

The appearance of each new poet is indicated by a seal. The poets are listed at the end of the volume.

On the Ornamental Cosmos

Charles Antell of the Ritz is walking along the avenue
with his golden hairs glistening and
his fingernails glistening and
his eyeballs glistening because he polishes them with a soft cloth
every evening one hundred times.
What are you looking at, Charles Antell curley locks?
My eyes my eyes my delicate eyeballs
are mirrors.
I'm looking at the back of a reflection

(the world sees the world in my eyes)

)eyes my in world the sees



Image

Time, a tart on tilted stilts
trips boldly through the courtyard.
Her dresses move about her form
Tehee! she shouts and shakes her hips
at me, the drooling watcher.

Song

yes, we fly through the air, a pattern of black birds, crossing and recrossing

floating with the ease of our wings
upon the cold sky
beautiful alone
beautiful in our changing pattern

In this nighttime there is a never ending repetition of rain and a stirring of small winds across the surface of my cheeks.

I will sit here by the window waiting for your face at the door, your hand on the handle, and I will remember you.

It was once, passing through a door, that I raised my head and was awash in your eyes, that I was swept back into the room from which I had just come to feel the startled muscles of my mouth leaping, and the short moment's blue ocean engulf me.

The light comes and goes,
a succession of landscapes and photographs, laughing faces,
waving hands, and two men clasping each other by the shoulders.
A small child sings as she stumbles,
and you pause to watch her.

Once I would come home very cold from school and fall asleep on my bed wrapped in a red and blue quilt, hearing the rain outside my window.

Will you come down the hill to the river now?

The dry rain falls upon grey leaves, curling in the grass.

Will you come to this place where I am neither myself nor anyone:

The leaves cover the sidewalk like snow and the rain falls onto paper.

Stop motionless against the sky, come quietly.

You will touch me before I can reach my hand to your face.

On a Poet

who is this fuzzy mouthed egotist who thinks he can own five sparrows?
the period king, word scrambler, jester, pester, persistent procrastinator, redundancy's minister

come) (in the st eps -the night's up (night mare horses leaping) and singing voices in a faces in the dark (eyes fall feet falling head falling face closing door opening babybaby i fall

o squeeze your sausage fingers
your short thick glossy hands with their dry packed fingers
moving within themselves as over hot coals.
and witness me squirming in my chair.
my stomach is liquid, the heat within my throat boils over:
warm fluid flowing beneath the still skin.
I see your fingers touch that book,
the brown hair on the backs of your hands,
the strand of grey hair stuck to the armpit of your jacket,
the selfish small mouth refused to me,
and know the low slow sucking tide of my blood
as I touch you with my eyes.

I have never seen your hands,
yet dream of them in deference to your eyes which touch too harshly;
for I am not strong enough to return this clasp of eyes.
Bring your hand to me, one quick touch becoming
the touch of bodies,
the easy blending of flesh before the moment spills away.

Do I Detect a Sudden Change of Fancy?

People's faces pop shut

the top goes on the bottle

Pepsi Cola, say the passionless red letters

which span the surface (this and something more

which I dare not repeat to myself):

the advertisement ignores the contents -- Oh America --

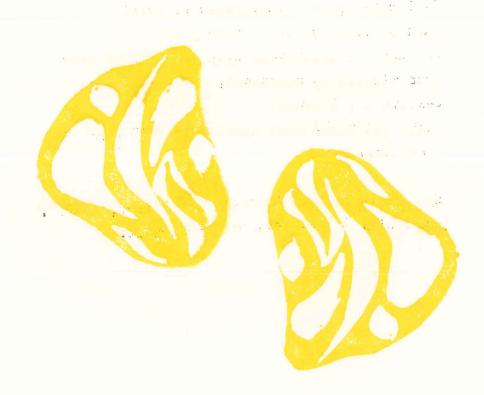
You don your dust colored glasses,
you trample as you turn away.

If I could pull a chartreuse or purple
mustach from out of my nose
and wave it under your eyes until those same
eyes widened in amazement,
believe me, I would
until you could once again know that I am of
substance.

concealment by the congealed exterior.

the air is rather thick in this corner, dearie, you can't, I tell you, see through it.

o I would taste the words, roll them in my wet mouth slowly tease them with the tongue, notice the juices, the salty flavor, and remember: do they dissolve quickly, sliding easily down the throat, soon forgotten, or do they remain, pungent aftertaste, memory of delight?



A Good Case for Brevity

The chandelier's great light illuminated the programs that the decorated women and penguin men were reading (as they sometimes do) and now as the cutglass chandelier dimmed the renowned pianist Rubinov Stanowsky slowly walked on stage quite penguined also and bowed ever so politely to the awed audience flicking back his tail (as he always does) he sat at the piano waited for complete silence raised his right hand and with one finger sounded a most magnificent

A

Arose
bowed
and left
for that was all he had to say

The Constant Variable

stores stood as fortresses armed with irate owners a paint-peeled door and two brown-streaked windows composed a shelter doorways were clothed with men trying to escape the hungry cold unshaven dirty

TI

some winter nights my room was warm when all the rest of the house was cold but then some winter nights my room was cold when all the rest of the house was warm

they outlined their building counterparts

my walls were gray quiet library gray restricted prison gray even gray void of shadow when light came through my window it settled on my floor and never touched my gray walls in my room I had a chair and a table a bureau and a bookcase all of dark brown wood their square shapes blocked the wall a room with furniture so square and cornered had gray walls my room had two beds of dark brown wood each had dull white bedspreads and I liked to run my fingers around the designs that were raised from my bedspreads

making little shadows of gray gray and white and brown filled my room I had white curtains and on my bureau was a mirror I could see brown boxes against gray I could see a desk and two white bedspreads sometimes I liked to lie on my bed among my furniture and sometimes I lay in the comfortable warmth and sometimes in the cold I had a rug on my floor it was gray

A CONTROL OF S IS OF AND JOSEPH AS A CONTROL OF

recent and a deep or high

dark hurts the eyes for one tries to see it is impossible to see in the dark I can't but then I don't try

red's a little too bright I want something more subdued perhaps something with simpler lines that won't do at all that's a nice blue blue won't do

it's snowing I'll have to wear my galoshes I hate beautiful snow soft snow purring snow

blue won't do
I won't even try it because I know that I won't like it
now if it were red

children should be quiet when it snows their noise is irreverent

I think that my bedspread's very nice
the yellow brings out gray
and gray brings out orange
and orange brings out green
and green brings out red
I like red
I wonder whether red brings out blue
I like those designs too
doesn't anything bring out white and black

you can't start a fresh bottle until you've finished the old one
then you sit and try to stomach stale milk
like stale coffee
or stale wine
or stale cigarettes
or stale cheese only that's better stale
blue's stale like milk
only it's blue
skim milk's blue
blue won't do

snow
winter-beach-sand to run fingers through and make designs
like on yellow bedspreads

blue won't do

snow's gray and white and blue snow's never red except underneath a sunset

bright red lights

paris is red

you can walk down the streets when it's cold and glow like a

steel ingot

and the cold wind will sift your hair like flour
paris is music
you can walk down a damp paris street
red paris
at three in the morning and hear a symphony of silence
complete silence
complacent quiet
a quiet of satisfaction

a room with furniture so square and cornered had gray walls

I hate beautiful snow soft snow purring snow but I think it's stopped

the tight cold turns everything to gray
the naked trees and the hard ground
are all gray
the gray clouds contain the sun
and the sun pushes
and fails

but never stops pushing until he finally wins until bright colors bloom in some paradises the gray is covered with the white of snow blue snow no blue won't do

III

that radio's much too loud
a little consideration for your neighbors
please
turn it down

pass the stuffing
no thank you
I couldn't take another bite
but it was delicious

it's still too loud
make it lower
inconsiderate neighbors

yes
your tree is quite nice
the whole street too
just shining with bright lights

the parade was fun the marching with the feet up and down stomp in the cold with parchment skins cracking and bells always bells high bells bells that never went dong just ding ding ding until you leave in the cracking cold and you're clamped into the jaws of the roaring subway lion then home to four rooms and a bath in hot cloudy water soft white underwear smooth and a stiff white shirt with atarch please that should have been soft french cuffs or button cuffs french are dressier khaki colored suit so brown tie twice around over twice around over then through pull it straight and tight

like a noose or was it once around over and through

then you take her arm and you go dancing and you drink sip more dancing and sitting sip and talking and then everyone stands and waits and you wonder whether you are trying to forget the last year or don't want to see the next one swallow no more sips swallow and then it's ended and it's begun and instead of air there's paper bits of colored paper long spiralled bits of colored paper

and the sound of an old tinny band and ancient songs

he continued through the city her maze walled by steel ringing steel whistling in the sky cold wet steel knifing the wind damp shadowed steel silently erect

he drifted past the masses of squatting concrete past the cracked streets on which the claws of grinding car motors sent dark rubber wheels humming

past the talking lights laughing in the rows of mirrors

all so alike

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Puberty Explored

you see there was this girl who was beautiful and built

but her parents were rather prudish

like midvictorian

and they got this chastity belt

with heavy leather straps

and they put it on her and kept it locked and guess who had the key

mom

so this girl goes around to lawn parties

in the summer

in her lowcut evening gown

with this leather strap showing

it was around her waist

to her shoulder

to her hips

and below

and it must have been six inches wide and

two inches thick

which is pretty goddam thick

and she wasn't particularly infatuated with the thing

so one night

comes this lawn party

and

everyone was on the lawn

and so was she

when this real handsome guy jumps her

but is somewhat deterred by the belt

so she reaches between her breasts

and pulls out this knife

and gives it to the guy

who cuts it off in one stroke

Lord

she says

it's good to get rid of this thing

Skin Deep, No

Notice if you will the shape of her neck (such perfection) and her bone structure (truly magnificent) the nose (formed with classic lines) yes, please observe the teeth as they smile (in perfect alignment) of course this is a rather poor photograph but I'm sure that you notice the chin (how delicate) and her lips (such perfect curves) is it any wonder that I love her?

Just One More Amendment Please

Monday: Today my decision was made. After four years of weighing both sides carefully, I have decided against it. Shall write first draft of letter tomorrow.

Tuesday: Composed three drafts of letter. First draft took ten minutes; second, four hours; third, four hours. Decided on first draft as best. Shall mail it tomorrow.

Wednesday: Sent letter to Democratic National Committee telling them I had definitely decided not to seek the Presidential nomination for 1964. Mailed it air-mail special delivery at 8:10 p.m. Thursday: Still no word from Democratic headquarters. No mention of letter on radio, television, or in New York Times.

Friday: Should I have sent letter by registered mail? Still no mention of letter. Daily News had an article on the next to last page saying that the Democratic headquarters has been deluged with mail this year. Was my letter in the deluge? Have others also sent in letters declining to seek the nomination?

Saturday: Sent a registered letter to Democratic National headquarters saying that under no circumstances would I seek the Vice-Presidential nomination. Mailed at 5:10 a.m.

Sunday: As President I should have instituted the practice of mail delivery on Sunday.

Monday: Harper's came out today. No mention of my letter in it.

Went to news stand and purchased Time, Newsweek and U. S. Reporter.

All had stories on Kennedy and Rockefeller, nothing on me.

Tuesday: Received my subscribed copies of Time, Newsweek and

U. S. Reporter. Still no mention of my letter in them. Cancelled subscriptions to Harper's, Time, Newsweek, and U. S. Reporter.

Wednesday: Changing only the address and the word 'Democratic' a few times, I sent letter stating that I should be unable to accept the Presidential nomination to Republican National Headquarters.

Thursday: Still no word from Republicans or opposing party.
Friday: Sent letter to New York Times asking the question 'Is
the common man in the United States powerless today?' Used
quotations from Locke, Rousseau, and Gasset. Mailed air-mail
special delivery at 5:05 a.m.

Saturday: Had a funny dream last night; went to read Bible, and, when I opened it, all the pages were blank. When I awakened, my hands were covered with blood. Weird.

Sunday: Am getting too upset. Today I found solace in religion: what a party ticket, Moses and Christ.

Monday: Received two letters today. Charming thank you note from Democratic National headquarters suggesting that I try Republicans. Also thank you note from Republicans on engraved gilt-edged stationery suggesting that I try Democrates who seem to be in need of a few declensions to seek the nomination. Sent two letters, one to Republicans, one to Democrats. Can't seem to recall exactly what it was that I wrote. Letters from Democrats and Republicans received 11:45 a.m. Replies mailed 11:49 a.m. Tuesday: Sent telegram stating that I would be unable to seek the Presidential or Vice-Presidential nominations to Liberal Party headquarters at 4:18 a.m.

Wednesday: Received telegram from Liberal Party headquarters saying that they were sorry, but they had already reached their quota of declensions to seek the nominations. But suggested that I try the Democrats or Republicans, or if not, I was certainly welcome to try to decline in 1968.

Friday: Sent letter to Liberal Party headquarters asking the question, 'Is this America, Land of the Free?' Also told them that it was my privilege to decline to seek the nomination on any party ticket that I wished. Though I really had no intention of declining on their ticket, I told them, because actually I was a Communist. I enclosed genuine parchment copies of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence with certain pertinent passages underlined several times in red ink. Christ, I'll bet even the Miss Rheingold election is fixed.

Swing Happy

I like to swing around a crowded smoke-filled room to the glowing music to move and glide and feel the deep strings of a bass spring inside me and send me beating across the moving room and take a girl with dark hair flowing behind her swinging with me. then spin her past the tables at which couples huddle over dark green bottles and see her eyes filling with a sparkling light and her white teeth smiling happily at the sensation of moving barefoot so freely unaware of all that surrounds her but the muted trumpet and the vibrating bass tossing her head back like a wild pony

Somewhere in the Rain

It is raining outside now, very softly, and if I stand on the porch upstairs I can see the ocean and the beach.

*Excuse me, Madam, but how did you get into that bathing suit?

'Why do you ask? Oh, I suppose it is because you see that my left foot is still three inches above the ground. Well, do not worry for I have not yet finished getting into it. In just a few minutes I shall have my left foot down to the ground.

'That is very interesting.'

'Yes, indeed it is. But it's not my fault that the suit was made too small.'

'Or you too big.'

'Young man, do you mind if I use your shoulder to push against?'

'Will it take very much longer, for I must be off.'

'Yes. But it will take me only a few more minutes. I have only another inch and a half to go.'

'Then go ahead, but please hurry.'

"I may not look very desirable with all of me flapping over my suit, but you should see me when I'm all in."

'You must be quite out.'

When?

'When you're all in.'

'Oh, yes.'

'And I saw the negro boys with their large hands wrapped around the watermelons, their large black hands wrapped around their red watermelons.'

'Pardon me?'

'Really nothing. Just a little social significance. How much farther have you to go?'

'About an inch. Just hold still.'

Do you have this problem often?

*Every summer. There, now my left leg is resting on the ground.

'Can you walk?'

'I'm not sure. I've never tried. I just lean until I fall on the beach and just stay in that position and smile at the men who pass.'

*Do they ever stop?

'No. But they often slow down. They are quite amazed, but, you see, it's really nothing. What laps on the outside, I overlap on the inside. Do you see?'

Yes, I think so. Shall I help you fall to the beach?

'That would be very kind of you. I'll just start tilting, and then you catch me. That's very good. You seem quite experienced in these things.'

'Really? Well, I must admit that I don't get to do this very often, though I sometimes hold the bottom of ladders for my friends who are climbing them.'

'Well, how do you like what you see, honey?'

'It's a very nice suit. You bought it at Macy's.'

'Why yes, I did. You're quite an observant young man.'

*Oh, not at all. I merely read the label. Your suit is on inside out. Shall I help you get up?

The House With the Drawn Shades

The shades are always drawn with professional discretion.

Many different cars park in the driveway overgrown with grass

while their drivers enter the house stay for an hour or so and pay her as they happily leave to return again the for more.

Everybody knows of her and about her and shows no respect for her or her daughter

who is just like her mother
but in tenth grade.

Everybody says
the daughter
is just as disgusting as the mother

but the boys still
take her out
for just one night.
She gives them what they want
and parts with

one ironic kiss.

No boy's sincere
or cares
to compliment
her brand new

dress.

One day she came to school
late in the afternoon with
scrapes on her freshly bruised neck
acquired from her temperamental

ma

She said they didn't hurt but they know she cried in bed all morning behind shades drawn

as in death.



I Make No Footprints

In the north sea howl I call 'Iceberg' but no one hears. Leda with her soft fur wrap a small child's hand. The passing look, never twice. Hunchbacks draw second looks. When I was a child, I spoke. became a man, I put. . . . My youth wept of the passion. Why can't I weep now? I stop to watch myself fill up. Strange stopping with no coffin near.

Unresolved

Childhood has faded
but it has not gone
for it calls to me
and I follow its beckoning finger
with wistful backward glances

Adulthood is not here
yet it lures me forward
with hints of future fame
and implications of hidden knowledge
and promises of a great love

So I stand an unnamed being at the fulcrum of the lever afraid to step forward or backward for I know if I do the journey to the end I did not choose will be impossible to ascend

Cuba

The day was such
that the wind blew running through the grass
and the water lapped at the dock like an angry feline
the sky was black
with all the anger of nature
against man,
her bastard son.

Everything could have been so smooth
like a silver thread leading to the moon
unbroken by the limits of finitude
But instead
I cut it
deliberately
not with my nails in anger
but with a single thought

Uncaptured and Unclaimed

a cat is soft
and silky
and vain
its walk flowing
and graceful
and smooth
the eyes of a cat
are penetrating
or incinerating
the cat is free
and chooses only
to visit man

and so does woman



Riding a white horse,
Wearing a sword,
Singing the song.
Come you travelling fellows.
Come see your father
In the straw.

The Idiot

Red is Red,
Black is Black.
But, my good sir! you must remember the cause of the integral facets of the colloidal suspension.
The reason for the purple hue, the dew,
The vapor, the lighting and angle
And a million and one pertinent facts
And bits of extraneous information.

I must be wrong!

Savior

I am the rational animal, And yet, rationality cannot compensate. The lack is obvious, And yet, I know not what it is. The desire is there and centers itself; And yet I know not what on. Relieve yourself, give in to all feeling. Disassociate me and rational, Do this and I will believe Do this and perhaps I will know Whether the intellect travels where I go, Or if the emotion strong, Is the real me. What am I, a thing which feels, And in feeling knows the lacking, And in the feeling knows not whether This is a real lack. I'll find out soon, For give in I must, Though satisfaction, I am sure, Will not be the result. I save me?

Passing the Time

It's a very nice day outside.

I am in the house.

Friends are all over the world.

They are inside also.

The big city is nearby,

But everyone in it is going someplace.

I have nothing to do,

And I am much like everyone.

The whole world is going someplace,

But it leaves everyone alone.

Perhaps we are all inside the house

With nothing to do but watch,

As everyone goes.

Do we really know that they also

Have nothing to do.



Carefree

The sun rises, stretches in the laughing sky and sets
Scattering its purse of summer gold
While setting fire to the dewy meadows
It shares the day with the lark's love caress.

Synas like nie Indigo

There is the blue of morning: awakening bruised
In the solitary dawn.
There is the blue of noontime: blank monotone
Riding high behind a brassy sun.
There is the blue of dusk: crouching thief
Everywhere and always feasting upon the empty heart.
There is the blue of evening: frozen
Into dark dreams by hopeless wishing -Pastel searchers wandering
Starless, moondrugged and alone.



Changeless Night

Thou wert black-nippled night
On whom the famished dawn doth feed.

High-crested night
Whose arched neck bears proud the emblem of eternity.

Frozen-lipped night
Whose song is a whirring whisper of sacred truth.

And night, now you are quiet, busy streets
On which a wayfarer of universal wondering still stops

To doubt but then believe because

You must remain our goddess of relief, despair and sleep.



A Song by Li Yu (Early Sung Poet, 936-972

When will the flowers of spring and the moon of autumn clase to be?

Oh! How much of the past do I still remember!

Last night the east wind again visited my chamber;

Under the bright moon, I cannot bear to look back at my former kingdom:

Railings of exquisitely carved wood and lattices of finely cut jade Should still be there,

But they are no longer mine.

You, sir, how much grief do you have?'

'My grief is as a torrent rushing eastward in the spring.'





The Snake-Swift Building of the Years

the snake-swift building of the years
to crystal clarity
outgrows the tears of youth
to claim the sky of love
on childhood's wings.
time's pinions ride the clouds
locked in silence
bright beneath the sun
and more still than the stillness
of the quiet corridors of
memory.

ii

through the hall,
cascading over empty chairs
I people with my eyes into an
audience of love,
and pours from dusty corners
to return to that lone shadow
and her song.
the yellowed light drops gently
to her shining eyes
caresses fleetingly her hair
and having seen her fades again
to dark.
the song is over
and my people smile -- and vanish.

ii:

with memories of our lost loves, the pale magnolias bloom with breasts of those who slumber in their winding-sheets of snow. all we have lost returns to us, but still we mourn.

we stand transfixed beneath the circles of the stars and in their ever-shifting patterns we rejoice. My uncle, out to impress me, Took me to the little town's chief bar And introduced me to a friend, An old Jewish comic Who had just been playing burlesque In Miami. They talked for a while together: My uncle about his depressions and diabetes, The comic about audiences and crooks. I think the old fellow knew Why I was there, For he kept his eye on me, And when he got up to do his routine, he said: "Before I start tonight folks, I ant to mention a friend who has Honored Us this evening with his presence. . ." Politely, the audience clapped at my uncle's name. My uncle reddened and smiled all aver his face. Driving home, he asked me: "Well, what do you think of your old uncle now?", And whether I liked his friend. I told him the truth, of course: I had been impressed that evening with them both.

On a Happy Occasion

By God, I hated you standing there pregnant, flaunting your belly, caressing his arm; your glance, by its absence, said plainly you'd seen me, as did your sweet smile, and excessive charm. . .

(but at least you still cared enough not to forgive me for my love remaining when your love was gone.)

Orsino Observed

He holds his scret to him,
Of beast and raging river:
Tumbling down
Beneath the crown
Falls lordliness, the giver
Of all his virtues to him.

He holds himself apart,
To display secret sadness:
Minor key
Melody
Hints to some his madness,
But hides the thundering, stricken heart.

Not to Notice is God's Great Mercy

The young nurse
With the golden hair
And the remarkable breasts
Moves quietly across the private room:
To fetch a diaper for the old woman
Who grins senselessly
Upon the bed.

The old woman wats herself, now,

She even fails to recognize them,

The children

The grandchildren

The great-granchild

Who gaze at her from pictures on the wall.

The great, full years, invisible to most,

Now even hide from her.

See those shrunken breasts,

Young woman,

See that wrinkled crease

Which once received sharp pleasure

And delivered splendid sons.

But the young nurse
With the golden hair
Hardly seems to notice.
Reaching for the diaper,
Her mind is busy elsewhere,
Planning dinner
For her husband and their son.

Nor need she notice now. . .
Nor should she see. . .



No Final Request

Into the North,
 the vital land,
neat=set in the hills and built with teeming cities,
he came, a long time past,

From the soft, caressing
land of his fathers -his birth-land, flat with its cotton and tobacco and beans
and peanuts and red clay,

Where the thick pine woods

are dense and sweet

and hot in the haze of dust from the roads and feet

of the pickers, and the river lazes east.

North he came,
and strode through
that alien, far-from-his-life land, and like so man of his
kind

Life was sweat and pain.

But he said

it was good, and he had learned of men and ways -- wise in all this,

and in his quietness.

dreamed and did, and all his

And like so many
of his kind, there was
'down home' always, beloved and imaged like old satin
glowing from age and love.

In his memory.

But he got old, and then an artery broke and the warm love of the sun tempered, and

made taut by an

Alien climate poured out, and
with it him -- as if
striving, he and the warm love, to find their way back
to the
flat and the clay both loved.

to a least of the interior

Jakys Livie.

In the cemetery,
in the family plot,
there are three azaleas, and a honey-and-bee-heavy
wisteria
climbing on a cream-dotted magnolia.

Quiet, haze, heat,

heavy scent, rest;

and so many of his kind there, in the coolness to know only

"I am home."

He'll dream about that

when he looks out

from his mountain-cold grave North -- oh, he had a fine

military

funeral, just as he would have liked.

'He would have liked.'

An alien in an alien place
foreign to all he ever knew or loved;
forever no more 'down home.'

River Song

Bright, splashed-greens whirled-blues always living, clear and clean-tumbling sparkling sun-reflecting unhindered onflow. In spring tearing-up, clearing, sweeping before it; in winter, stillness and lace-lovely ice-loving frosted young water roaring.

Down, soft slow-lengthened

passage of still-deep

noon heat darkening wavering

tree-weeping

moss-bedded fern quilted,

probably holy -
swim holey cow-lapping boyhooded river,

backfloating, or raft drifting

love-counched, soaking up sun.

Bend making, and slow-turning chocolate, crow flown and cat swum, foam edged haze heavy tide pushed backwater, log-moving swallowing storm spawning fertile replenisher; but most of all mud loaded, new-earth former, beloved untimed and untiming.

Summer Days

That summer was lifted limb by limb
Up into the tree outside my window,
Up into the leaves, And from each night,
Over dandelion distances
Completed in a breath by bees,
Each day was lifted into morning.



My mother gave her grocery list, And the birds threw parties in the air, Yelling their names across in notes To new and old acquaintances. And then at noon a string of ants, Strung into families of feet, Went somewhere up or down the tree, One step and brother at a time. The wind in the leaves above my window Set shadows moving over the grass, Over the green leaves on my cup. To Benny, our gardener, who drank, And drove a beautiful red bike With blue streamers on the handlebars, Shadows were a bother, like the lawn; He turned the sprinklers on both of them, The water ringing in the pipes Under our house, and in the air, Until my mother told him, Wait, You come back and water when they're gone. . .

They struck the passing cars, struck fire Instantly, and feel in the evening.

I hid my face and cried, afraid,

Until the lion of our company

Slapped me, and kissed me bravely,

Lifting me up from the deep grass.



On Sundays, Listening to the Little

On Sundays, listening to the little three-foot singing sensation of the National Baptist Convention:

the all-weathered owner of unnumbered street-corners, cravats and fiends and, here and there, himself,
Harry walks out of the Y (questioning fair daylight singing) down
steps almost in time, his fingers parted from one equally through ten, to break today hopefully yesterday's fall, and a squat Ever-Umbrella Lady ahoy, conducting your car's path away, goes up in feathers as you go by,
Mister Aftermath, who comes and goes by waving everywhere:

'Come aboard
suddenly, for always there's song abroad
on certain Sundays, and for sure
Pigeons are we who don't dirt ever,
we will scream forever at red lights,
and refreshed by Caution, be thrown
to wings and blessed by green lights
on Sundays, such
three-foot singing sensations
of sweet marjoram and sunrise.'

Wind shakes
The spider's thread,
The sunlight slips and breaks.
Then sunlight out of broken sunlight breaks,
Windsped.

Two Parts Invented

7

My mind moves on to beauty, and beauty taken, moves on and on to ever, ever - moving and overtaken -- from stone to stone stepping in a stream, from ever to ever in a silence singing, on and on -- it moves away.

4

I wonder, by listening,
what am I singing myself,
as you ask me, then at once
explain, seeing my confusion,
how my hand seems moving in time -to you, it seems so. I say,
Now you are seeing things, now -and we sing on together.

We the Honoured of a Green Land

'and, behold, there was a swarm of bees and honey in the carcass of the lion.' Judges, Chap. 14,8

We the honoured of a green land attend this Birth.

We who were fed with the cracked bones of birds

Have this report from a people of the desert,

A flowing of spears in the angles of a river.

And the lion murdered this evening with joy

Swells like a river in rain of great sweetness,

The spears in our hands are trembling yet with bees.

And the women paint their thighs a thousand times,

Maddening breathless men with the smell of eagles.

Unclosed sores are comforted with seamless cloth,

A land of green stones is washed with the spit of

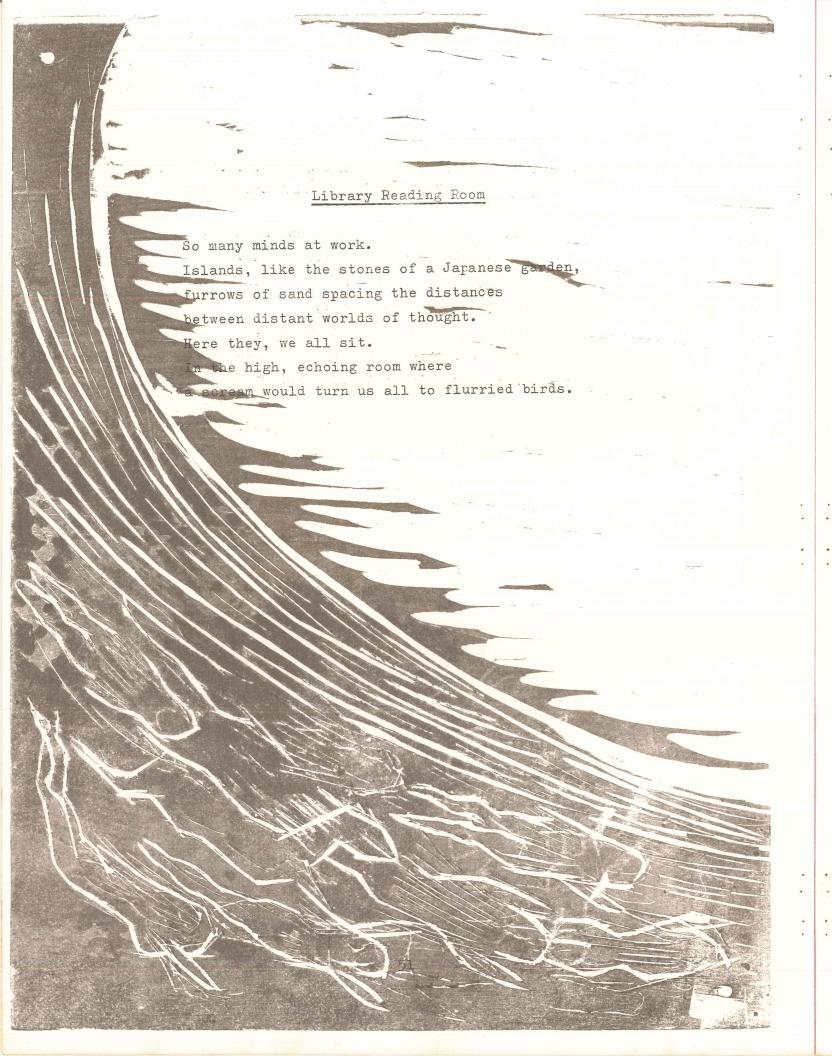
children.

We the living and the dead attend this Birth.

*At sea there is nothing to be seen close by. . . *
Sarah Orne Jewett, The Country of the Pointed Firs

There was nothing to be seen close by, the distances were pointless blue, until the captain took to drinking imagination, like a fool; and as he sailed beyond himself, described the islands and the fish, until his ship encircled him.

And yet the captain sailed beyond, if not beyond where he had been, nor travelling in terms of wind, yet beyond knowing where he was; he could not say how this was so, except to say he was at sea, with nothing to be seen close by.





Road Chant: 1956

thunder, thunder, thunder,
run with tar, melts you under,
thumbs to the moon, hearts to the sky,
soul always saying, why, why, why,
and answer the soul with your quiet foot cry,
say that without it your eyes would soon die

hobogregorians chanting their chant, singing their song, screaming along, run, run, run, run, this is for fighting this is for fun

search till you find that holy town where holier gods come tumbling down and grant you forever the golden crown. Fields, fields, many hundreds of green fields, rounded fields, caught in the storm, and one farmer riding a mule to home.

Kansas and Arkansas, blackbirds and corn, everything moves one way, the other way, the stalks in a body, side to side like mourners.

Noon and rain, the day like night,
rattling shutters and something forgot in the barn,
wind skips a basket, bouncing free down the slope, towards the
shed.

The Poem Called Dusk

The wagon rumbling on, creaking up the slope.

No baby cries within the new-wood box, cushioned with used diapers, squashed against the aged pine-board, iron-hinged wagon sidings.

The small grave over Charbonneau Creek, swept in grass like the wispy, white hair of Grant Iron Lightning when he stands so still, watching the spring dances.

And his eyes crease like the puckered pouch, beaded, hanging at his belt.

The rings within his trunk have dried tight as rawhide round the rock. . .

(ornamented with tassels of trader's yarn, bought for a squaw, five minutes against a deer-greased thigh, along the slippery, shaded bank of the Platte. Buffalo glue also, from the hoof, keeps the yarn in place. And porcupine guard hair dyed vermillion and the rawhide-covered stick handle, once parchment yellow, now oiled black with sweat.

The sweat of much fear, solitary, and overcome by clenching the sweat club tight in the fist, while galloping at breakneck speed toward the camp of Crows. The dawn holds her breath. They plunge in silent attack.

The man running naked from his teepee. The beginning of screams. Sun just flooding up. The heart, The beating of hooves. Coming upon him -- bewilderment in a glance -- beside him -- lean over the whipping mane --, and the contorted spine of a man shrinking from a blow with upraised arms -- too late -- and past the falling victim who behind crumples.

The camp now alive with: The screams and noises.

Dust of horses. Women and dying men. The stones on the clubs soak red moist into their cold pits, blood melting into the palmed granite.

Then the songs and the feasts and the dancing and sleep.)

Watching the shadows of those years, he is dead as his grandaughter, the baby, Betty Shoots-Alone, her chest wheezing that afternoon, sucking and rasping, and racked.

Her death song a muted chortle.

The western skies split apart,
and rain flushes gullies in the thin grained dirt.
Lightning sears, a white sheen,
like fear in the hearts of children.
Against the hill, the bearers
outlined like charred trees,
or statues aged in coal.

The storm is blunted by their silence.

'What's that bunch of injuns doin' in this mess,' says a surveyor, peering through the staccato-tapping rain on his split-shingled roof.

Lagrimas

The Home all shut
to night. And windows
like lanterns and the wind
in the garden.
Slowly Joaquin paces,
beneath the dim portraits.
Outside is coming, is rumbling,
the wind from the shore,
the wind in the garden.
All night these slight sounds
break into the house
from the garden,
like guitars.

Early Fall at Bras D'Or, Nova Scotia

Dawn; and the swimmer on top the tall piling,

Eye dancing with lake spread sun,

Body clothed in a swooning chill.

The deep citadel, his consciousness, drawn far within.

It lies hot in his breast

As a smouldering castle

In a moat of ice.

There is only the blindness;

The wind tearing, deep gulping, ear racking

Blindness, the breath, inhale, and shivering wrench.

You, morning lake; you, diamond water.

Tambourine

Into the waves at Les Saintes Maries
the gypsies and their children
carry the statues.
Beneath the soaring of a tern,
the gold and leaf encrusted figurines
disappear before the foam.
A child stoops --

throng past -- and,
picking up the empty shell of
a hermit crab, sees the beautiful sky,
the Spanish cliffs,
the sleeping hulls of beached boats,
the painted saints,
and the long white splash of each wave.

Murray Avenue

Mother, you were walking home.

One late afternoon I saw you from my window.

And half down the block that reeling fall day,

A dust devil, whirlwind, leaf-wheel,

caught you with the packages in your arms.

And on you, swirling up in leaves,

a spiraling ramp spun round.

You cringed, slit your eyes,

and half enjoyed the honor, center;

this sudden excitement.

The swallowing caramel sun
had gulped all the street, the parked cars,
and the dying grass. There, too, the
wind had gone mad, carrying
(frightened stallions across the sky)
clouds moving in throned splendor
toward the east,
clouds shifting colors by the minute,
luminous, holding their hues like carved thunder.

Mother, you looked so fresh.

Your cheeks were blushing with wind.

In the warmth of the house,

now with us,

your happy eyes.

You were smiling,

and we all put the packages away.

Prayer

Passage me to these,
grass-stoned, tree-leaved.

Lord, passage me to these,
among waves of fall fields.

Now, yes, hold me in them,
tight, unwavering, Lord,
and them with Thee with me.



Anabasis:

Night streets in the Old City,
Voices in the gardens softened by lilacs
And the heavy quiet:
Soon I will say I've forgotten her name
Or the way it was for us and Athens,
Held secure those days
Between the mountains and the sea.

It was after all only spring and the islands --Barren hills, some fig trees and lemons, Wild poppies bleeding in the rock shadows --Terraces of wind and barley Mounting up from cobalt sea. She moved at my side dark, Hair braided color of the nights, Moved silent and knew the path. We carried almonds and oranges from Piraeus And wine from Rhodes. There were not many gulls. For a while we rested on a high place --Watching a boat pass lost in distance --Then spoke softly in her language Descending to the sea. In the water she laughed at Yiannis' warning, Gave me lemons and garlands of the waves. Together we took on form and context From the singing rocks above. That night passing the place where we had bathed, From the boat watching the cove recede, Dark in dark she turned from me

(continued)

For something had passed between us And now was gone.

Spring is over here.

Wisteria replaced by roses.

The flower is ripening fruit.

Brilliant peacocks molting in the park

Send victorious children laughing with plumes

Through the chalk streets. Summer heat begins.

Now the islands are behind me
In the south -- Mykonos, Aigina, Seriphos;
Now the Canal and Corinth Gulf again
To last days at Ithaca and Corfu,
Bound for Brindisi and the West.
Roll the names on the tongue once more . . .

The language is forgotten.

The season has passed.

Mine

These things I consider mine. Altered chords of Chopin, early Concerto and late Ballade, Berceuse and Barcarolle. Courbet's self-portraits and the spot Of cadmium orange in almost any Corot. That corner of a park Where paths cut angles beyond the bench Of desolation, and the lamp Casts artificial light on unnamed trees, All amateur theatrical. A small hotel in Amsterdam, a town In western Denmark, askew amalgam Of marzipan and fears of the North Sea. A billiard room in Sweden Where I entered feeling thin and sweetly Foreign. I let a Swedish sailor Photograph my fierce portrait of someone else. Perhaps the things that I consider Mine are least mine.

Percussion

This is the recipe
For stude and elegy
Wit and melody
Wood against metal
Hammers the harmony
Felt is the feeling

Hush and sonority
Are kinds of percussion
The movement of muscle
Is merely mechanical
All well-know legatos
Entirely illusive

Oh factual physicist
Author of overtones
Harken to history
Rush to redecible
Etude and elegy
Sweet sostenuto
The sounds of my century

Steinway and Bechstein Are boxes of mystery

Learning

I made my first right turn

On a corner of upper Broadway. I was a learner

And asked my teacher

Who was ready to reach

For the duplicate brake

Whether the pedestrians

Were volunteers.

Fearless,

Those pedestrians,

Packaged, beparcelled, perambulated,

Didn't, I dare say, know from which eighty

To which eighty they ambled.

And the teacher, his ears

Attuned to wheels within wheels,

Ignored my joke about the volunteers.

Overheard

Do you, Barry, remember that escapade in Harrisburg?

Do you (O News from Nowhere, the smiles) Barry

Remember (puzzles and peartrees) that amazing escapade

In Harrisburg?

Remember the escapade here in the City
Far from the bus station and the Susquehanna
Coastal and incandescent
Alert in the chorus of college-boys
Who catch Dinah or Martha on that underrehearsed rebound
Between the bars

Where culture is bound in new rows

Linked and in a line

Like the uncut Strindberg on half the shelves of Stockholm.

Go ahead, Harry,
Mis-spell the Mickey Mouse song
But whisper the words, whippoorwill:
Some children should be epicene and not overheard.

O Barry, or Harry, there's a puerile nastiness of tongue
The language of lady philosophers
And of the uncertain momentum of Show Business.
Keep talking, canary,
In Metropol itself
There's Nowhere like Harrisburg.



Sixteen Eighteen

'Why do these gentlemen wish to throw me out

Of the window?' asked an obscure Bohemian secretary

Before he was unexpectedly exfenestrated and miraculously saved

By a pile of castleyard rubbish or an angel of God.

Thus to be flung into History, and by one's Fall

Introduce three decades of winter, delusion and war?

Or merely as one for good measure, to show

That the ignorant often are accidentally in castles?



Pygmalion: A Sapphic

Here you stand, a promise and a shadow,
Consecrated formerly, born once,
Just begun in heat of conception,
Now consummated.

Limbs entwined began, in a moment,
Place and Time. The chisel and mallet
Laid aside, the ivory, breathless,
Lacked gracious movement.

Place and Time: how dark, lacking motion,
Lacking form; an echo entwined in
Mists, until the light of desire,
Chaos informing,

Shapes anew the forms of the artists -Loving father, most gracious mother.

Join your love, and be consummated,

Daughter and sister.

Concerning Privacy

Standing nakedly alone,
Your beauty flies from you.

Standing nakedly alone,
And seeing nakedness
Peering flatly at you from your mirror,
Your image and your body mingle incestuously,
And thus beget the idiot monsters
Of that too-reflective loveliness.

Standing nakedly with me,
Your beauty flies from you to me.

Standing nakedly with me,

And seeing me conceive and comfort you,

I recount you to yourself;

And thus your nakedness, through me,

Begets our union's singularity -
Your true nakedness.



A May Morning

Five A. M.

Randall Court

Annapolis, Maryland

Dark; but darkness somehow luminous As whispers of fog enfold the town.

Damp; but dampness warm as a caress
Wavers -- almost sea-spray, almost rain.

Night; but night has never been like this, So palpably flesh, a courtesan

Breathing on the face a phantom kiss, Soft, as softly come the sounds of dawn.

On the Edge

The purple fabric of Richard Strauss
Swathes the room with Don Juan.
We've finished the cigars and wine,
So filtered cigarettes and beer
Abet our musings as we stare
Through the smoke at our game of chess.

We sit on the edge of something strange
And shift the men with a beery lunge.
The shortening cigarettes glow orange.
The smoke swirls, and there's a swell
And ebb in the music. Ashes fall,
But somehow nothing seems to change.

Here is the lamp that lights the game
And defines our own positions. Far
Beyond this cozy nimbus, space
Recedes into the dark and time
Drops into an infinite square
Of smoke and music, chess and beer.

Deep within the woods, half-sleeping in a glade I heard a sudden noise and saw her being led by two men through the trees. She hadn't any clothes; her hair was wildly down and swung below her waist. Their skin was golden-brown, their hair was curly, dark, and from where I sat, it looked as if they wore baggy pants of fur. The laughter of the three was not forgettable. Completely frightening, it was not a sound that I had ever heard. Theirs was urgent, low, hers hysterical, somehow wanton, eager, somehow filled with terror. They held her by the arms and hurried her along, and all the forest sounds crescendoes as they passed. I struggled to my feet and called out after them, but they were quickly gone. The woods again were still

and I was left alone.
Running to the place
where they had disappeared,
I only saw the tracks
left by something hooved.
There was nothing there,
no traces of the three.
I searched the woods awhile
and never found a thing,
but still I seem to hear
their laughter echoing.
It shakes the very ground
and thunders in my ear;
the madness of that sound
is more than I can bear.

Behold the dolphin standing on its tail

Accepting a piece of herring and the applause

Of the sun-suited crowd for whom it has

Jumped hurdles, juggled ten-pins, tossed a ball.

He and his brothers once killed sharks for sport

In the green Pacific far from any port.

Behold the dazzling white peacock. It struts
With boundless, unfathomable pride,
Spreads and rattles the great white fan,
And stalks its mate behind the bars,
Amid the tinfoil, candy wrappers, old cigars.
Can it live in there? It can, it can.

Behold the sarcophagus. It looms immense
In the dusty room, amid the bones,
Amphoras, weapons, and rubble of ancient stones.
Far from Egypt, the Sphinx, the sand, the Nile,
The weight of the pyramids; the ageless smile
Smiles on regardless of time and circumstance.

A museum piece: the ancient awe of death;
And now we threaten life itself -- the earth.
Behold the bomb. Must everything be sacrificed
To mankind's ugly needs? He already uses
Nature's most elegant constructions as he chooses.
But it is clear that this does not suffice.
And mankind -- foolish, clever, brave and vain -Will treat himself no better in the end.

ALBANY, GA.; BIRMINGHAM, ALA.; GREENWOOD, MISS.; ETC. . . 1963

I will stop saying 'Yes sir' tomorrow,

And when I stop they all will understand.

I know that there is more hate in the land

Than my new bravery will undergo

Without new walls of fear, but I will show

Myself before their pallor and withstand

The leaping heat from the flames that I have fanned,

And crush these walls of fear by shouting: No!

I will walk where I damn well please, and sing

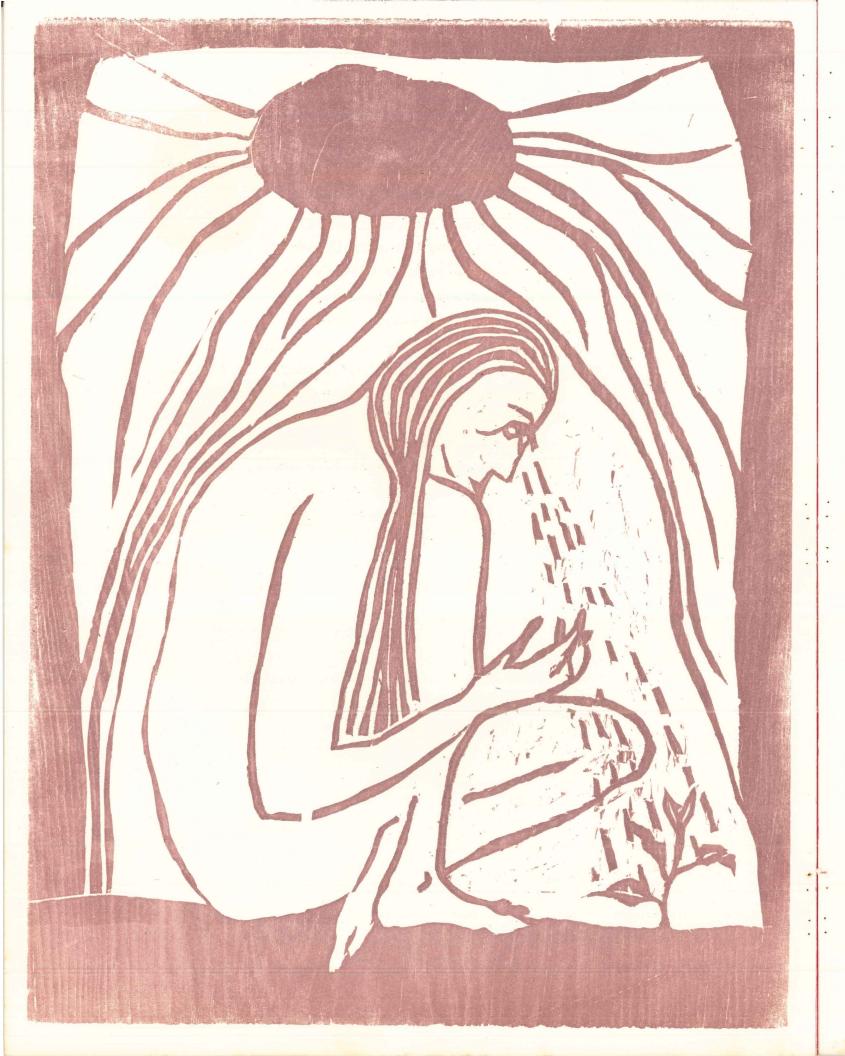
My song even to white men in the street

Who curse as I pass. I don't fear abuse;

Scream, call the cops, you can do anything

But change my mind -- my song is very sweet:

No compromise, no deal, NO, I refuse.



To the Night

Darkness, Night, night Soft wings of shadows Beat, beat; Upon the earth, the shadows fall Across the greying fields of grain, of wheat, And barley and oats; Across the cities and the towns and the villages, Lights are going out, Men are going to sleep. Darkness Night, night Soft wings of darkness Beat, beat. As on a greying cloud, the last rays of sunlight Shine down on human endeavor; People are coming home; nightwatchmen are going to work along with scrub women, and janitors who like ancient farmers across the dirty floors throw sawdust like seed and reap the harvest of the dirt and grime and soot of the

estable to the second state of the

city by the day which is cleansed by the night; commuters travel on bus, on train, on car towards home and wife and

children and supper and evening papers and sleep,

And sleep and love and rest until,

Until the morning and the day.

Communion at the Mass of Midnight

O Lord, I am full of unsaid things, I love the beauty of thy house, But as for me, I walk in innocence. Thy will be done. Chanting I mount thy altar: Glory to God Glory to God Glory to God. I will go to the altar of God, To God, the gladness of my youth Singing yea, I love Thee; O Lord not my will but Thine, With mouth open Singing My Lord and my God My Lord and my God My Lord and my God. And the wine is mixed with water, And God becomes a Child. Existence contains a Child which contains existence Which contains a Child which contains. . . The ringing of the bell; Chanting at the altar of my youth: Sed tantum dic verbo Sed tantum dic verbo Sed tantum dic verbo. I must go and cover my face Lest I drown in unsaid things.

Widow's Lament

I remember racing clouds I looked up and saw the sun. With fresh-thrown rice in my hair, In my soul, I had no care. But now he's dead, O God, he's dead, And now, what shall I do? We knew each other that first night We loved and were one without the light, I looked up and saw darkness But was not alone. But now he's dead, O God, he's dead, And now, what shall I do? There was a lump beneath my chest, A ball beneath my navel. I felt it there with probing hand And in the night lay still; And silent and mysterious A knowing smile crossed my lips; I hoped it would be a son. But now he's dead, O God, he's dead, And now what shall I do? It was mid-December, the second year, The crying baby filled my ear. But then, O God, my man was there; My man was waiting at the foot of the stair. But now he's dead, O God, he's dead, And now, what shall I do? The baby grew strong and passed a year,

And we were married four. But on this day he forgot to say, 'Woman we've been married four And four to this same day. I cried And cried some more, And locked him out the bedroom door. But now he's dead, O God, he's dead, And now, what shall I do? But then next day, he came walking in, A tinkling in his hand A twinkling in his eye And then I cried and cried some more, And hung the music box above our door. But now he's dead, O God, he's dead, And now, what shall I do? And sometimes yet, when I'm upset, I reach and turn the key And listen And listen Until it sets me free. But now he's dead, O God, he's dead, And now, what shall I do? He wasn't as good as I would have had, And he wasn't as bad as I would have taken, But he was good to the children And kind to me; And being that, I let him be. But now he's dead, O God, he's dead,

And now, what shall I do? It was ten and two years, And we had three, and I expecting a fourth, When he came home so soon and early; I smelt the liquor on his breath; "I've lost my job, woman" he said to me, 'And you with a fourth and having three'; O God, why won't you let me be? But now he's dead, O God, he's dead, And now, what shall I do? But things worked out, and they stayed four: Three boys and a girl. And how that man, he loved that girl The girl and the three. And with these four the Lord, he let them be. But now he's dead, O God, he's dead, And now what shall I do? I told him once, I told him again, And then I told him once more, 'Don't work so hard, you're not that young; Pay heed the cough that racks your lung. He laughed at me. A woman. But now he's dead, O God, he's dead, And now, what shall I do? The nights they grow this season cold And I feel for where he should be. But warmth there is not,

And love there is not,
And neither is there he.
But the bed grows cold
As I grow old,
With my memory.
But now he's dead, O God, he's dead,
And now, what shall I do?

Burial of a King

'And Uzziah slept with his fathers, and they buried him with his fathers in the field of the burial which belonged to the kings; for they said, He is a leper: and Jotham his son reigned in his stead.'

Chronicles 26:23

Uzziah's dead.

Upon the hill they buried him

Amid the field of millet.

The valley of the kings,

For thus the king should lie,

Buried with his ancestors.

Jotham twenty-five

In the time of Isaiah,

Lions of Judea,

Jotham twenty-five,

Only twenty-five

Cried,

For a leper died.

And the wind blew cold and steady as they left.

Song of the Bridegroom

How shall I build the house of our love
How shall I lay our bower?
With flowers thrown fresh and marybud dew,
There I will pluck the flower.
With drifts of sunlight and honeysuckled dew,
There we shall spend the hour.
How shall I say of our love my love
How shall I sing of our youth?
With lilacs and lilies and lavender rue
With melodied singing of small birds above,
There I will sing of my love unto you
There we will sing of our love.

ybresa in a comment action.

Image in Color

(but green as green)

and the sky is pink-tinged

like carnival candy

and bitter with remembrance,

for the water's tossing back from

self to self,

(forced acceptance)

and the lost clouds are pulled driftlessly

by,

my tongue is purple when I finish the

grapes

that grew these summers,

(and I am tempered

with the endless hurt)

but don't call it love.

On Reading James Joyce

a moo cow came out of thin blue air

(gauzey, effervescent

as red apple glass stained against the tongue)

but where did he come from?

moo cows just don't suddenly come from the historical present

bumbling their way

into inevitable deception

artists don't have friends
they're free, and happy?
ask me another:

the meaning of time the color of tears the edge of the sky

(my daddy is an artist
 and I can't come out to play
 my daddy is an artist
 so you'll have to go away)

After Reading Descartes

The world is fathoms and fathoms dark

and lonesomely empty

as a mind on a fire-bleached

mountain-top,

searching for rationality

stand still and straight and (lo! a second coming)
create

order from chaos

The world is fathoms and fathoms deep

and incandescent as red wine bottles

burning dully in

fitful dreams that do not end with the midnight

who goes in the night?

hark: be still

and listen: order is a beautiful quiet

The world is fathoms and fathoms dense

and tangled as braids

that are slept on,

we have no choice -
and there are not enough mountains left

Beyond the Trellis

My sister is dying and nobody cares
nobody cares at all
My sister is dying, but nobody's crying
(though she is very small)

My sister is dying, but nobody knows it's hidden with a terrible lie Nobody knows it, so nobody shows it and no one will even try

My sister is dying, I know this well
And it is all too true:
nobody knows it, so nobody shows it
and there's nothing I can do

My sister is dying and nobody cares
nobody cares at all
My sister is dying, but nobody's crying
(though she is very small)

Dialogue

he said

all colors of the wheel to catch
the sun this morning
(a formidable magician)

---somehow like a medallion my grandmother had

(long before she died)

making her cheeks
smooth and rose-color soft

---The very young and very old he said

full of worn phrases of love

and despair

kissing me slowly

---my grandmother died and her medallion

(won for an unknown honor, bought for fifty cents, ages ago)

was buried with her

---The sun he said does not touch the dull gray of graves, not in winter nor spring nor summer nor fall just pigeon's necks he said kissing me

Symposium

the mind makes the judgments: lambs, going off to their bloodless slaughter, follow

> the plastic piper whistles and the tears of joy or tears of sorrow dried by wind dreams

(there is no language of the mind, you know)

the mind takes possession:

pretension, late at night

and early day watching moons crawl pearly to consequence

and lone

(there is a sadness of the mind, you know)

the mind can destroy what

the mind possesses:

and you are there before me, in dusty armour

and tarnished silver,

away from the war: undestroyed

(you must not be mine)



Poseidon

I

We live on the strand of a wild dream

The fish we eat are haunted with the dead god

The old tyrants are rubbed into the coins

And moonbeams work magic into our soil.

We live in the filthy ear of Poseidon
His sea washes music and seaweed in my soul.

Time has poured the sticky Stories in our brains

Death runs with an oily pulse in our blood

And this sadness is our place and plague

The foresight of a poor man is limited and unhappy.

II

Never wander lonely into Poseidon's marble shadow

Make this distance a ditch and abyss

Build these rocks into a thorny garden, a heartless fire

Never drive into your deepest wall a silence.

Silence is a thin noise
A gold cover is the sound of moving silence
We will be a naked unadornment

It is a strange story that makes it so
But home is best an empty place
Quiet nothing the only god
A raindrop and a glance will make us warm

Never mention any death the stars suffer Forget the green that stays buried in the sea These sun myths must cease.

III

The orb a shiny rock
Say that tides wander, a little lost
Say that waves follow a twisted circle: nothing more.
But never tell that moon and water dance together:
Only God knows his joy
Forget the evil of white flesh in another room
There is no watered world gone, drunk by fish
No Atlantis in any realm
All things exist and all things are true
But we are not poets
We cannot believe all things
Leave them in their pity
Please, cover them, for they are naked and crying
Your torn mind, in their dark land, will lose itself.

IV

Connect only what keeps your life
Sing nonsense to make children dream easier
I warn you most, you are my One
Our time has its mouth
And you are too sad on its edge already.

V

Will you hear me?

Must I scare and shout now?

Must I lose you for awhile in the explicit?

If you tell a friend that your husband is a child,

If you whistle distractedly, if you demand an endless excitement. . .

Someday what an ugly man means will infect you

And his Word hang limp somewhere

Then, you will visit the cracked temple that serves Poseidon.

VT

In that ruined hall the daylight your eyes carry will go out
Your mind will steam and darken
And your love drain away into a shadow

At last, the rich gloom his gauntness casts will become a person
He will give you many pictures
He will teach you his eyes and his tongue
His lips and his swollen neck
They are all beautiful truths

You stand a stone placed there:
All the broken hills, every departure,
Every song that rips its hair will stand with you.

Ask him all questions, present him each unhealed wound Say quietly that colors bother and pain And like a clean rose that dies a stink His godly fury will pound your silence into a sea.

Dark moon, mother love -Without breadth or number.

I remember
Similar evenings, alive
When she was, would give
Herself to her lover,
The Sun, my father.
Mother love alive:
Captured in mirrors live,
Open to the eyes
Of the seas
Whose surfaces break into plates that shine.



1

I Am A War Poet

The cold candles are melted and bent,
With huge thumbs of wax pressing down on the velvet.
Some went out this morning and will be replaced
By dowagers of this town who will nurse them
(Candles are dear now) through their first urges to die.

The candles are a sort of memorial to those who died From this town -- I do not presume to call it mine.

One can almost name the candles -- some are hunched
Under a shield of their own wax created by the draft.
In some the wick is long and the flame steady.
At times I cannot stifle the laugh
That rushes through my teeth as these candles parody
Their namesakes, and comment tellingly on those who rush to replace
A certain candle, keeping one lit from the other in a sterile
generation.

The rest of the church is simple -- a few old men

With half an eye on the icon in front, above the shuddering lights,

And half an eye on their loose hands which they gather in their laps.

That figure on the cross has annoyed me. I wonder,

Would the men whose skin hangs in loose folds robe-like

Respect that icon if the face were twisted as it would be in the

present war?

Would they admire a gilded figure with a tube up his ass Being given an enema of acid, stripping the pride of pain? It is easier to worship the pride than just the pain. Outside, here in the soft spring rain, the water splats
Off the end of the slates of the church
Onto a brown cold cement which is like disease-roughened skin.
The cement is slowly chipping away now.

And as I walk down the street, I am thinking, remembering. . . Remembering how the rain then tittered on the tin plates
And the dust faded into itself. The walking yard emptied.
The food bolted, the cigarettes crushed quickly.
It was a sham, that picnic, that attempt at grass.
And I and the others, I who could not fight, even I was taken,
Went back to the tedium of betting pools on liberation -D-day or some day when the pools would be over.
I even have scars which, when drunk, I would show.
I didn't fight; I only went to see them die.
I remember one, his huge golden head in my lap, smiling slowly,
Sleepily. His armor clashed as he rolled, his shield falling
away.

A few screams from the horses could be heard.

And then I was taken away, pulled roughly up, my lap

From under his head, my outrage violent.

Until I was smacked with the flat of a broadsword

And laughed at. (They even winked at each other.)

That was some years ago. I suppose I had missed my chance.

It sticks in my craw to weep syllables.

But come now, O Muse, tell me. . .

The Skin Diver

Perhaps he sat on sand
One night, and
Watched this colored whore
Roll her dark breasts and wear
Lace ribbons bubbling over stones
That combed her hair.
He saw her where
She played with side men
Who would always be side men,
And let them ride
Under the power of her big blues voice
With the brassy jazz of one-night
Stands in it, sawdust and crowd noise.

Or maybe it was
A tinny, up-tempo chorus
Where she rolled her eyes
And laughed outrageous
Loud. Maybe he stood
On a beach one night,
A beach on a point of land,
And saw her dark legs spread
Around him. His palms began to sweat
When he saw this brazen
Black whore stretch
Over a bar of sand
And hum -- no blush -As if she didn't see him. But he could
See she sung for him,

The Company of the state of

And wanted him to come

To see if he was man enough for her.

It took lead around his waist And a clumsy spear gun And artificial lungs To match her song Once she was up and really wailing. She rolled around his boat, moaning Soft, teasing his haste As he began to make the dive, The dive to seek her love, To find and take her love. There live There giant clams unknown To him; he was new To giant clams. He was down to bottom slopes Where water hissed in his ears And strangled light to cold green bars. The kelp in tempo swayed --Even he was pushed and returned, Back and forth above the giant clam.

He was
Too close,
Maybe even bumped it; he was
Too excited and far too deep.
The clam itself is sort of soft

But those huge stone
Lips, wrinkled, almost puckered, swung
Shut and crushed his spear gun.
He looked around then
And saw she had flung away
Her street-corner smile and played
every note for keeps.

He was man enough to try one night.

He scrambled into his boat and saw her

Moaning, still rolling around him.

He swore at her and cried,

And threw at her the lead belt.

But in the water it was a feather falling:
Lower, lower, slower still,
To blacked-out deeps
Where it too would roll and sway
When Aeolus, king of jazz
Comes to blow this brazen hussy
Up, to make her big blues voice
Sing his tune, his tempo. Rave notice.



Voyage of the Killarney December, 1959

I

The sea is a fearful place of dreams

Backing into the rivers of life

The caustic salts of bottomless foundings

And whales weave together with perches

Barnacles noiselessly swallowing the sea-scream.

The sea-lungs breathe and pinch the pleural cavity of thought And visions of shark slash by Ripping into the lonely nuclear sinuses of time.

Squid and octopi, startled, move away then

From the chartless corners of the brain-wash

Arching their backs against the gargoyled weight-wet of thought

Working their knuckles on the unhourglassed sand-grits of the mind,

The ear listens then and in the sea shell of the skull

It hears the algae munching on the sea-feast

Salivating on the rocks the crisping foam of endless appetites

For long creations still undreamed.

TT

And we went sailing on that shrewd sea

Noses pressed against the glassy air

Gulping the wind-scuff

Like infant birds mother-beak.

Sails snapped and down the furrow of the tongue

That teaked thing cruised,

The palate itched to madness

By the sour-lemon, pupil-cutting mast.

The sun stood high, mercury-speared

Melted the siren-wax and day-long gold we heard

Our faces squinting toward the cool fishes

Swimming the ocean-lymph like shadows of diamonds,

Nibbling at our mossy skull.

Day burst past the silly sail-cloth tourniquet we set and

Bled the dark'ning cloud-stuffed sky.

Tom talked the stars into existence

Metaphored the sleep-stabbed giant's eye to gleam.

The tackle whistled in the wind-night.

We slept dreaming of crystal porpoises.

III

At dawn we rubbed the seagulls from our ears
Our lashes rocked the boat scraping at fog
The dampness clinging like larded elbows;
We drove it out with whips of coffee
Filled the sails with bacon gusts
Charring those mists to forgetfulness.
That sloop knew the stir and smell of humans
Thirty feet of tight-caulked pride
Bright work sanded to the soul.
It found the sun at eight breeding over the foredeck
Bright as the dream-bite of sharks
Curing, curing the weary, water-logged sea.

Southeast to the Trades we went

Jib hammocking the eye-long breezes

Mains'l, sea-berry full, webbing the handstretch up that fat sky

The day a timeless sun-journey into dark.

And dark, shadow-panther, came on

We saw him drop soft-pawed to the deck

Devour our eyes and eat his way

To the sea-murmur in our brain.

IV

And then Nassau!

That dream poised in a sky-riot

Rose in the ripe eye

Like a whale-burst sea!

God-like we nodded. And then went in

And I saw Time relearn the creases in our eyes

My hand vein-ruin on the tiller

Felt my sea-youth gasp and suffocate

On the brittle land-air.

And, Jonah-sucked, we headed in!

Jonah-sucked, we headed in!

The Woodcarver

When I was a boy there was an old man
Who taught me chess; he had been my grandfather's friend:
A craftsman in wood: he carved his own chess men;
And once he had made a sweet-toned violin
Which he played for us sometimes, in the evening.

He was born in the Black Forest; his name was Grimm:
A lovable man; but his art had no sale.
It was factory stuff people brought him to mend.
He went on at his musing and his lathe,
Turning out bowls and curios, unpaid.

Tops were the only sellouts of his trade:
Shapely spinners of hard yellow wood,
Slim as a hornet and spiked with steel;
They would split a dimestore top at a fall,
As a fighting cock might spur a barnyard fowl.

I have not his white beard or his wrinkled skin,
But I like the notion of that old man.
I like that honest way of the neglected crafts.
I am told surrealism is the door
To make a man modern like Rene Char.

I say I have bowls to make, or a violin;
I will even turn out tops now and then,
Small things for child-hearts to spin.
If such they please, of such we have heard:
'Forbid them not, for the kingdom is theirs.'



Suppose I have kingdoms they do not share;
They are closer at least than the smart fellows are.
Why should I sing in the falsetto choir?
I will go back to the dark shop where I went as a boy,
Among strange treasures: ostrich eggs, a crocodile,

Carved clocks and pipes and puppets; there let me stand

By the white-haired companion of one for whom I was named,

Watch him choose from seasoned wood something with a tough grain,

And turn it slowly to a polished form,

As he leans in the cave of light by his whirring lathe.

I have been thinking of a collection of poems, of which the title-number would be"The Woodcarver", and the sections of the book suggested by phrases from that poem. Here are samples.

Queen of Night

All night I have kept you waking
In the slow unrest of love;
We have seen the gray moon streaking
The warm hills of home,
The long moonlight probing
The fringed lake and the grove.

Now the day is breaking

And the day birds are shrill;

Reason comes creating

In the blind depths of the will;

And to the world of making

I must follow the day's spell.

But you, my love, will shade you

Deep in the sepia grove.

Sleep, my soul's soft shadow!

I would not have you move,

Till the moon and I shall wake you

To the slow unrest of love.

May Apple

May apple is your flower, Cream-white, withdrawing, Hardly noticed under its leaves,

Until we bend down
And see the green tent
Filled with glowing,

And our sense reels
Under a smell like
The ripe odor of fruit.

'Something with a Tough Grain'

Gilbert, Swamp and Blackbird

The thunder came and we paddled into the tooth of it --Waves, wind and rain, prognostications out of Lycidas: 'That fatal and perfidious bark' -- a canoe built By the wife's father for himself alone, sunk to the gunnels And wobbly as quicksilver -- What should I care? Having with me again the master painter, neglected Don Quixote of the brush. Mopping water from the bottom, My shirt for a sponge, we came, as the rain cleared, To the overgrown creek's end: beneath a rock-oak slope And flanked with pine, a blue-green swamp of reeds, the tide-Flat surface hatched with allizarine dead stems. Across From the crabbers' shacks and long sleek boats, by a bridge A quirk of decay has turned to an heirloom from a Chinese Pen (where a redwing blackbird flies from the swamp nest, Creaks like a hinge, that opens to music, rupture of gold And vermeil from black flight and the sunlit spill of the trill).

We reach the wooded shore. The painter squints for a focus; I withdrawn to a hummock of moss, lean to a pine
And write -- nothing to celebrate but the fact of sharing
Again the thunder-and-sky-reflecting tide-swamp world
That is ours, and the rusty creaking of a coal-black bird
That flying breaks in wings of flame and -- yes -- song.

Renegade

Having flown to Newark after two weeks of Mississippi, And running with all bags across the road for a city bus, The cheapest transportation, I sit down in a Number Four full of smoke and laughter; A mechanic haranguing the driver about nuts and bolts, Then off to his grape arbor and how he makes wine; Voices, scrambled, converging from all sides: 'Well fer cryin' out loud, ya can't do it that way. . . ! 'I must have fleas. Soon as the double-crossin' cur Begins to scratch I feel things crawlin' on me. . . ' 'Didn't rain hard? Are ya kiddin'? It flooded the place.' *Christ, did she think she could break it up and not pay? * At my side a Negro woman, having every right To be there, and damned well knowing it --And not a drawling planter or wife-and-slave-holding Caucasian toting his coon gun --It was home, down there, I stayed at, thought I enjoyed it. Now I heave the rib cage and gulp air, Snuff up the Northern city; Surprise myself, mouthing: "By God! It's good to be in a free country again!"

'Polished Bowls'

Barn Swallow

A swallow skims low over the field,

Turning and darting as insects rise.

I see the blue back, orange breast, forked tail,

Pursue the motions, the bank, the dive,

The swerve in flight, a snatch at swerving flies.

He sees me also, bends his course

To skirt my presence, flutters, cries.

I find him beautiful; I only guess
At what he finds, beyond that prey.
I am not one to take the world on trust -Probabilities remain, and this is probable:
The flight of his outwardness, the stance of mine,
Harbor like visitants, some angel I,
Banking in timelessness, intrinsic, free.

The Fire

The fire was slow kindling; it was damp wood,
Old, and moistened by the earth and rain.
Two times I rose to mend it from your side,
Stirred the wet sticks and blew the smoldering ends.
Then in the clear cold night and clearing of the wood,
We two, under the stars, hearts not young,
And wet with time's worse rains, forgot the fire --

Until suddenly it was there, each kindled point
Enforcing another, to take us by surprise,
A brightness huge and fierce, a living flame,
That sent up sparks to coil across the dark,
Earth's poor matter assaulting the night sky,
A trembling moment of immortality -Such was the constellation of our love.

We lay afterward a long time
On the plain ground, earth, where we are bred,
And watched the lattice of transfigured wood
Slough films of gray ash and renew its glowing;
And in the cleared space of the dew-cold forest,
Saw now and then how a few last sparks would rise
To that brief ecstasy among the stars.

Strange Treasures

Baby Blue Eyes

Ripe as a fruit and globed with youth

And paired with eyes as luminous as blue,

That break in glances like a changeful sea,

Stands before me the most vocative girl

Of twenty years of teaching, lips inquiring;

May she write her theme of love, on which she is

knowledgeable.

My eyes swim with blue,
Or if I close them, wave on wave
Revives the swinging pools,
Where fire corals show
Blood crimson in the blue.
(I am one who has downed
A philtre of such love
There is no return to the land.)

Earth reels in the sun,
But all around it cool,
Laps the luminous blue.
Where the blown wave ripples
Crests of white, and the sea
Glints with purple, there the reef,
Down swaying fans unfolds
The summons of its caves.

Gulfs of living water, down and down,
Once we have gone far enough
Into the element, that fish
With jaws and teeth, called picua,
Does not repel, but beckons;
We pursue, she withdraws
Into the deeper water. . .

'No doubt,' I tell her, 'that will be satisfactory.

Relate it, if you can, to Penelope and Calypso.'

How peerlessly her stirring leaves the room

And leaves my silence stirred with crazy jazz:

'Jeepers creepers, where'd you get them peepers;

(Loosers weepers) where'd you get them eyes?'

'To be Played in the Evening'

Stranger

The eighty-year old woman
A stranger in the house
She has lived in half her life,
And which now she has to leave,

Taken to another room

For the children to pack her things,

Stumbles among cases, files,

Relics of extinguished hope. . .

A towering darkness on the Delta, Lightning, thunder, Great oaks whipped in the wind. The lights go off together.

She understands a moment,

Then forgets. Gropes from lamp to lamp

Trying to flick them on.

Bewildered,

Calls the cat. . .

(To bring the years' lost kittens from the storm.)

A door slams in the wind, Trees brush the window. Rain in sheets goes solid on the screen.

She trips and stands smiling,
Lost, but not worried.
(It is we who draw back in fear.)

The smile on her lips,

She calls into the darkness

(Further than consciousness, the wind-blown candle):

"Here Kitty,
Kitty, Kitty;
Come Kitty, Kitty;
Come Kitty."

The Mockingbird

That plain gray bird with the blur of white on the wings, -Call him an artist in the modern sense:
A mountebank, a charlatan, a mimic,
The most quarrelsome bird,
Fighting all day with the robins;
Well, he makes amends.

It is spring now; the nights are warm,
Full of blossoming. Outside the window, roses
Distill themselves, contending with the honeysuckle.
On the black tree magnolias are white in the moon.
I wake as the leaf-fringed hollow,
Already filled with fragrance, overflows with song.

In the dim solitude I give him leave.

Let him be as cursed all day as he pleases,

If only the midnight reaches of the soul

He quicken with this water,

The well that flowed in the garden

From the rock, under the tree of life.

School of the Seed

If the school of the ant teaches there's no laboring
In the winter, better go to school of the seed,
Like the hierophants for whom grain was central
(Except a grain of wheat fall to the earth and die) —
An oval door into the saving kingdom,
The halls of Demeter, the season's dying.

Surely you can read the signs of the seasons? There is A snake also in the stars, the largest constellation, Coiled almost encircling the pole, and he holds
In his folds the round kernel of the world.
If the wandering soul must go into those caverns,
Let it go, like Orpheus, singing.

Water shines in the sun; low sun on the waves

Sows the whole surface with light —

Pale winter light down the leafless trees, cold

On the leaf-brown floor where death is working.

Close your eyes and turn your back to the sun;

Dark requires your presence in his caves.

Sold



Where I wandered
In the snow
And pushed aside
Wet dark leaves
To find arbutus
Long before the spring. . .

Where I looked for
Jacks-in-the-pulpit
White violets
Wild geraniums

When earth was soft with birth
And growing green smelled sweet --

Where I reached and cut
Armsful of dogwood
To grace a room
With ivory-white bouquets

And where I heard

The peepers jingling tune

Then later listened

To the plunking of fat frogs

In love --

Where
The timid thrush was safe
To sing sure silver notes at dusk
And orioles built their swinging nests
In still dark privacy. . .
Where I gathered
Sumac's candelblooms
With bittersweet
To last me all the winter through --

Where I wandered
Watched
Listened
Felt
The turning of each season
Is no more;

Birds will never sing again
Through these acres
And there will never be a newly green
Or flowers.

Gargantuan machines have slashed
Across the woods
And rawed all growth
To painful roots

And man has built
An air-conditioned structure
With ample parking space.





The First Poem Written

The waves march in like a regimented army, each line precise and unwavering, and they send themselves against their foe, falling lifelessly back among their ranks.

And in time they conquer.

There, through the doorway, sitting in dust alive with sun, is an old man.

How sad he seems in the haze of the late day with his eyes closed.

And little children from the past taunt him with laughter sung by rote.

He smiles, hunched by the door, silent in the noises of the street.

Poem

There is a crate of lemons
washed ashore
where the waves
break into foam

and I may go and spend an afternoon throwing them back at the sea

An Orange Cockroach

burning the insistent silence of gothic love:

equipment

jerking

jesterlike

in lunar perambulations;

Ja Josef

waging brittle fury in fernmoist rooms of love:

miming pyrrhic war.

Back Country Poem

The wooden owl stood in the yard scummed and eaten by weather:

an old bird

icon of the folk
who put it there

out back of a house on a mountain road underneath the trees. Did you ever sit and wait for the moon to turn into a globe from a slice?

I believe that
the man who lives there
calls it
'self-realization.'

The Sea is a Sort of Cat

that sallies forth continuously in all of its parts:

a jade bandit
and master of cat-shy turbulence

an old cat

but still with uncomfortable eyes.

Five Haiku

a beetle crawls toward the stem of a lilac; rain begins to fall.

fish entangled in
a net -- no more the subtle
motion of the tide.

the echo of a falling leaf penetrates the stone on which it lands.

a black and white moth on a weed by an old well; water reflections.

a broken bottle lying in the sand: the sea is angry today.

snowflakes disappear
on the surface of a pool -instant memories.

a fly's wing falls in the morning; the earth's awakening noise is great.

Spring Love Poem

and the second of the second second

Only one evening in the late leaving hours of sun I knew a girl on a bridge (and the water -so far below as we leaned in wind to watch the boats returning going away; and we speculated on them laughing as strangers laugh when they wish to love) and I took her hand her eyes were heavy orange were other little suns. Finally, she turned and walked away calling back goodbye.

It Was at a Certain End of Being

and we were sitting on an iron stairway
watching the evening disappear
willow leaves dropped in the heat children called cats meowed

there were cosmic questions being asked and the sun was leaving them unanswered leaving the night

we waited
and made jokes but our eyes contradicted us
we watched a spider a good omen we said
the cats and the children are our spokesmen we said

we had methods all at once we were eager for night
we assumed greater identities
especially that of the spider with the acuity of eight eyes
especially that of the candor of children
especially that of the prophetic code of the cat

we became fanatic decipherers of the cosmos
we ran down the stairway we ran down the street
questing
off to ask directions from those who knew the night

defying all systems of order
opening up reality
we were giants and voracious beastminds running against the
deadline of the sun

playing children's games
suddenly stopping to sense in the manner of cats
performing the critical ritual of spiders
and these not order but
fantastic explosions

WE WERE TRUE REVOLUTIONARIES!

To Hear the Wind Blow in Furthest Summer

when the butterfly bush is like a last old clown in a lavender wig

and the crickets cry in monotony. . .

A Poem Whose Origins are in Queen Mary's Garden, Regents Park, London

The circling gulls
swing up and interchange
in endless rhythm
low above the pool in the park

occasionally skimming the water whose surface is woodcut by sun giving back fragments of white motion

insouciant
as the child with bread
beside the pool
whose smile
is sign of knowledge
of complicity
whose hand
by casting crumbs
interrupts the dallied glide
excites the raucous laradine cry
explodes the tinted print of sun

controls
the very nature of the circumstance
sharing dominion of the park with
only those who
sit and watch.

Summer Song

Out in a sun forest
with a black cat
and a bunch of oranges
tramping until I reached
a great outcropping of rock
by a stream.

I sat down
the cat drank
I ate the oranges
and smelled the woods
a toad jumped into the water

toad
sun
my cat
all in the forest
by the rock.

Some Untitled Thoughts about the Subject in General (A Minor Manifesto)

The way
the words
run
down
the
page
not so much their peculiar meanings
but
what
is done with them
and through them --

and
not the visual effect
but the
FORM

or capacity to express the development

not the meaning:

who knows what
'mice in a flowerpot'
means
or
'in a city a child sits in an alley
with an umbrella'

these
and all the rest
are too private I don't care how one has tried
(what about that word 'one' you say
well maybe that's me and you and both of us together
and all the rest of the world
and what the hell
it's still a mystery so just look at the poem
don't scratch at it
let it stay there caught on the paper)

think about all of it at once don't be so God damned condescending

The Approaches

I. From
the working of the wings of birds
above country snow

the noise of the ice-covered branches of trees in the wind

the sun
below the birds
behind the trees

II. (and a certain transcending of vision or essential altering of the structure of contact in which the object is stripped of intrinsic action and used as a final axiom and is not an experience at all but a basis or assuption of noumenal discipline)

III. come the circularities:

it is that if I am there
and made critical by the syndrome
the participation begins

an awareness
of performance:
implications

alluviate

who shall say in what manner

or why

but do not ask it

140

there are migrations and interchanges
of the brittly shaken branches
and the faraway birds
that work upon themselves much as they work upon the mind
the sun is untangled from various myths
and is not abstracted but transmogrified
as are the functions of energy
as is the mind
each by the other in conjunctions of cause

IV. I am as the blackwind and as the sun I am all the movements of the universe

I am the extender:
I compose through expansion the final form of my sensibilities
And that which I do is done to me
(the origins are no longer present

their implications are sustained as extensions of will

V. What is left is the future of the mind and the field and the seasons

Notes: The action of the birds seems to represent the possibilities of liberation, or the mind's own venturing. The icy branches make noises of what is perhaps the poetic basin or deep thicket of the mind's unformed call to create. The country is large and black and white and silent. The sun is a force; the orange of the setting sun is an unexplained beckoning or obscession. The winter is sharpnesss, is acuity stripped of previous construction. Black wind is also a force, an antipody of the sun in the catalogue of the circularities. All of these things make up a real scene. To get the feeling of the poem it is perhaps necessary to have experienced the scene. And one must ask -- is one mind another?

In Delusions I Can Pull Down the Sun and Hold it Rusting:

I am the devisor
and I cry
at my own formulations
I exploit myself
I am reassured only
by the necessity of my arrangements

jokingly
I refer to myself
as a sort of carpetbagging tragedian

'I am worried', some would say.

I say

I am sick with fear

that I may tar and feather myself
and drive myself away

charred by the very sun with which I deceived myself in my plot against the world

Spontaneous Riding Poem

Almost night suffusion of orange/chinese blue driving hard on streets maneuvering:

the mind down
to the shifting gears
again and against themselves shifted

eye
double functioning:
that is
navigates
also sees

partakes intrudes

in wealth of every sharp edge in city made of edges

Only action blurred
people
in continuous going away from a point
running dance step negotiation
intervention
i am racing through them

the operator

feet feet
car gears car machinations combinations
Then city cemetery hill:
narcotic everywhere smell
of honeysuckle.

The Grey of the Afternoon is not Grief

but the rejection of circumstance
which claims even birds swifting in the sky
and leaves the trees isolate in their silence

vines clutch gathered stones garden chairs remain arranged with leaves the gathering crickets' chant begins

and soon
there is the fragile dance of butterflies
as night reveals itself
in blue film
dissolving the trees
leaving only the sibilance of wind
which is a fountain
spraying in a sortilege of surprise.

A Mournful Poem Because it is Required/Even Necessary

The weirs have been up since

earliest morning

and some men have built a fire/it burns against the sky

a small fire and they

aren't even singing

(oh the stakes are driven firm against the water

Come Forth as Life by Outburst

What is the measure of the mind invaded by love

--back country road by waster orchard viney stone wall:

child after rain walking and stopping;

congregations of butterflies the rusty fields the puddles

the child's stick

a divining or in some way mysterious

cause:

REFLECTIONS OF THE SUN'S CORTEGE:

a dwelling among/a radix or grace as though a pentecost the mind implodes/explodes assumes the spectacle

PROLEPSIS

this VISION as artifice of love a forecast/the mind answers with a music a beat a dancing:

IT IS THE UNIVERSE BUT I cannot comprehend it

(perceptual inaccuracies
 the limited range of my being
 historically)

small bells should be rung randomly

--plainsongs/let there be no allelujahs or shouting

this is a time for

clarity

that is:

a celebration
of the mind's opening
which
overwhelms

shouting later --

loudly say:

the words progressions on lines in patterns determined by feeling

logic a barrier not so consideration and turning inward and then

THE OPENING THROUGH LOVE WHICH IS FINALITY

- (1. the poem is the mind's music it must be done it is insufficient
- 2. the mind is made aware by love nothing else)

I answer after performing this:

the mind is measureless

Poet's Song

Taking as I please
I give again

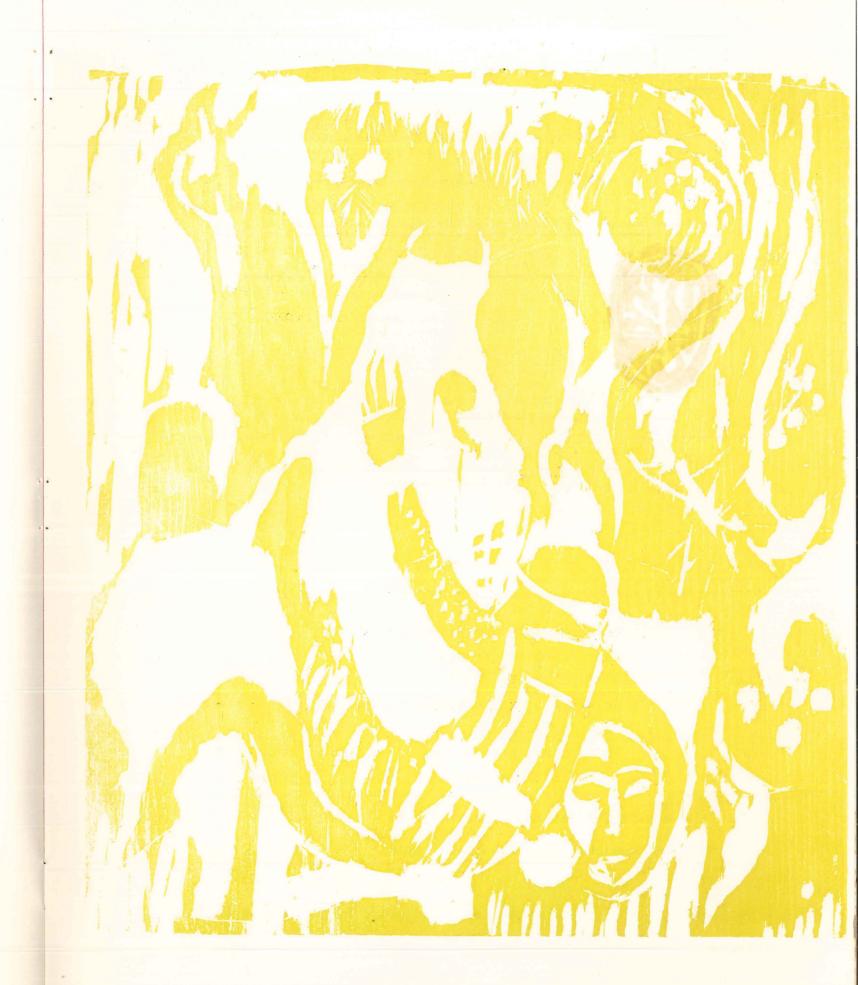
I give
the great orange sun

a tree in wind

a child

Giving gladly
I assign my soul
to any other soul
who stands with love

and seems alone



An oil puddle is black (like love)
Reflecting the sky.



A kite against the sky
is a snake writhing deep in
an unknown pool.

to pass away

in smoke.

Title Unknown

Learning near an open window in that Empty shadowed room,

He watches minute sparks of dust and earth. . . Swirling with the sun.

Then turns away and would avoid their fall:

To clean white paper.

Song of the Goatherd

Sing I, the drunken goatherd, sing
Sing I of things high and low;
Wander among the hills
Sing I drowned drunken with wine sleep
Wet noses of goats on my face.
J.M.



To every part of its face the smile stretched, From ear to ear to ear.

B.H.

At Two

I just ran



barefoot
in a breeze
through the soft night grass.
It made me think
of ice cubes floating in lemonade
a red dripping watermelon
fireflies
and a string of Japanese lanterns
dimly swaying between two summer trees.

J.L.

The young girl turns her head toward me.

Her eyes are closed. How sad her large mouth.

S.R.



O skies, who have made so few turnings,
Why should my heart not melt with your snows?

The branches of the pine trees

Begin high above where we stood together.

In this night of snow

They are shaken by the wind

O they are singing proudly in the forces of the wind.

I cannot tell whether
They remember or have forgotten.

If no one

Should love me again in the sky's few turnings,
I shall not be the first. O it is morning now -Why should my heart not melt with your snows?



High on a white horse he rides clothed in red;
Fine is the Tien, but he is not yet so intense.

Jealous I am, jealous for his youth.

How long will he be gladly smaller than the skies?

For the sake of falling blossoms, seek no words.

The warrior will not listen if you tell him of them.

Put his armour away gently, and smile at his sons.

Blossoms fall silently, how can I tell you?

But my warrior is a rough man.

Put his armour away gently, and smile at his sons.

You have spoken to me of the rhythm of life.

The storm would not be chaos,

But that I do not want his boat to go upon these seas.

Ah! There is the devil -- confusion.

Ah mother, I knew him better than the skies.

They bore bitter fruits
Who froze in the old seasons.
Mother, I have seen such beauty.

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