

# Metaphor Police

*A Collection of Poems from 2007*

Richard P. Gabriel

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## How to Recall

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

## Roughing It

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

## Travel Date

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

## Blame for Life

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

## I Felt the Cold Hand Last Night

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

## Old Things In Mind

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

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

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

## Long Hours

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



## Teach Nothing

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


## Just In Case

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

## Up Coast

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

## Another Night of Lights and Her

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

## Does This Matter

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

## Street Scenery

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

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

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

## Does Science Change the Past

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

## Both Hands Off the Wheel

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



## This Device Again

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

## Stop For Refreshment

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Late Late Late Late Late

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

## Nowhere In a Car

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

eventually the light changed  
and I moved on

## Oh Stories

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

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

## Inappropriately Famous

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

## Pictures, Small Ones

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

## Unproven

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



## What An Animal

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

## Odd Thought

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

## Bottle Hunt

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

## Thoughts on Love Like Mud in a River

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

## For Anything

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

## Counterexample

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

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

## Simple Minds

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

## Warning

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



## Tracings

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

## Again

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

## Revision Experiment No. 1

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

## I Might Know Her

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

## True Enough

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

## After Hearing

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

## Bridge Along

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

## Gubbish

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



## LA Skyline in my Best Pants

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

## Sharpened Points

sentences arranged  
to tell you things

sentences in crowds  
sentences running  
for the doors

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

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

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

it takes a long time  
to learn what a sentence is

at least we still  
have that

## On a Jet Plane

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

## Problem Page

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

## Wrong Food

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

## As A Dog

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

## Another Day Waiting

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

## Here No More

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



## Tube at the Edge of Forever

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

## Seeming

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

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

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

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

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

## Change of Luck

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

## Anniversary

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

## Trains on 66

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

## Tired & Rocky

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

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

## High Desert

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

## Caged

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



## Trip Changes

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

## Kingman

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

## Quote This

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

## Black Mountains

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

## 10 Hours

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

## Drive Around Day

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

## In the Bonds of Life

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

## Communicating Integration

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



## Titanic Discovery

the question of the tomb  
is asked

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

and DNA applied to prove  
no relation

consistency with  
is taken as evidence for

nothing is wrong  
so it must be right

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

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

## Fear Itself Fear

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

## Lineman

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

## Blame Is For...

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

## By the Way

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

## Writing on the Wall

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

## Low Flying Black After White

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

## Look Close Down

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



## South Boston

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

## Really So Slight Stupidity

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

## Thunder and 1965

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

## A Kind of Blind Art

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

## Pray for a Rerun

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

## Greatness Never Ends (Supposed)

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

## Float Off

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

## Un-Heard Of

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



## Not Only Quick But Lousy Too

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

## More Like Woods

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

## No North No South

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

## Walking It Is

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

“I was fixin’ a puncture on a car.

I had been mistreated by a girl.

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

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

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

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

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

I learned it from Son House.”

## Dynamic Languages Thomas

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

## Carla Curtis

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

## Temporal Madness Through the Same Old Things

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

## Because Explained

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



## Restaurant Scene After an Expensive Meal

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

## Quux Reads As He Was Asked To Do

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

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

the 12 of us dispersed and most have not  
met since

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

## 66 Tears

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

the time  
the place  
the night  
the guitar  
the beer

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

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

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

great stuff

## Out North

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

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

<http://justin.tv>

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

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

## Impress People With Symbolism

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

## ignore

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



## Changing Font Size

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

## How Much Suffer

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

## Scrapyard Hustle

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

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

## Emergency Hah Call The Doctor

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

## Light Remarks

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

## That Never Thought of Place

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

## Did It Snow?

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

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

## New Bum

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



## Webcam Rearrangement

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

## Faint Echo

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

## Road as Road

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

## Saturation Under the Influence

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

## For A While

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

## A Little Nothing

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

## Learning Center

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

## Yet

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



## Belied Strangeness

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

## World Away / 2

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

## More to the Story

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



## Different Times

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

## This Is About Deserving

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

## Road Badness

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

## After Reading Another Shepherd Poem

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



## Reality Versus Truth

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

read this

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

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

## Abstraction Again

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

## Little but not Nothing

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

## Surprised Probably

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

## Art Not Hard to Master

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

lost that thought

## Tonight and Speaking

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

## Is What I Heard Tonight

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

## Waiting in the Bar for the World to End

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



## View from Out and Above the Sea

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

## No Moon Rising

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

## Walk One Night

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

## Gutter Life

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

## B Woman

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

## Notes / Notes

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

## Important Things

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

## Love on the Run

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



## Outrage Given Color

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

## Three Places

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

## Crossing Boundaries

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

## For Marianne

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

## Cry Along

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

## At the Pizzeria

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

## Lit Building

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

## On It

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



## Cloudy Prospects

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

## My Bed of Solitude

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

## Choro

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

## Porto de Galinhas

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

## Southern Cross

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

## Dressed For

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

## Yes Her

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

## Samba Club

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

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



## Paula in the Car

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

## Leaving Brazil

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

## After 26 Hours Coming Home

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

## Bound

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

## Crossing the Mind

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

## **Oh Foo**

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

## Best By Far

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

## I Greet You

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



## **Pure Practical**

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

## Afterward

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

## **Alone Some More**

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

## Pools are Next

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

## All Wrong

another day of things  
gone wrong  
how can this happen all the time  
why me / why me again and again

## Not Your Father's Thought

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

## Cloudy or Bright

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

## Noise You Call

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



## Ars

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

## Recursion Like Many

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

## Life All Over

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

## Like a Flyer

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

## Lost on Me

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

## What A Day

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

## Town Thinking

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

## Love Type Shuffle

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



## The Practicalities of Poem Writing

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

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

## Littlefoot

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

## Sentence Death Match

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

## **Exhibition**

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

## Your Disquiet

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

## False / Person / Real

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

## Kid Band

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

## Observationally Old

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



## Derelection

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

## Care in Choice

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

## Writing For Fireworks

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

## At The Reading

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

## No Writers After Shakespeare

conference over

people dancing

eager to leave

I am always stunned by their readings

and what they consider contemporary art

here is what it would be like

I walked into the Sneaker Pimps dressing room

and found them reading Shakespeare and looking

at Titians despite the otherwise contemporary

art they otherwise love and make

## Progress is Our Most Important Problem

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

## Last Poem #1

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

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

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

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

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

## Snake No Snake

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



## By the Sandy Road

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

## Reading of Success

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

## Life Taking

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

## Remarks

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

## When Night Times Out

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

## Art On Top

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

## Losers in Arms

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

## Beginning

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



## Revisitation

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

## Get Lost

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

## Right

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

## In What Life?

want to have sex  
she asked  
wings waving  
sure

he paused  
her wings wavered

but I don't know how

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

he paused  
her wings

how can I tell

they wavered  
she said  
be right back

## Lots to Clear Up

she drank  
mother didn't  
but hers...

yelling heard out the windows  
"another of her fits"

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

she and the bottle  
were very good friends

## Baz

a beautiful zebra  
zerored a buffer  
and...

## More Cemetery Men

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

## Like a Clock, a Simple One

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



## It Is Where We Are

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

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

## Long From Here

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

## Like Tonight

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

## Like This Evening

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

## Collapsing in Budapest

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

## In Florida

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

## Story Through Facts

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

## History by Facts

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



## Two Ways of River

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

## Timing Affair

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

## Case of the Synchronism

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

## Sullen Physics

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

## Sad Girl in Montréal

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

## More on the Girl

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

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

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

## Until Now

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

## Sad Girl on the Wall

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



## Blandness of Tuesdays

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

## Memory Bank

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

## Walls Gone

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

## Confusing My Understanding

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

## Heavy Dinner but Late

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

## Elegant Angle

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

## Listening for Rain

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

## Appearing Lowlands

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



## Timely Deductions

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

## Information Indirect

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

## **Crypto Poem**

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

## Frustrated with Beauty

when you look at the paintings  
close / like from 6"  
the brushstrokes look random  
like chaos / like vague  
                                  tongue  
lickings I                   guess  
planning it seems is overrated  
when you step back from chaos  
—say about 6' away—  
it turns into beauty

## When I Step Into The Light

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

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

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

this seems unlikely

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

## Science of Sweet

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

## Left Behind

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

## Tangential Viewing

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



## Before and After Pictures Available

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

## **Not Much**

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

## Sad Girl on a Rain Night

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

## Mystery of Grafitti

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

## Mind Stripped of Ticks

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

## Only the Few Can Parse What is Seen

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

## Animosity of Story

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

# Hey

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



## What is it for?

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

## Essence of It

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

## In Heat

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

## Until After

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

## Oh?

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

what storm?

## Lecture #23

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

## My Only Poem Mentioning These

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

## That Girl He Talks About

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



## Driving Around & Around

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

## Crossing That Bridge

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

## Past the Sad Girl

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

## The Chair-Caner

*(adapted from Guy Goffette)*

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

## Don't Go

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

## Again and Again

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

## Go In

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

## Simple Life = What He Wants

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



## Man to Hell

work like hell  
hell will work you  
over

## Again

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

## Mind is a Razorblade

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

## Wouldn't Be Good Enough

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

## Driveaway

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

## WWII

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

## Place Storms

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

## Not Much

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

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



## Long Hauling

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

## Bridge Picture

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

## Over Work

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

## Ride Through

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

## Standing Firm

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

## Worry About Me

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

## Dark in Fall

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

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

## Not Her Thing

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



## Bad A Bing

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

## In Hours

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

## On Examining an Old Photo

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

## On Looking at an Old Photo

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

## Tonight In Town

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

## At the Bend

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

## Couldn't Go On

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

## Lost by Design

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



## My Song

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

## Dark in a Northern City

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

## Alley of Art

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

## Cold Schooling

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

## Side Street Time

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

## Could Happen

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

## After a Warm Day

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

## After Our Visit

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



## Or Is It Lovers

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

## Tailor It

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

## After Nighttime

she wrote  
it ends

## Prescription

sometimes regardless  
of what you believe  
you must pray  
to live

## Over / Over

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

## Appreciation of the Argument

a good way not to  
forget is to write

## On Her's

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

## Integrity of Time

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



## Fall Scene

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

## Of Existence

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

## Everyday

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

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

## On Every Street

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

## Farm Day One At A Time

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

I pray  
make me remember

## Under a Sky

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

## Kharma Reiterated

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

## A Story of Illiteracy and Cuckoldry

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

## Alongside Truth is a Pretty Song

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

## Offtune

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

## Etc

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

## Important Quote Number One

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

## Important Quote Number Two

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

## Important Quote Number Three

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

## Hong Kong First Day

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



## on the train

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

## Our Motto At Last

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

## How I Wonder

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

## Wild Food

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

## Way Up A Hill

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

## Tai O in Nov

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

## Not A Thing

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

## Away Or Far Away

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



## Little Memories

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

## The Road

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

## It's Those Parentheses That Count Most

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

## In This Way

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

## Winter Terse

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

## Odilon Redon

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

## This Is The Biggest Surprise

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

## Actress or Role

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



## After A Month I Remember

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

## Costain's Basement

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

## Ship Ahoy!

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

## Plains Song

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

## Lost Trinket

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

## Why Not Now

it is hard  
for an idiot  
to write

## Unhinged

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

## **Where Next**

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



## Winter Process

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

## She Come

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

## And Now Again

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

## We Endeavor to Destroy

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

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

## I Am My Rust

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

## **Photoing**

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

## But It's Cold

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

## Pining for Montréal

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



## Paradox in Two Parts

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

## Voting For Everything

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

## Apply Finally

How to interpret the final bytecode?

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

So what am I doing at the moment?

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

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

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

“The Rise of the Nguyens” Asian-Nation:

The Landscape of Asian America.

How to interpret the final bytecode?

## The One Who Won't Be Taken

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

## Gig and Dance

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

## Under

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

## Bad Occasion

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

## Beaten Trace

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



## Bad Alone

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

## Was This Love

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

## Stories in Ink

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

## Sad Girl of Montréal

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

## Why Not Cry Before the New Year

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

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

that it sees to get near.

It will be wrong in the table

and if it welcomes,

he, the futures, or ...

will be extensive in 2

and it surprises;

he does not know.

## The Day Before

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

## How Many

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

## What an Early Morning Teaches

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



## Shared Fraud

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