's most private bathrooms (even though there was no door on the stall, so few knew of it, his privacy was assured) across the hall from the emergency exit at the bottom of the stairwell, enjoying the luxury of a meditative and undisturbed evacuation and liberation of his bowels. Blessing his own punctual regularity, the porcelain and the smooth banana-like, unforced plop after plop into the receptive, musical waters below, his mind wandered contentedly. Small bliss. But bliss none the less.

When he heard the crash and then the avalanche of something, someone thundering down the stairwell clearly headed for the emergency door directly across the hall from the privacy of his own, almost personal, lavatory, he took it to be movers moving something very, very heavy. It was The Indian. And he (pants down still sitting on the crapper) was The Indian's only obstacle to freedom and mayhem.

Fortunately what he did have handy was his trusty retro-fit, nine by nine millimeter, Walther P99 German semi-automatic taser combine which he grabbed from his cashmere Brioni sport jacket and, pants down, began firing. The Indian was as surprised to have surprised the hero as the hero was surprised by The Indian. The bullet holes were tiny, miniscule and seemingly ineffectual. The taser no more effective than dental floss attached to a slew of sewing needles. A technical malfunction? A function of this happening in this dream?

The Indian, though undeterred, was leaking like a Roman fountain, spouting thin streams of what appeared to be motor oil rather than blood. The more our dream hero fired the more leaks there were. Still handcuffed to two shattered arm rests, The Indian had the appearance of a 400 pound watering can that had been punctured by a conglomerate of hateful trolls with tiny, pointy jack hammers. Though not fatal, the assault stopped him in his tracks. More by force of surprise at the fact the he had sprung a multitude of leaks than from any mortal wounds.

This gave our hero time to pump even more rounds into the escapee's massive torso and triple the voltage switch on the taser. All to no avail, save the saving grace of turning The Indian into a non-moving target giving our hero time to lift the lid off the toilet tank and in a brilliant flourish, pant less still, pound

the brains out of the brain pan of the evil hitman. At which point he thought to look for a mop, bucket and plenty of Mr. Clean or Ajax the foaming cleanser. But, first things first, in the interests of not ruining and resuming his morning constitutional, he put the toilet cover back on the tank and decided to finish his business and in his good time deal with cleanup later. The Indian would keep.

january 1 2017

the baby

When he got the call that his wife was in labor, he was at home, a ten minute walk from the hospital. On one of the top floors in a suite with a waiting area, bathroom and a large window overlooking the Triborough Bridge, east river and hell's gate, there was another room – the birthing room. The entire suite was white including the tables chairs, lamps and tiled floor. The admitting nurse told him his wife had one of the shortest labors on record. As he walked in he could hear the baby crying.

In the birthing room his wife was nowhere to be seen. There were two men their heads shaved like Buddhist monks in white dressing gowns sitting on the bed side by side like partners, one holding the baby. Who knows why, his first thought was: *Men can't give birth. Where's my wife.* They said nothing, placed the baby gently on the king-sized bed and left the room. As they left his wife, also in a white-Belgium-lace dressing gown, walked out of the bathroom and sat on the bed, not a typical hospital bed, not a typical hospital gown, her back against the headboard. Calm but emotionless.

The baby was huge for a new born. An unusually big head. And, caterpillar-like, was squirming, crawling to greet him. Or so he thought. He sat down and began petting the naked baby like a pet dog or cat. The baby made some gurgling sounds and continued to cross the white expanse of the bed. He picked it up. It was a very pleasant baby, very advanced for a new born, making eye contact, smiling, grabbing his fingers and shirt. Behaviors you'd never expect from a new born.

For someone who had just given birth, his wife was totally un-phased. Seemingly pain free, She sat expressionless, meditatively alternating her glance from baby to window to him. Expressionless but not hostile, not in pain, neither sad nor glad. He on the other hand was overjoyed and perplexed by his wife's neutrality and lack of joy in this determined new life.

Then there was the smell. The baby left a rather large yellow poop fouling the Immaculate sheet. He thought to himself (his wife not seeming open to idle chit chat) *That's a really large poop for such a small creature. I guess I'll be doing a lot of diaper changing.*

His wife didn't react, smile or change expression. The baby, on the other hand, clearly distressed, horrified even, let out a monkey howl of protest. He used a towel and a cloth napkin to clean the bulk of it from the sheet and off the baby. On a table near the bed he saw a clear jar containing an iodine- colored fluid which he took for disinfectant soap and

poured some on a face cloth for the fine cleaning. The baby hated it even more and started monkey howling even louder.

He moved the baby to the middle of the bed, went into the bathroom, got a warm damp towel, did the final wipe down of the baby and the bed and put a clean dry towel over the soiled spot which looked like a mustard skid mark on a once immaculate sheet. Almost immediately the baby stopped wailing and resumed crawling around the king-sized bed oddly resembling a tiny naked marine in an obstacle course at Fort Dix under barbed wire and heavy machine gun fire.

He couldn't understand why his wife wasn't happier. It was such a large baby. Such a large, intelligent head. Eyes so alert.

Outside the hospital, the sun was going down behind three white clouds shaped like salamanders and the Triborough Bridge shaped like the Triborough Bridge with its necklace of white lights and the waters of the east river below. Like the famous Monet paintings of sunset on Thames, everything was turning red with the big head of the setting sun going to bed, shimmering blood red, fire red in it all.

january 7 2017

CONTRA NATURAM

hawk and crow

from the trees' tops
i see the rise and fall of their soft breasts
down to soft thickets they flee
no rest for the weak no sanctuary
the parabola of my razor beak
geometric surgical and free
my talons wake to warm flesh
trembling prey still fresh
my heart is full of glee

dark crows of the soul
leave my hunting heart alone

raptor king, you'll not dine in peace
our black envy and jealous greed
will make you choke on every bite
we'll black dog your airy pirouettes
with our shrill cawing flight
turn your day to our partial night
dive bomb your dignity and aplomb
jeer and joust your speed
of your ferocity make light

dark crows of the soul

leave my hunting heart alone

beneath the shagbark limb
light down and feathers mount
a plucked molt like snow
from one black branch above
on one white downy tuft
falls one drop of red a hymn
never enough never enough
the hunter catapults from darkest cloud
raw hunger bolts from harrier's glove

dark crows of the soul
leave my hunting heart alone

to glide above the city
my silence married to the silent sky
shot from The Archer's bow my high desire
above the pine and cedar spires
doves and ducks scattering far below
the timid flocks panic and cower
under the predatory span of my wings
to see the terror in their eyes
makes my soaring spirit sing

dark crows of the soul
leave my hunting heart alone

is it fair that some relentless hand
should have cast a crowning spell
and played me for the royal fool
harried sovereign whose harried flight
draws bloody crows like fillings to a magnet drawn
black furies they know my story all too well
my horizon spoiled only by their spawn
the haunting shapes and shrieking japes
of crow on crow so loud so loud

dark crows of the soul
leave my hunting heart alone

the same week in early march

like the deboned fingers
of tiny pink and gray aliens
the worms mimicked lemmings
marching and casting themselves

suicidal extraterrestrials subject
to the cruelties of frost and side walks
melting in the morning sun
the park paths full of them

the sunday following
it was snow's turn to cover up
the walks and blunt the daffodils' spikes
with soft bowlers of white
everywhere there were snowmen
recalling melting reincarnations
of jesus, buddha, moose and henny youngman
and the ghost of his much maligned white-haired wife
the park paths full of them

CARTOONS 1999

betty boop

when i was seven
betty boop's cleavage
seemed like a new age
heaven
her wiggle and her walk
made me feel eleven
boop boopee doop
forget the chalkboards and the chalk
boop boopee doop

charlie chaplin and hitler

charlie chaplin and hitler
sent the world's axis
sliding out of kilter
these ministers of jerky walks
held two primal posts
one of laughter one of tears
while hollywood inventors
created celluloid which talks
dances, sings and stalks
celluloid tragic trances
celluloid ghosts
celluloid toasts

two dogs in snow

two dogs in dog sweaters
walking in the falling snow
the color of the wool

orange and lime - day-glo
one's named 'walks too fast'
the other 'walks too slow'
one faces future
the other faces past
one speeds up
the other snoofs around
each eventually finding
the other's common ground
the owner, god, made the fool
torn between the two
not knowing how to rule
lets them run helter skelter
what else to do?
has anyone known better?
dog is god
spelled backward
forever and forever

my feet

my feet look up at me
out from under the cotton sheet
they wiggle hello and praise
my trembling hands who shout
they might as well be
travelers from foreign lands
wearing tasseled fez or black berets
singing loony tunes they like to rave
solitary planets out there on their own
the body one the mind another thing
each unto itself alone
when trumpets blast
when last breath is drawn
each will surely be forlorn
about the fact just exactly then
of having no digital friends
to whom to wave anymore
and realizing in the end
that the body is but a nest
without the homely wren
and when the final drop has left the cup
maybe we'll just wake up
and this will be the beginning
of an eternal clapping dancing storm
an open closing of a door
the soul's walk out of a closed hope chest

and up and up and up

the lemons of picasso and george braques

the lemons of picasso
and georges braque
marched out of their paintings
into the landscapes of david hockney
to their electric sunny shock
they fit right in just ah so
like the mice in hickory dickory dock
who ran up against the clock
theirs wasn't the pale of drawing room faintings
of classical sands and precious schlock
theirs was the bold of brassy virtuosos
without affectations as a lock or mangos
aspiring to the condition of cockney
always on bright vacations

tulips in a base

of all the tulips in a vase
only one is open to the sun
the others play it cool
and keep their bright heads bowed
thinking any flower to raise
a head too high must be a deluded fool
safer to be petals in a crowd

the paper clips' revolt

one pitch night
when the moon was silver
like a spot lit paper clip
clipped to the carbon sky
the paper clips all rose up
tired of their lot as twisted fools
with a determined metallic shiver
unclipped themselves with a quiver
and stormed out of libraries, offices and schools
to this day stacks of unclipped paper still ask why
the letters, memos, files and other paper knavery
were disconsolate and lost
like crazy gypsy tools
they unclipped themselves from rent
from their paper lords and masters
and like tiny furniture on oiled casters
left their file cabinets and their shelves
without a single silver care

they broke their ancient paper chains
imposed on them by fat bureaucrats
and plump paper pushers every where
the entire paper world fell into disorder
in the cities, villages and the towns
stacks of regimented paper soldiers
in one stroke of paper clip revolt were changed overnight
into sheaves and reams of flapping clowns
the paper world of paper mountains was lost
the paper clips just didn't care
instead they clipped themselves to themselves
an orgy of paper clippings ensued
wired freedom felt just right
papers clips clipped to paper clips
clipped to paper clips
paper clips, tell their children, is right and good.

the wooden fold-up toy

first i really couldn't kill
the wooden walker with the mask
or the evil man behind it
no matter how i tried
then i learned each time
with each attempt
something in me died
with each attempt
was born another wooden walker
with another frozen mask
an army without reason without rhyme
that lied and lied and lied

walking through elementary schools or being at conventions

walking through elementary schools
or being at conventions
speaking without being heard
to those obsessed with obeying rules
or clasping their pretensions

an incomplete catalog of modern artists

one who sliced his penis off affectionately and sectionally,
one who crawled through broken glass in an Los
Angeles parking lot, shot at 747's as they took off,
was crucified to a volkswagon,
orchestrated his own shooting.
one who masturbated beneath a gallery artificial floor

and recorded his sounds for visitors,
followed people until they left the street,
entered their destination and then followed someone else,
one who lived with a coyote in a german museum,
one who was chained to another artist for six months,
one who was buried alive in a locker for a week,
one who used leaves, pebbles, twigs and logs
glued plates of spring ice together with his own spit
into impressive towers until the temperature rose,
one who dressed up dogs in cowboy outfits,
one who painted with his own blood,
one who submerged a crucifix in his own urine,
one who canned his shit,
one whose medium was firecrackers,
one who hung from hooks and chewed the heads off live chickens,
one who left mirrors in the jungle,
one who photographed his friends sleeping,
one who painted naked women sky blue
and had them press their bodies against large canvasses
in the company of crowds and a single silent soprano,
one who made giant sewn giant sculptures of
dog turds, cigarette butts, electric fans, hamburgers,
baseball bats, rocket ships morphing into penis guns,
one who photographed herds of hundreds of naked humans
in capitol cities throughout the world,
one who wrapped skyscrapers, bridges, historical buildings,
islands, museums anything that was deemed unwrappable,
one who invented and spent his own currency,
one who had multiple identity-changing plastic surgeries,
one who made audiences listen for hours to
the sound of traffic, random tunings of the radio,
one who filmed the empire state for 18 hours
or people sleeping 'till they woke up,
one who made sculptures of piles of violins, paperclips,
typewriters, automobiles, telephones, museum admission buttons
one who slit sharks and cows and pigs open,
and neatly divided in pieces
plunged them in formaldehyde and displayed them
in clear plastic the same one putting the head of a steer
in a glass enclosure with a colony of flies
the decomposition and the explosion of maggots
constituting the work in time the flies dying,
the maggots breeding the steers head getting smaller,
one who painted canvases of one color only,
one who smashed plates and created portraits
out of the multicolored shards of his friends and heroes,

one who only photographed cadavers, microcephalics,
hydrocephalics, amputees, dwarves and the deformed,
one who told a lot of jokes and was a wit,
one who remembered the prison camps
and the prison of the moment,
one who collected antique tea pots,
one then one who wrote nothing painted nothing
sculpted nothing conceived nothing
had no desire for fame no desire for wealth
only lived nothing more or less no need for grant
galleries museums pop up installations no ties
to collectors no ties to academies or art maggies
and was content to call that ART

uncle eddy and the diving bell

when i was a kid
uncle eddy joined the navy on a dare
he served under rollicking waves
his hair was dark and wavy
he managed to retire early
an accomplished ballroom dancer
he liked his motorcycles and his beer
called his retirement checks 'gravy'
when he died of cancer
in his later years
i pictured him last in my child's eye
suited down in his diving bell
jiggling like some hooked fish
eyes protesting and wide
as the tube of air was cut
leaving him free and clear
to be slowly buried alive
with plenty of time to enjoy the ride
stream of his last frantic airs
bubbles rising up
from his lonely diving bell
still there is no answer
uncle eddy was in the navy
his hair was dark and wavy
he served under rollicking waves

a working man's philosophy

we don't know where we're goin'
we don't know how it's gonna be
that's about the size of it my friend
today however it's really snowin'

in milwaukee anchorage and moosonee

confession

bless me father for i have sinned
i just had my newly canonized anus rimmed
as she dipped her sacramental tongue
into my joyous levitating rectal aperture
she stroked my cock and pulled my balls
with unscented vaseline-lotioned hands
until we lost all track of the relic of a clock
our entire pulsing apparatus sung and sung
we made dog sounds cat sounds bird sounds too
climbing the sweaty ladder to Everest rung by rung
and then we came like virtuosi violins come unstrung
we paused to pee and drink a glass of water down
and when she asked if i might possibly consider more
i locked the sacred motel door in that pilgrim town
and i confess i heard an angel's voice that sounded
just like mine but pleasure wise more grounded
say why certainly of course good idea why not sure
at which point her warm mouth smiling
on my holy prick went righteously down
like a saint lost in prayer before my tabernacle door
bless me father for i have sinned

on a sunny saturday

after i killed my father and my mother
i killed my brother Pat, my sister Brett
and then the cats, canaries and the dogs,
one horned toad, my fish and all the neighbors' pets
with a tiny poisoned spear
now that it's finally quiet around here
i have only one regret
while doing clean-up with the axe and knife
i got a rather serious blood blister
which hasn't fully healed just yet
it stings like hell as i make this balsamic vinaigrette

some modern art in munich

september 1997

I

a padded cell
which admits no noise
an anechoic chamber/stage
with dentist's or surgical chair
enter alone beware

II

a manic depressive
quite insane cook
the white mushroom of his hat
slashed and gored
bleeding mustard
wearing the face of *mad magazine*
alfred e. newman mad chef de luxe
trapped in a cage of rooms
he mutters autistically
and stabs and mixes
mayonnaise and ketchup
he points to his penis
and gestures obscenely
cupping his hands below his soiled ass
he weeps hysterically
in a shaman trance of inane
and endless violent action
the viewers watch and laugh
riveted as he stabs himself
and deconstructs his bleeding kitchen world
bad bad recipes
bad bad boy

III

the photographer has framed
and polarized two worlds
the old and new
african women in ceremonial dress
postcard images
their bodies breasts and faces painted white
leaving only smiles and smiling eyes
transformed by white out to sinister and worse
exploited the second time
to reveal the first great slavery

"my little twin"
with instructions for care
original blond doll
and matching dresses preserved
she the slut mother
transforming doll child into concubine
and partner in crime
both abused

lipstick smudged mascarra running
turning bruises into cosmetics
an inheritance of anger and rage
turning the convention
of madonna and child
on its lewd ass

IV

a bridge over
all the feeble packaging
and pathetic residue
of what we buy to entertain and prop us up
from pots and porn to breast pumps and popcorn
our time's rialto and bridge of tears
looking down on all our junk and fears

V

maus museum
the miniatures the inspiration
souls for the monumentals
all saved and resurrected
hoarded hard and soft
from plastic dog turds
to clothes pins on tiny pedestals
the aerial view revealing
the gallery as mouse head
with us walking through the brain

mary i luv u

somewhere there's someone
who loves mary
so secretly so intensely
that he was driven to write
"mary i luv u"
on a ground level billboard
at the garden city station
defacing an ad
for new balance sneakers
and just below his confession
written no telling before or after
another victim of unrequited love
wrote jay is gay
and loves mens (no apostrophe) buttocks
spelling love
right at least once
on an ad for running shoes

night is always a giant

over the seven seas
under the bed of your childhood
waits the dark colossus
the moon his single eye
the sky his blackened diaphragm
the clouds a woolly mat
of celestial hair on his cosmic chest
the ocean's inward grumblings curl
regular as digestion
as tides of unwanted dreams
yours and mine
Chronos
intent on consuming all beneath him
on conquering the boastful sun's
pathetic sparklings
in the vast abscess of his open maw
turning presence into absence
swallowing every vestige of anemic light
each glimmer a headless body
all adventurers end their odyssey here
heroes hanging on his pitch lips
slipping down the starless chute
of his tunneled gullet
Chronos
only his one eye sees
take note sanguine brave hearts
salute his gleaming orb
from the eternal pitch cave
and call and sing and call
to your dearest departed
silently waiting one and all
compose in what calm you find
your final will and testament
dark sonata to the moon's descent
on Goya's Chronos Devouring His Young

REELS SURREAL – Toronto - 1970

PENITENT ACCORDIONS

SOME OF THE MOST GORGEOUS FAULTS OF AUTUMN LEAVES SHOW
LIKE STAINS ON THE LAPELS OF CALIFORNIA SALT-CHOWDER AFFICIANADOS.
OBELISKS. ONANISM. OLFACTORY OMIVORES AND, NEARBY, ASTEROID
ASHTRAYS AND AWFUL ALIMONIES ARE WITNESSES TO VINEGAR
AND OLD URINE IN THE SAD DAY'S JAR. WOUNDS PRESERVED IN SALT TRY TO
RECUPERATE. INEFFECTIVE AND INNEFABLE TONICS TITILLATINGLY CONSPIRE

(NOT REALLY TO RESTORE) WITH ARROGANT DOCTORS TO GIVE NO MERCY TO ANYONE PLAYING POLO OR CROQUET OR TENNIS ON MANICURED LAWNS. BEFORE NOON WELL AFTER SLEPT-THROUGH DAWNS. GROGGY VESTIBULES. SOLO CYCLONES HUMMED LITTLE CELLULOID VIGNETTES AND THE DARKENED MACADAM BIRDS DELVED INTO THE COMMISSION BOX FOR LONGER LIFE AND SUGAR-SWEET TRACTORS PLOWING. IN THE outhouse THE SOUND OF PIGEON SPASMS MAKES EASIER EASTERs FOR TINY POOLS OF ECTOPLASM. EACH EGG SPROUTS LITTLE CHICKEN LEGS AND WALKS OUT OF THE DARKEST PARK INTO THE BRIGHTEST LIGHT.

THE POWER OF ANTS AND IMBECILES

BRITTLE CLAWS AND MORAL PRINCIPLES HANGING FROM THE LAW'S JAWS LIKE FOOTBALL GEAR OR THE BUFFALO SABRE'S HELMETS IN SMELLY LOCKER ROOMS. A MILLION TUMS CALL ON THE VICISSITUDES OF FORTUNE TO BATTLE ON. WALKING STICKS AND GUCCI BAGS WAIT FOR THE PILE OF UNACQUAINTED INFERENCES. SOME PINK, SOME ORANGE, SOME CROCODILIAN. MONEY UNDERSTIMATES THE ROSE AND FECULENT COOL WATERS. FAMOUS GRASSHOPPERS OF ALL COUNTRIES HAVE CONTEMPT FOR ART IN THE SHADOW OF THEIR READERS, EAT CAT THISTLES UNDER BANKS OF SPOTLESS REPUTATIONS. THE SULKY SUN GOES DOWN LIKE A DROWNING MOB OF HOMICIDAL CLOWNS REDEFINING COULROPHOBIA.

GNAWED NUDES

IN SUMMER, THEIR SERRATED CROSSINGS ROBBED OF THEIR EDGE, THE GREAT GENERATIONS OF EARLY AMERICAN NUDES WENT TO EUROPE TO TEACH MANICURISTS NATURAL ILLUSIONS AND GOSPEL HYMNS. BURMESE CAT FRESCOES WERE DOMINANT. LIVE LOBSTER WALKING WAS ALL THE RAGE. EVERYONE SIGNED CHECKS WITH THEIR LANCES BLOTTED WITH POWDER FROM BUTTERFLY WINGS. THE INEXHAUSTIBLE FURNITURE OF THEIR INTERIOR ALCHEMIES WAS EVIDENCED IN BEEHIVES AND BILLIARD TABLES, CAST-IRON WORKSHOP SCULPTURES, OLD PERSIAN CARPETS, BRONZE ZEN RAZOR BLADES OR GORILLA SLEDS SENT THE HELMET-HEADED DOMESTICS HOWLING BACK INTO THE MOONLIT, MISTY WOODS. THE IMPERIALISTS FINALLY BOWED DOWN, KOWTOWED TO A CELEBRATION OF OUTDATED TOASTERS. AN UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECT IN THE SHAPE OF A PUMPKIN SMILE HUNG BAUBLE-LIKE ABOVE STARLIT MARINAS REFLECTED IN THE CADMIUM-YELLOW EYES OF A CAT NAMED ALCATRAZ AND HER BLACK MATE ABRACADABRA.

COURAGEOUS UMBRELLAS

RAINDROPS BIG AND GREEN AS BULLFROGS SOUGHT LODGING IN TEAPOT MOTELS OF EXECUTIVE LAPELS AND HERMES PURSES. IN ALL THE DRIVE-INS WITH THEIR FAUX-WORN DENIMS AND PAISLEYS, THEIR PLAID, MADRAS JACKETS AND HOLIDAY-INN BERMUDA SHORTS, UULATED UNANIMOUSLY. FAMOUS LONGITUDES WONDERED WHAT PHASE OF THE MOON WAS MOOING UNDER THE VAST SPARKLING BARN OF STARS IN NIGHT'S FUNNEL LIKE A BLACK FEED SACK POKED THROUGH BY ICE PICKS IN A DARK ROOM ILLUMINED BY ARMIES OF BRIGHTEST FLASHLIGHTS HELD IN THE HANDS OF SUDDENLY-CURIOUS CAMPERS. CHOIRS AND CRIMINALS TUMBLE THROUGH ABBEY STAIRWELLS OF INCORRIGIBLE, SECOND-TENOR TINTERETOS.

MONTAUK DOG BROOMS

BUSTER BROWN FUR DOMES ALONG THE WHARF BORDERED BY MILITARY PARADES OF TURQUOISE AND DARKEST CELANDINE SNAP-DRAGONS. BROWN SUGAR AND SAWDUST NODULES STINKING OF DUSKY CREEKS CREPT INTO THURBER'S WAR OF THE SEXES. MEMORIAL PARK TO DOGS NOSING SMALL BUGS EMPTYING INTO CULTURAL FISSURES UNEXPLORED BY

ARROGANT CRITICS. AND THEN SAND, OCEAN SAND. UNDER THE BOARD WALK.
UNDER THE BROAD WALK. AND THE BLEACHED-GRAY, SPLINTERY BOARDWALK.
THE WINDING-TO-SOME-MISTY-VANISHING-POINT BOARDWALK.

RAMPANT DOG BROOMS LITTLE SPECS OF LONG-GONE TOURIST DUST AND THE
EVERYDAY LITTER OF HALF-EATEN FRENCH FRIES, SPLATS OF KETCHUP, TEENAGERS'
SPUNK TRAILS AND A GROUCHY SETTING SUN. ROOTBEER. HOTDOGS ON TRAYS WITH
THAT SPECIAL LONG ISLAND MUSTARD AND THE SMELL OF CLAMS FRYING. SAND
EVERYWHERE. THE WORD "BEACH" STANDS CAMEO-NEON-STILL LIKE DOGS
SMELLING THE OCEAN AIR. IN OUR EARS IS THE RHYTHM OF THE SURF AND TIDES AND
THE VOLTAGE OF BIG SHIPS APPEARING SMALL ON THE HORIZON AS LITTLE
BIRDS LEAVE ZIPPER TRACKS IN THE WET SAND THAT ARE ERASED BY WAVES AFTER
WAVES, REWRITTEN AND ERASED AGAIN.

A CREAKY OLD MAN MINING THE BEACH FOR SMALL CHANGE AND BURIED
ENGAGEMENT RINGS WITH HIS BEEPING METAL DETECTOR REALIZES HE FORGOT TO
WATCH THE SUN COLLAPSE AND PRAY *BUENOS NOCHES* OVER THE DARK, CORDUROY-
BLUE HORIZON. ONE UGLY CHIHUAHUA, TONGUE LIKE A PINK LASAGNA NOODLE
LADELING DOWN OUT OF THE SIDE OF HIS MOUTH LOOKS LOST, PERPLEXED, STUPEFIED
SEARCHING FOR A DAY-GLO TENNIS BALL WHICH HAS DRIFTED FAR, FAR OUT ON THE
TIDE. HIS MASTER, A SMALL BLACK DOT AT THE FARTHEST END OF THE BEACH. THE
SURFACE OF THE SEA IS A GARGANTUAN TIGER SKIN – TANGERINE, ORANGE, BLACK
AND TURQUOISE WAVELETS DANCING SEDUCTIVELY TOGETHER IN SOME TANTALIZING
OCEANIC TANGO.

BOOM. BOOM. BOOM, BOOM, GO THE WAVES BEATING THE CRAP OUT OF DRIFT WOOD,
DEFLATED WEATHER BALOONS, MANY FRACTURED SHELLS, THE GUTTED HUSKS OF
HORSESHOE CRABS, SOAKED SEAGULL FEATHERS AND WAY TOO MANY, MONSTROUS
FRAGMENTS OF INAPPROPRIATE STYROFOAM.

MR. NIGHT AND MRS. END OF THE WORLD TEXT ONE ANOTHER: *NITEY NITE. DON'T
LET THE BED BUGS BITE. HAVE A GOOD SLEEPY SLEEP, SWEETHEART!*

BREATHING AT THE VERY FARTHEST REACHES OF THE HORIZON, AS KING OCEAN
ELEGANLY RISES AND FALLS, IS A SMALL LOBSTER TRAWLER SEEN, THEN NOT SEEN.
ONE LIGHT AT THE TIPPY TOP OF ITS MAST BLINKS ON AND OFF HOPING AND
IMPLORING THE NEW MOON AND VENUS TO RISE UP AND SHINE. ENUF.

SALT PORK IN THE LADIES WASHROOM

GRAND MALL CLITORIS ENVY. THE EROTIC GHOSTS OF THE RECTAL TEAM.
TRANSVESTITE LESBIAN GAY AND STRAIGHT SEX CAUSE BURNT PENISES TO GROAN.
INSPIRE ALL TO LICK FACE AND HANDS AND THIGHS AND EXHAUSTED PUT ON GARLIC
PEDAL PUSHERS AND FLY TO ST. BARTS. PRETTY DRUNK STEMS OF PAPERWHITES
DECAPITATED IN STALE CAFETERIAS BOW DOWN TO CHIPPED BEEF AND RUBBERY
FRENCH TOAST. SUCH LANGUID APSIRATIONS ASPRING TO THE CONDITION OF MUSIC
AND MACARRONI THAT EVEN BEST FRIENDS AND THE NOTION OF FRIENDSHIP AND
TRUEST LOVE ARE CALLED INTO QUESTION.

ARMED ROBBERY AND BIBLES IN THE REAL MESS OF CENTURIES OF WHITES BLACKS
YELLOWS REDS TANS AND GRAYS ARE DELIVERED LIKE PERFECT PIZZAS AND LAND
COLD ON DOORSTEPS MAKING RESIDENTS WONDER ABOUT THE MEANING OF DREAMS.
THERE ARE SOME MIDGET ANTHROPOLOGISTS WANDERING IN THE CLOAKROOM
EXPERIENCING TWINGES OF SIZE GUILT BUT KNOWING THE POWER OF BLUE CANOES.
SILVER PONTIAC COLLECTIBLES FROM THE 50s ARE HEADING TO CAR WASHES

EVERYWHERE FOLLOWED BY A LONG BORING LIST OF LONG LOST ONE-HOUR PARKING SIGNS.

THE UNIVERSE IS SINGING THE BLUE POTATOES BLUES AND GIVES NO CREDENCE TO THE PUTRID REHASHED SAME OLD BLAH-BLAH STORIES OF THE PRESS AND FAT-ASSED POLITICIANS. CONCEPTUAL CATS LEGS UP ARE LEAVING THEIR MARKS ON THE CELLAR DOORS OF CONVENTIONAL WISDOM AND THE NEGATIVES OF BESTIAL ARROGANCE. THE BLACK AND SPRY AND EMPY CLOUDS OF FLASHING GALLSTONE TATOOS SEE AT LAST THE TURQUOISE PYTHONS OF OLYMPIC ENLIGHTENMENT. PEACE ON EARTH. AND ONLY COMPASSION. DEEPEST COMPASSION FOR ALL LIVING BEINGS ALWAYS PRECIOUS AT EACH BIGGIE'S TO SMALL'S BEGINNINGS MIDDLES AND ENDS. STOOL FOP. FULL STOP.

PASTURIZED FLAMINGOES

IF YOU REMEMBER STRAWBERRY MILK AND FLAVOR STRAWS, YOU HAVE A GREAT FEELING FOR PINK FEATHERS, LONG LEGS, NECKS AND POWERFUL WINGS MIGRATING TO DISTANT DESERT FLATS.

WHEN SHE PUT THE MEXICAN BEEF PATTY BETWEEN HER DIFFUSE AND LIGHTLY ORCHID THIGHS, IT HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH SIZE. TOGETHER THEY INVESTED IN AND INVENTED A LOIN FROM ELLIOT: "O THAT SHAKESPEAREAN RAG!" RAGE HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH IT OTHER THAN SERVING AS AN EXOTIC SPICE. COMPOUNDED BY THE WEIRD DREAM OF T.S. ELLIOT IN BOOTEES CROUCHED BEHIND A VICTORIAN COUCH TAKING NOTES FOR HIS ANOMIE. BAWLING LIKE A BALD COYOTE UNDER A BLUE SICKLE MOON.

IN THE LITERARY CANON'S BORING BED PARLOR AND RED-LEATHER ARMCHAIRS LISTENED TO THE FLOW OF ARCHETYPAL CANYON PEEPEE AS THE SELF-CONGRATULATORY AND POMPOUS ACADEMIC ASSES WATCHED THEIR OPINIONS GROW. THEIR BORED AND BROAD FOREHEADS IN THE BRIGHT BIRD-PINK LIGHT, CONFUSED ABOUT WHAT WAS WRONG OR RIGHT, DECIDED AND DERIDED THE NOTION OF COJONES. BUT THEY MISSED A LOT. AS, FOR EXAMPLE, THE SHADOWS OF EXPENSIVE BABY CARRIAGES AT SUNSET IN WELL MOWN PARKS OR THE WAY THE TREE SHADOWS ON THE CARRIAGE GREEN GONE BLACK AND HORIZONTAL AT DUSK JUST BEFORE DROP OF DARK. AND THE MEMORY OF INSTITUTIONAL HOWLING AND THOSE MAGICAL EXPLOSIONS OF STRIKES WHEN BOWLING PINS VANQUISHED BROUGHT US BACK. BACK TO THE PARROT'S NAVEL AND THE SMELL OF SAWDUST AND JUST-CUT WOOD. BROUGHT US BACK TO THE BRAZILIAN COMFORT OF WARM ALPACA RAIN AND WATER RESISTANT SHAWLS. TIME AND TIME AND TIME BACK AND BACK AGAIN. LIKE A TOOTH IN PAIN.

STRAUS AND BALLROOM ROLLERSKATING IN VIENNA

OOMPAH, OOMPAH, OOMPAH. SKATING PAST VARNISHED FLOORS, GOLD-GILDED WAINSCOTTING AND BESPOKE CARVED DOORS. PAST ARCHITECTURAL FOLLIES AND FLOURISHES. AN ARCAN E FORM OF DATING WAS THE CONVENTION OF THE SILLY SCHNITZEL-RICH AND THEIR MUCH-PRACTICED-BAROQUE-BARBECUE DANCE. MINUTE MINUETS. OUTSIDE FROZEN RIVERS AND STAND ON STANDS OF RUSSIAN BIRCHES. INSIDE THEY PRANCED. INSIDE MUSTACSHIOED LORDS. HOARDS AND BEVIES OF LARGE-BREASTED COUNTESSSES. NOT TOO MANY BUT SURELY A FEW WHORES. FORCING COUNTS WITH CERTAIN ITCHES TO BEHAVE LIKE LOUTS AND OR BORES. ALL THAT VIENNESE HUMAN 'PASTRY' OFF THE SHELVES, ON DISPLAY, SET ADRIFT. CHOCOLATE IMBROGLIOS MANUFACTURED FOR LANDED GENTRY BIG-MONIED CREEPS. A KIND OF INHERITED GENETIC GIFT. SOCIETY'S, SOCIETIES' LURCHING CHURCHES OF TIME AND LIFE AND PRESSURES TO COMPLY PASSING, SPEEDING BY. A KIND OF APOPLECTIC TIC AS EACH AND EVERY ROBIN CHEEPS AND TOCKS. ALL THAT TOO-SWEET CRAP NOW CLEARLY A CULTURAL ELECTRIC BAGGAGE. THEIR MUSIC, THAT MUSIC AN OLD WORLD

INSIPID VERSION OF TODAY'S EQUALLY INSIPID RAP. WISH THERE WERE AN ADAGE. THEN INSTEAD WE COULD CHARGE INSTEAD OF BY THE FLIMSY WORD, BY FULL-COLOR PAGE.

SPRING STILETTOS

THE FONDUE OF MUDDY BOOTS AND UPRISINGS OF CELADINE SHOOTS. THE FLASHING NEWS TRAIL AND TRIALS OF COMA BERENICES AND CANES VENATICI MAKING BEE LINES FOR LEO MAJOR AND LEO MINOR. SUDDEN FIREFLIES TURN DULL SWAMPS INTO TIMES SQUARES. NEON GEESE SHOP FOR PEEPER IN THEIR SHOPPING CARTS.

SUDDENLY GREEN IS NO LONGER EXCLUSIVE BUT THE ONLY THING TO WEAR. POND ICE CREEPS AWAY FROM SHORLINES AND JOINS UP WITH WHITE MEMORIES OF FROZEN LACE AND GONE FROST TREES. TADPOLES WIGGLE WAGGLE IN THE SHALLOWS. GREEN SLIME AND DUCK WEED CEEBRATE NATIONAL DUCK WEEK.

THE LOAF OF NIGHT IS SLICED BY THE KNIFE OF SUN. DISAPPEARING LIKE LARGE RED ANTS ON THE RUN FROM LEFTOVER PIZZA BOXES. DAY BREAKS WITH BATTALIONS OF SILENT SUN DOGS ALL OUT TO PLAY LOOKING FOR FUN. BUM SNIFFERS ALL SNIFFING ONE ANOTHER'S BUMS. OLD BONES MADE NEW EMERGE FROM THE SAME COLD SEASON'S OLD TURNING ZOO MADE SPANKING NEW.

SILENT RUSTED TYPWRITERS NO LONGER TYPE IN THE GALLEYS OF SUNKEN BOATS. RAINDROPS SKIP, SKIMP AND DIMPLE PONDS OF PUDDLES. WARM WINDS MYSTERIOUSLY MUDDLE ALL. SOMWHERE DOWN A LONG DARK HALL SWEATY SCHOOL CHILDREN IN TOO-HOT CLASS ROOMS SQRIM IN THEIR CHAIRS VAGUELY SMELLING SUMMER VACATON'S CALL.

THEIR TINY FARTS' SMALL MINI-SONIC BOOMS ADD TO THE OPENING BUDS OF BUSHES AND TREES. ALL IN ALL DAME BLOSSOM'S CASTING CALL PROVES MORE THAN ANY AND ALL CAN HANDLE. EVERY FLOWER OPENS UP TO FAME WANTS TO BE A SHOW STOPPER A STAR. A HALF A MILLION DOLLAR LUXURY CAR. AND THEN THE MIRACLE OF WARM SPRING SHOWERS BOWER, FLOWERS, MINUTES AND HOURS.

THE WASTED AMBROSIA OF FLOWERS

LONE FOG PHANTOMS ROSE OVER GREAT CORAL BEDS AND OCEANS' SANDS. SUN ON HORIZON A GREAT BALL OF PHOENIX FLAME. BREADCRUMBS AND EGGSHELLS AND SEA SHELLS AND THE GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL'S CRY. FEATHERS IN THE SURF. WAVES AND THE SOFT THUNDERS OF THE EVENING TIDE. HOW CAN ANYONE SLEEP NEAR YOU AT YOUR SIDE BY THE PILLOW OF YOUR DREAM-LIKE FLOW WITHOUT FROM JOY NEEDING TO CRY.

KNOWING NOTHING LASTS, NOTHING STANDS. YOU BEAUTIFUL, DELICATE ONES RIPE AS A GREAT GRUYERE. DEEP AS A SUBTLE, PREMIER CRU CABERNET. SALT IN OUR TEARS. SALT IN OUR EYES. INTO SALT BLOCKS THOSE LOOKING OR TURNING BACK. SALT TO ACCENTUATE THE INSIGNIFICANT ARROGANT I. THE EYE'S VIOLIN, THE CELLOS, THE ANTIGENS, THE OLD LIFE OF BOURBON JARS AND JELLY BEANS AND RIPPED GENES SO AGILE IN THE HIDDEN PALM OF SOME SILENT CREATOR'S HANDS SEASON AFTER SEASON DOUBLE BACK. CLASIC CARS, SACRED XANAX, VIGILANT VODKAS AND XERXES RISE SHIMMERING IN EACH DAY'S JELLOS. SCINTILLATIONS ON SCINTILATIONS AND THE HAUNTING VIOLET SHADE OF SUMMER AFTERNOONS. LIGHT'S CLUTCHING XYLOPHONES AND STALACTITES DRIPPING POINTEDLY. RADIANT CARTOONS ON SUMMER AFTER MANY SUMMERS' PURPLE LAWNS AND AFTERNOONS.

SENSATIONS, INCRIMINATIONS AND JOY'S AND SADNESS'S DAILY INFESTATIONS. INTERVENTIONS ON INTERVENTIONS. NO SHADOWS ON THE VIOLENT

CHALK BOARD OF VIOLET COVERED-WAGON CLOUDS. BENZODIOZAPENES KICKING IN AS ANCHOVY PASTE, VIRGIN OLIVE AND LEMON IN A ROBUST PUTANESCA SAUCE. PACKETS OF SUNSHINE PASSED OUT IN TOUR BUSES. ON A BED OF THINLY SHREDDED SUNDOWN WITH CARROT, BEET AND CABBAGE SKIES. THE TUTELEGE, THE TURTLE PACE OF DUST WHISKS THE DOVE'S BREAST PRISM-CLEAN TO SHOW A DESERT HOME OF TRUST AND GEORGIA O'KEEFE'S VISION OF LONELINESS. THE SO-PURPLE DESERT DUSK. IN THE GREAT EYE, THE EYE OF SOME GREAT ONE, ALL THE SMARTEST TOYS KNOW WHY. AND THEN AND THEN THE OPEN, STRAIGHT-FACED SKY THAT NEVER TELLS A LIE.

EVERYTHING BUILT TO RELISH AS MATISSE DID HIS GOLDEN-ORANGE FISH. THE SENSE OF BEING SOLITARY IN ONE'S OWN BONES. STAY THERE. REST THERE. OWN THERE. YOUR PLACE. GREEN WATERS. DIAMOND JELLY. TRUE ALCHEMY. PETALS OF STEEL. WASTED FLOWERS. WASTED AMONIA FLOWERS. JOHN BARLEYCORN FLOWER TO GROUND FLOUR IS BORN A HOLY BREAD.

THE SECONDS, MINUTES, HOURS. THE DAYS, THE MONTHS THE YEARS. THE ALTO-JESUS-BLOOD-RED-WINE OF OUR SHORT-LIVED FEARS. THE FADING NOWS, THE FADING WHYS, THE RETURNING POWERS OF STARS AND CONSTELLATIONS IN THE NIGHT-DARK SKIES. KAPOW! SHAZZAM! AS IN THE PAINTED COMIC-BOOK RHYMES OF ROY LIECHTENSTEIN. THE FRAGILE INARTICULATE AND THE MOST ARTICULATE CARTOON OF NOW. THE WHEEL OF DAYS TURNING US ON OUR HEELS.

O DEAREST GIRLS. O BEST BOYS. EACH OF THOSE WE LOVE. IN THE HEADLIGHTS OF LOST YEARS SEE THE DANCING FIGURES ON THE GRECIAN URNS. SEE THE HERDS OF ANCIENT BEASTS LEAPING ON LASCAUX'S CLAY-RED WALLS. SAVOR AND BURN BRIGHT. O BEAUTIFUL ONES, EACH AND ALL, YOU YOUR OWN BEST AND TRUEST BOOKS. REST WELL, READ YOUR OWN TALES GENTLY AND WELL. FIND SOME PEACE IN INSIDE YOUR HEADS. SO SAY THE WASTED AMBROSIA OF FLOWERS TO US. EVER UNFAILING. FOREVER THUS.

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Cover: Daffodils – acrylic on cardboard – 24"x36" - G.J. Furman