



Shock
and
Amazements

RON BOGGS

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INDUS VALLEY OF MY SOUL

I built my home deep
in the Indus Valley of my dream,
palpitating sandstones
of brown, white, shame-faced orange.

I could not deform
this most beautiful valley
in the world
by the construction of humans.

I restored
Indus Valley
to the figures soul
had given me for I was a tool, a skill...

The cavity remained, reminder
to suffering loss
of what never existed
but briefly.

My soul lost color,
became the soul
this very moment,
said, without remorse:

“You may go at any moment
to the Indus Valley of your mind
and rest in the palpitations,
sandstones washed with ancient ancestors.”

She strode out triumphantly
on horses
into the night,
for Indus Valley births.

On a flood plain
seers
must drink
of Vishnu's nails and Ganesh's water."

QUETZALCOATL

Up from the balls of my feet comes Walter
as feathered serpent, Quetzalcoatl.

Heads roll down the athletic field, heart
to see life beat in the flesh rolls down.

Life so grievous. Mind as game, the mind
a plaything. So much, oh, my god, Walter,

so much that you didn't see, terrorizes us
as grief sacrificers, shocks to reverence.

You peer out of Quetzalcoatl's eyes, roll
down darkness out of moon body, lord of

light. Dripping heart when you peer out,
vertigo of the truth of reason, neverend-

ing plea: chords of chaos out of field.
Up your feathered body, compassionate,

even in the human sacrifice, once a year,
up from the balls of the feet to the tip

of head, still attached, not on dispatch
to the field, molds chaos, molds us, fly us

jungle tangled dragon as precious twin
walking wings that end human sacrifice.

HOLE OF NIGHT

Sits raven in the tree:
“You wish to not see me.
You shrink back into a cloak
of darkness, flooded fumes of contagion,
blight, to go to your juggler.”
I silently squander: I’m going to die.
He symbolizes death. “Death of you.”

Image: twice in dreams,
Charlton Heston’s chest bone
opened to reveal the red
ribs of being put together.
“You’ve had one heart attack.
Die on the second.” Mind tack sharp
into oblivion, black obsidian
for companionship.

Sits raven in the tree:
Tells me trickster stories;
whippoorwill pulls through longing,
shaking me until I rattle,
as a saddle carrying the beast
who never lets sky turn blue,
who beats all ravens.
Raven fools when raven can
for here are stories out of the hole
of night that will of delight
defend itself against all
whether strong or tall.

“You need not fall. Let’s begin:
you’ve skinned your shins, eyes
for recall, mouths of worlds, washer-
board ears for the cat’s hour
as night speaks, letting loose
the trickster in moon’s shower.”

Sits raven in the tree:
“I am black all over, even eyes,
all of you must center to enter
and fear a divide -- keep your com-
pass for it will spin, never win,
for the winds are tongues wagging
booze to run with the bulls, fool
you are; you never know you lose,
always lose, yet incredulously, fly
you can without wings, raven wings
when you have raven’s eyes. See.
Welcome to your perch, do not lurch,
see out the impossible
to live through the improbable.”

LAUGHING FOX

Red fox
stuck in a tree
next moment
pissing steam into grass
last seen
bouncing on a ridge
falling off
laughing all
the way down
landing
on all fours
prancing away
into underbrush.
Last heard,
last night's dream.

TRUE BIRTH

Being born
to her mother
her daughter believed
she was the daughter
who lived the family
tree

When she was made
by the beauty
of the paradise's fire
of this garden earth
of true birth
free

CLOUD OF A CHILD

I

Cloud of a child

Could not talk of shame
all shame was the child

Building pyramids
among alligators, Florida
of eternal youth suppers

When the rain splashed the dirt
child exploded
exposed shamelessly
no evaporation

II

Sod of the adult

Sadness wide mississippi
fish on the grasses, gasping
lacks tow truck clackers
sludge

Never stopped talking of blame
Blame never stopped talking of adult

III

Mud of the human

Tumbled like clothes clouds
colliding catastrophes
galloping samurai sands
lotus

Fuel the walk of flame,
all flames walked slower

IV

Bud of the buds

Out of the fire flew
withdrew arrow's aimed heart

A sky who knows the beauty
is black and seen blue
A heart that beats red,
not shedding, appears as bed

Winter hold of all the animals
floodplain for old growth forest
ripened unknowables

V

Soul of the soul

Could not talk to soul
soul's contours were what spoke

Given wings, you folded away
each you blundered out of wonder
into the labyrinth, led by the stench
Soul fountains flame to astonish you

From dreamlight to deathlight, soul
wholes what incarnates as the living.

SOUL'S CLAMOR

The clamor woke the dead
so tumultuous were fists flying,
wrestlers in the mud:
“The world bleeds,” came the cry,
“entrails of rivers prove it.”
As I listened, blistered by existence,
I could not fathom that, as I listened,
I blurted, “No world, human slaughter
barter to never halt insults.
Planet stink runs raw and saws.”

Joined in the frenzy,
I arm wrestle a bear, saying:
“I’ve been given...to understand
that...I am...responsible for a-l-l
uh... I see and everything that is.”
Bear pins me down like a landslide,
and he exclaims, “Throw away what
you understand.” As I hear, “hoorays,”
and declarations of guffaws,
and “you’re nuts,” moves wind,
wild, untamed.... I blow a wind.

Wrestling the dead I now must do.
Return from the landfill of relief,
release the invisible hollow of grief,
where I pled the nothings of slaughter,
with silence, with coins in mouth,
by bargains through the underworld of soul,
my companion, in a language of true anguish

upside down that tows a world
larger than the human inhumane.
Be crazy for the bleeding gums of shut jaws
that insanes a splatter crew of display.

Poems are cliffs, not all cliffs are poems.
Cliffs built from the top down, soul claws
are fresh in your flesh as always.
You will know you are alive, down under,
thrown up, for the rise of soul:
“Call it suffering, pain, agony, jam,
pleasure, you are thermometer
taking the temperature of the slaughter.
Do not turn your head away
and do not refuse life,
life does not refuse you.
Any wrestling leaves traces of blood,
you are a bloodhound for love -- enter soul
from the center in order to staunch
the hemorrhaging without being bloodied.

Tap--tap--tap bounce the spoons,
the spoons dance
have magnetism
draw me to unarm my arm
be a spoon
it clouds, cloud clays
into bounce
against the spoon tunes
what are they playing?
I forgot to ask:
Tap-tap-tap

Bee on pistil and stamen
philosopher on the stilt of
without metaphysics
pollen does the distillation

KNOTS AND NOTS

Knots and nots
knocks and knows -
all in one tin can,
empty of Uncle Albert,
while nestling in the Julliard
School of Music for the child
opens these knots and nots
in the land of oz
as it ends the knots and nots.

“GRATITUDE”

What name do you want to be called, Death?
Soul, like dancing seashells against seashells,
seeking her animator, answers, “Gratitude!”
All there is to be is shaken.
All I’ve become I owe to others. Death
you will have to get into line, I’ll
be there when its time and so will soul
and the others who came as visitors,
stayed as guest, and chanted songs of home.
We’ll go as one, and of those one, soul,
intrepid traveler that she is, will story
our love and give Death a chance to answer
life back with equal love of “gratitude.”

ITCH LIGHT

I itch all over
scratching reddens the skin
the itch moves the light
to another patch of the body
spot on leopard.
Dazzled circles of itchings
so many beings, so many egos
so immense the hind leg
scratching the face
falling into the center...
of your grief, being scratched
by your longing
red with envy of the itch.
Over there, here, over at this spot
it is not you, you see
release, let go of the itch
light circles through the body.

Bush traps wind
shaping it
bent into leaves

A pair of doves
continual matings
chicks to fledge
one over the nest

Forty-two lightning bugs
courting
while I was young
drawing all of me out
into the middle of the night
dreaming
chasing the light
until that dream
I was the light
all of me
I was not me
am not me
that I now see
and am the seen

THIS FEAR, THIS TERROR

This fear, this terror
returns each night to burden --

Throws you across 9 times zones
you eat it or it eats you --

don't build another den
dig a larger den --

like dust thrown in the darkness
eagle's eye both the fuel and the fire --

devourer is your hope, devoured we are
to be more, like a cat with its prey --

out of the unknown, the unknowable hits
umbilical dream, cut...into blast furnace--

lions appear to stalk you, you stalk them
take the lion's pride, new dreams stalk --

leave the den, forever, you are the dream
that has been dreaming you alive, a fire--

a love affair your whole life, eros dared
carve a lyre out of the turtle of terror--

two shoes for walking backwards, to kiss
the lovemaking boundaries of tongues --

yes, yes, the yearning arches peacock,
ashiver with teeth of love, shaking feet.

AT THE CENTER OF BEING

At the center of being

rage

swirled

demonic power

though every point of compass of forest
though no place to go in the night
though when woke heart burning

the demon wheel beings

who released the rage
or my soul
to display
who fell into the center
where its swirls chaos

embrace rage and the chaos
shovel the words away

Let soil
of image burn out

Your anger is your radiance
trying to get out of you.

In swirling dark, be fuel for light.

SOUL SINGS

The anchor you've hurled down
from the sky into the pitch black

will not hold you in your course
Your boat will sink on the shoals

of the first storm who greets you,
in grinning waves of solicitude

so eager is death to sing you with
no praise for anchors, weigh

you in port, cup you moored,
sail, bail if you must, sink is true.

Every sun turning burns you, then:
why are you here as vessel of soul?

Hauling you through fire,
desire an hour, release

your geese to praise,
cut the rope, sink

and swim, time is hollowing tunes
for soul's sun and moon,

bending wood into flutes,
sending ears of night song

until with morning sun rises
with damp aura of dark's charm

the long heart of light
that beats soul's drum.

SINGING

I hear singing
out of things singing
so far near ear singing
in waves sings
into me it sings
to me it sings,
to me sings
sings its singing
sings me... I sing
I am song... sings
me

silence
my mouth is blue sky
tongue clouds
words sun moon
language of trees
syntax of bushes
camellias paragraphs
images coming at me singing
the songs of forest meadow,
river, valley, canopy,
whale, shark, marmot, beaver,
bear, eagle, owl, panther
jaguar... as if I were not here...

I am inside of things, abounding,
look out of the things I'm in-
side of, so many things I'm in-
side, beside the singing...

inside the thing singing,
being the thing singing...
I am not here...
Starlings by the hundreds
descend over trees onto ground
ascend as one as a move
through the window

Brown birds by the hundreds
scatter in every direction
shatter with chaos' language
explicates the boiling pot

INFINITY'S EYES

The water under the bridge
never seen again, windows
whose clarity distorts infinity.
Death is its messenger.

The world pleases you is not the world
that lives inside you as pleasing scenes
are not seen with infinity's eyes.
Those eyes see the never scene.

Houses nailed like coffins,
buildings modern trees of troop
status. You set the soul free
to fly as infinity eye's grows wings.

That soul taste on your tongue, parsnip,
is infinity's blast. You must walk
the gauntlet of ants of hate
through its firing squad at fatal hour.

Curse of the human upon the land,
snails abandon shells, the smell
of infinity abhors its squalor
and corruption, yet infinity's hour

will not wait, rests not in will.
Walk across the bridge, enter waves,
swim until see what infinity sees,
build new bridge from the other shore.

OTHER YOU'S

I go around the corner
seeking to run into myself.
Instead, another person
writes these lines, tells me
come anytime, its divine:
the apples are delicious, vine aged,
tickles of the world perfume
eat your pickle disposition
into the uproarious pain.
Why are you another, light years away,
not hearing the pleas to come home?

BLOOD SEA

Fish stink
unseen stain glass eyed
does not wash off
keeps meal appearing upsets stomach

listen to Dvorak, Renoir
nothing shakes the teeth death throes
inured annoyed palette
crossing boundaries stain sea

Blood Sea, I look
that we've come this far sea of blood
every sea, blood sea,
without burning the babies tossed bones

LAKE OF LIFE

As the eyelids of night open,
I walk the narrow slats of the pier
rattling the stillness of the mist
as calm pervades the lake of life.
The preening of the desperate
I'd never seen before, in this way,
head down for food, tail in air,
from the Puritan's built pier.

Sunshinesbetweenlightandlongshadow
massages the gentle lake
weaving clothes of change
interchange of silver and black.
I could shed my skin, go naked –

feast of life awakened in morning's eyes,
step off the pier, disappear clearly,
fully into the lightanddark of life,
everything my eyes wanders to see
stands balanced at the end of the pier,
circling wonders out of the lake.
The birds are not birds, fish not fish.

I turn around to pier inward toward shore;
I see all the people I've ever lived
walk animatedly out of meadow mists,
others who've lived me rise as souls
out of the lake on this day of choice:

the choice between to live on the pier
or to die in the lake of life
is not the choice, seen backandfront --

to be visibleorinvisibleboth: after a life-
line of the heart refusing feast,
I breath in green forest and silver lake,
and wind the wonder pump that fills lake
of cold water, of clearing mist that releases life rattles of narrow
slits

of what I neither was nor ever wanted to be
but became and detested and terrorized me.

This pier appeared this morning to sing
of my freedom and to praise:

raise my hands in grievinggrandeur
as the treesdance, pick-up-sails, a
million folds - the beast of life
we imagined as death is a feastoflife,
sunray of irretrievablesadness
as we are arranged as we are, sosee.

EYES

In my eyes

waves the unending ocean,
daily washing ashore indelible shells
designed by depths of the sea
cracked open as tide yearns back
eerie skin sliding into revelation

Through eyes

brutality of the world
that we fear we see and are reminder
of the undertow keeps us awake.
Every evening the tides,
remorselessly pulls
me ever deep into greater weeping

No eyes

push me out
as elegiac shimmering, rides me
out to sea, life crafted in bottle
with unread messages
in anger waves
of destitution...

Eye unbounded

in gladness, too, un-
ending, seaweed's teeth of existence,
kelp, explodes the bottle.
Life fights

Life's eye,

life, life wants life;
creation myths have ocean
for the moon.

Shivering human looks for the edible
as he knifes through the water

cutting
fear

Open eye
winds ocean's message of where
to find and how to
cook delicious food. Clear through
to the other side of the world

AFTER RUMI

Everything exists
inside of something else

Everyone exists
inside of someone else

What is it? Who is it?
The same and different, both.

Break out, be the one outside
looking in,
be the something carrying
the suffering within
a moon of many colors
every phase seen on one night
a plow in fertile fields
and you the thing with steel arms
be the mud for the lotus

look back
look in
look through
look out
the rain makes first stone
step, it is over your back
relax, enjoy dandelions

Welcome, say salubrious
inebriations, learned drunkenness
or the morning brew --

paradise and catastrophe
are in the mastery to
what is

EMPTY HANDED

Into the woods, into the creek,
alone, no one could see you.
You jumped from rock to rock,
falling into cold water,
slipping in up to ankles
to be alone
wet, skipping, limping, leaping,
bending over to hunt lizards,
salamanders, legends.
Back bent, scurrying the elusive,
yet once caught in the wet hand,
alone, squirming to be free:
alerted to the art of danger,
ceaselessly wiggling the hands
of the boy, the larger freed
in the hands of the smaller freer,
squirming, just squirming wet land,
running up the stream and out
into the woods, empty handed.

THINGS THAT STICK

Seas -- seeds -- sails
top spin, bin, excavate
marbles... tunes... labels
tap water bulbs from faucet
turned right for "on" -- missed,
didn't see. This is the plea
of the markets to exchange
one for the other, release
the bouncing ball down a hall,
listening for echoes to please,
but your other ear hears
father turn the car
to go to work -- a seagull
on a mountaintop, a syrup
poured into for yeast.
These are the things that stick.

All this roundness --
apple, earth, breast,
scissors are useless.

DEFORMITIES

A voice said, "She does not want to come out."
Like a boy, I go through the veil
separating her from me, tell her to "Come out."
She states, "My mother won't let me,"
to which I retort, "That's not true."
"I'll be laughed at. I am deformed, I am small."
I laugh, "Shame comes from within, leave it,
laughter will not hurt you." She comes out.
We dance and laugh.

I ask her, "Do you want to live out here
in the open? I will not harm you. Do you bear
gifts?" "No, I am only a little girl
to remind you that you were a little boy, yesterday." She
continues, "You had play-
mates though you were a loner. Do not
mythologize the autobiography of the creature
of the story so that you can recognize
what you were doing in your life. No one does!
I can tell you things others cannot tell you."
Lowering her voice to almost a whisper,
"I will get lost. You will not remember me.
I am not a daemon, but I am a 'deformed girl,'
at your beckon call. Keep me near,
grow soul's daemonic, give me juice and
sustenance, keep me near," she implores of me.
"How about near my right ear for Hermes
is in my left ear."

"I appear, soul had hoped you would see

and harvest me; instead, you ignored me,
devastated, left to rot, to starve self
though well fed. Now, you seek communion.”

I’ve seen millions of trees,
played vociferously under their canopy,
and whether straight, leaning, bent
to touch the earth with arm like branches,
sequoias, oak solidly in the grasping earth,
pines and hollows, hardly held,
banyon, bodhi, so contorted
they are a map of their roots
that flies them skyward. None
of them could be called, “Deformed!”
Aspens with leaves shiver.

I lie myself down, spread out on the rough
hewn soil, stare straight up, the rain
hitting my eyes, involuntarily my eyelids
night day, 10,000 matrices design elaborations, sleeves of shivers
catapult me into space--
I see no deformities, except we all are.
Species’ vision, roots cannot be deformed.
I am informed by the little girl
that her deformity shamed her
and so she hid from the world. “The shame
is the world’s,” I offer to her wan smile.

Soul says, “My shape deforms when I form
other than human figures. My autobiography
is not your autobiography. You’ve been bent,
rent, I lend you breath, its cold respite

of true painting, picassan knives of real.
When you enter the land of soul, intention
gives clarity to distinguish distortions
from deformity. Your well echoes, "You've hollowed me out." Soul
becomes the hollow;
I the echo. "Soul shapes you the life
worth living and giving. Be kind.
You've lived inside the rain for years,
sink into the roots, bear the weight,
you've soul's deformity for buoyancy
of the fire out of the water."

The girl: You, Ron, have deformities of character, of mind, of
energies
that need to be acknowledged and realized
as what they are - make them available to soul
so soul can chew and mash them into deformity
worth a night's desire, drawing as brush
into love and solace and grief on canvas:
to treat other wells as hollows soul enters;
you do not fly there, you stay painting,
no longer infliction of your own afflictions.

STEEL OF FEATHERS

A wild-eyed man with upraised sword
runs towards me
to split me into two.

Last time, I ran
in the dream, as fast as the razors
could carry me, with bloodied feet.

Next time, he was larger;
I stood my ground.
He split me in two: I lived one
in Manchuria, the other in Luxemburg
for many years. The grave of one
is in Llasa, a prayer flag
brought from America, town of Pitcairn
Island, mutiny on the bounty,
Indian Creek behind the homes
where General Washington camped,
the Indians called it "Dirty Creek Run,"
John Donne Island - yes or no.

This time, I know he's real, I know
the pulsating dreaded pain of splitting --
like a tree trunk sundered by thunder bolt
seeking grounding, especially, for skin.
Real, though this time I know
he runs toward everyone,
songs of rain run cold
through his veins that makes his dreams
dark and deadly offerings

whose touch draws up your hair
on end, as a feather flown through wind,
you go in, though the mine shaft is black,
wet, rickety with years of deliberate neglect,
the cold throat of demon's breath.

You live your dreams real,
or they live you and will kill you
in mutiny, tyranny, disarray, oratory
of madness of "or".

As he is upon me... this time
I know a secret he cannot split;
I'll never freeze again;
I've been taught by salt tales
how to hew steel of feathers
so that even torn apart are one.

ONE MORE AMAZEMENT

You've been granted this gift
not because
you are worthy of it;
rather,
we've granted you the gift
because you
were not worthy:
we amaze you to return to the
secret
source
that lived you into
the Tao.

HAMMERING INTO BUOYANCY

Why are you hammering? You've hammered
with those nails for days into the wood.

I'm hammering my griefs, I've no ways
other than to have the hammer pounding
my head, driving the nails
into my wooden heart.

Use the other end of the hammer,
like a tuning fork to pry you out.
That will not relieve the grief.

This has no relation to the grief,
I know, yet the grief poems humans
hammer at day after day after day after...

if we told to your face and true,
the libraries of the world would double...
NO, quadruple, and the continents

would sink and you would cry "pessimist"
and "nihilist" as we sank while the

smile of grief you see the reeds wear
as you hunt lost baseballs shocks you.

Loss and lost, quivering wind, like love,
contain immeasurable shocks to slap your ass
for you to inhale the air, involuntarily,
at first... broken into small wooden blocks

we are offered, perhaps in the only way
our survival as a species would permit it
and the cosmos could figure a climate,

to turn wood into water as one way
through the secret of the mysteries
by learning the ocean, become the loss,
be lost. We are being taught to swim.

Whose “we?” Why, its all of me! I don’t
know about you, as that’s up to you. I’m
pried open, emptied, bouncing buoyant.

MEETING DEATH

I walk wearing a jacket into the woods
to enjoy what woke beauty in me
all a pearl of beauty. From behind a pine,
death appears and smiles, happy, too.

I stroll over to bulldozer's work
mounds piled high of dirt, millions
more creatures than I can follow. Death,
with a grin, shines a second sun on each one.

Body bumps of roadkill to grocery store,
I shop, meet death in every aisle,
his smile has irony in it as I bleat
out the fury bursting -- How much, not when?

Death accompanies the bags that we place
in the trunk. He sits beside me as I drive
and tells me how much easier it is these days
as nameless innumerable countless millions.

Death says the 100 millions do not groan
the girth of earth though grief falls like wine,
exuberantly. Admit it, he laughs, dread
feeds you when I smile at you, as I did

when you died on the operating table
during your heart attack, abandoned by lovers
in intensive care. Death made you well.
You, now, have eyes to see it is all love.

Don't you see: don't flee, don't plea,
prayer slays, death is pleasing as pleasing
can be, take as food for you, as compatriot.
Stink is stink, know doom's necessities.

I groom you for the long marriage,
a bride for the end of desire, yearnings
of everlasting warfare. A comfort for you.
I rule over love, not the million of love poems.

Your yearning voids of grief for one, loved
ones, 6 million, billions, ancestors:
never will death appease human's frailty.
Degradation and utter despicable despair

throws away inheritance of life. Challenge
death, make life the equal of death,
give away the wish, desire sire's no respite,
no peace can life give equal to death.

You've no more weapons to fight me, you try
to use me as a weapon against me: I smile
as one whose won many battles, will win
the war for when you come this way, you

come Death's way -- your challenge of love
to death lacks capacity and sweep, heart fills the yawning gap with
grandeur or flights
for the frights that incite, not delight.

What grandeur and might defeats Death
when poetry, grief, groceries, gambling

cannot stop the mighty swing coming at you
of Death slays in TV, movies, halls

and ovals, wars and religions, riders out

of hell,

preacher creatures seek the peak speaker.
The Great Silence stands at pit's edge
of Death and views the voyeurs of death

plunge into the abyss of bliss and disaster,
fearing its sting they fling themselves
into lust for dust, racing cars, whores,
tyrannical veeps: never to hear the Great

Silence, the birds, harbingers of the soul
who've kept humankind in the game, have left,
passenger pigeon, buffalo, polluted human.
How do you honor everyone whose lived and died?

What gift can life give worth the fight
with death?

Is Love worthy of Death? No plea, our heart
is the earth, all of existence, what do we
have to do, to say, to be worth the cosmos?

Death smiles, "I'll dance," he says. We wrestle.
"Until you take me, Death," I exclaim,
"I'll war you, woo you, will not slay you,
pray you see slaughter..." Death intervenes,

"Your war is with the Love of Death, where
the killing is the living's creed to bleed.

It's scree, mountain red dread drenched."
I'll be wed in bed with love, not in lust

with death, as magnanimous and invigorating,
as death that can unhinge the Love of Death
tires that whine with speed trampling earth
and given berth where you least expect.

No salvation comes in the end
no one will be here to read the last plea
but love and her children free me to see
you Death, as you are: companion and broth.

GOING IN WITHOUT GUIDE

A strange swell heaves over the crest
in mounting waves of sound and dark
birds by the hundreds, thousands
stream out of the dusk of the horizon
into the stream of trees in valley,
across the reach. The squawk deafens,
inchoate chatter, to me, silences me
then I am a chatter as the birds enter
the place of peace of their silence.
What world am I in? Have I slipped
unknown through the veil and silence
that curtains another world unknown to me.
NO! Primal stream we are always in
and fear to be in. I fell in, lived in
for years, intuit its water and wild fire,
and today enter the stream when asked
and, even, sometimes, without guide.

WIND

Wind bounces in
asks me to join
this morning I do not
too conflicted

Wind refuses the stall
surveys like a pro
the whole forest gets a blow
Useless you are all day

Contortions, deformities, chaos
rides through clinging
to every bush Every broken
branch immovable

Wind slaps me in the face
surprises take my place
What I thought went west to east
are always here

I lose hope the liver's pull
will lift me Those levels
cold blows against the scalp
leaving no roots to escape

No flower bands heard
brushes paint new greeneries
and glees and shimmering and worms
rise, roots inch deeper, give up

round belly of blue sky frolics
of gluten planting you
for songs of the dung, rung
out by the stake

Hot the desires to cold
wind is bold, never told
you are not the wind
neither are you without wind

As you delight in the fright
the taste of evergreen heard
to exclaim: you tussle the work
You'll wind into joy's grief, too.

WINDS

Winds lions tonight
garbage cans bound down the back alleys
bouncing aluminum against concrete
noise of fear roars down tunnel
cat fight fingernails my 3 am
sails without anchors
for every time loss wind is here
telling me I love
I get my wind tools to work
on my new assignment of wind

TREE OF HEARTS

By Fred Turner

To Hayden Carruth
& Vaslo Popa, in
admiration

Ten minutes, I'm out the door,
agitated, like radio static,
don't find any channels
between hell and heaven.
Take your pick. Hear the rifle clicks
you hear in movie combats,
always looking behind you
these days, 1/2 the pops in prison,
other 1/2 prison in their head,
coloring books to run
traffic jams with wrecks
at crossroads, so many cross-
roads no longer seen as deciders,
only as cross between road rage
and TV fuzzies on Channel 3,
the unused one, for taping wars.

Forgot to brush ultra teeth,
left a dragging demon
snarling at my foot,
who plopped out of dream, suddenly
I didn't have to melt him
so I sprayed him with my mind mace,
as if he didn't exist. I'll fix
the bleeding at the office --
oops, wrong way. One way.

I get out of my car.
Where am I? I go to the tree,
look into the cavernous hole:
hundreds of beating red hearts.
I yank me out in disgust and fascination,
cell the sheriff, yellow tape
comes circling the wagons. I'm questioned.
I say I know nothing about hearts,
know nothing about how they got here,
whose the culprit. They treated me
kind of like a criminal, made me feel
guilty of something, but I can't remember
what, maybe, it's everything.
I feel the dis and the hiss.
One more unsolved crime, they're perfect
crimes -- I want out.

I dream the hearts had been knitted
into barked ventricle arteries to make a tree.
I was inside the tree, struggling free,
and couldn't bear gunshots and tatat-tatat-
tatat of running animals. Red drips
down my forehead, my eyes popped open
running "www.internet" across them.
Went blank. I look back, heard a voice
say, "You may come back..." That's all
that I heard, all I wanted to hear.
My heart raced with such fear no alignment
could I find, I did not want my mind
and so that was the last of the heart stuff.
All's been fine, since.

P.S. Fred Turner's my name.
As you know, I've lived a blameless life,
couldn't stand the everready strife
so I sailed the seven seas of Mercerville.
The day I scorched onto the page
has haunted me so I flew and sailed.
Hope you do well, as I did.
I can't complain, what's the use,
nobody listens -- someday, I'll
buy a motorhome for travel through
the Rockies, though I don't want to sleep
on any graves. Give my love to the kids.

city on a hill
on a sawed stump
if you look aright

I asked the balladeer,
who loved shooting deer
and skinning rabbit,
"What are buttons for?"
"To show where the bullets go."

PUFF OF AIR

Puff of air
inflates the tire
in the dentist's chair
looks for glaucoma
a life

These features thread
make of twine
is there twine?
a holding as tulip
up

Pyramids and jungles
and deserts jello mold
Lusitania always remember
the lushness of gambling
down

Puff of air
at the opening of the mine
you are determined to go down
with no canary deaths
a life

MARBLES SCATTER

Marbles scatter

one gets stuck

in a crack

in the sidewalk

gets unstuck fast

when the delivery man

armed with bread

lets fly

the tomato sauce

with the geese

No manner of shouting stopped

them though they felt

pangs of remorse

Quickly got

over it

and were last seen

in the gym in the ring

slugging at each

other

As Jim Groth said

better rules

than no rules

That's why

philosophers conjure

up rules of

life

games of strife

logic to keep

if necessary by force

of arms in line scattered

marbles

ONE DREAM

You are to realize:

It is all one dream...

The purpose of poetry is to open the Land of Oz...

To see the words as notes on the page when you write...

I am looking for the poet, Hayden Carruth...

The words are alive in me...

I wake inside the dream. It is dark with a low glow...

I am in the center of my being...

“I am inside every poem.”

“There is no guilt.”

SOUL WINGS

This line is the end of the poem.
Birds peck for food among grasses
with folded wings of remembrance,
the long scars of poems resemblance
to flights of birds, migrating
south in winter, before thermal kill,
migration to north in spring, warming
tides that carry by inner compass.
Sun? Gyroscope of history? Soul
sent a spirit willing me to risk death
on the flight of life and flew me
that one time when I heard the blast
that shot me off the earth. I didn't know,
couldn't know, which way to turn
in my plight. Soul wings.
Silence unfolds the folded wings
as a gyroscope, even when I fly
upside down in order to be right side up.
This line is the end of the poem.

WAR OF LOVE AND DEATH

The war of love and death, of which one
is the greater? I've heard the march of love
on the lyre give credence to its power
that outlasts death, its beauty soliloquies
its scorn with baneful, savage love
that bites and whose flight of agony
and duress of no relief and mental torments,
swelling all for love, whose noble aspirations
funnel life into an arrow's pierce,
loneliness in twin, opposites into kin,
of the crime that gives kiss a name
for giving each moment and every time, all time--
until death unheeded, undeeded gets done
what love cannot do and refuses to abide,
lasts longer than love unless love is death,
as well, though not beautiful to the eye,
to the heart and the mourning it opens each,
every time, from time immemorial, to forever.
These goads to move the immovable
to do the impossible, out equal love
in its bounty though wretched you feel,
like death is love, too, unable to feel
deliverance from its grasp
and so no hope, hopelessness of hope --
no matter illnesses and love are hope
that binds lovers and care, as death,
as careless, seemingly, using lovers
to bind the weaker to the stronger
of the passions and breaks reason
every season as a too weak mettle

when the weakness is the strength
in both love and death, takes their measures.
No formalities are needed in either realm,
savage and tender are both calluses
that grow from wear on the heart
(What ointment do you use to soften
the leathered hide of the modern art?),
transporting you beyond your alias,
and waking you to your foolish wish
to love forever, never to die, a never forever--
gives you grief and more grief
as lovers and as lovers left to shiver,
a moving heart, the shoveler of the grave,
why have others do the opening,
release of the heart of arrows by arrow
of the shovel, earth's heart, to liven
and quicken searing pain of open emptiness
that lasts forever so mighty is death
that lasts to bury love's treasure:
we are life's arrows to waken death
to heart that will not listen so our ears,
the newest new, must teach our eyes,
the oldest old, what lives loves,
what dies loved, what is forever is love,
the fuel that is the flame that sparks life,
foreverness of love, and its deformities,
binds death that undoes all: to begin anew.

Cardinal rocks the twig of a tree,
careening, a world gone crazy,
as it always is...
as cardinal stands swaying,

flies to a rounder tree,
a world of sparkles and jade,
as it always is...

Pelicans share shore with petrels
no shade, never done
until a meal is won
no fun, no heaven
in the straits of elongated love,
beauteous stars, marvel even there.
And, you know, you are free,
you've the life to find it
and the losses not to bind it.

Beavers telltales signs,
to home underwater --

TOURISTS

The tour guide swept her hand before our eyes,
as if she was a magician, and said,
“Now, this is a sequoia, one of the largest,
if not the largest, species of trees
in existence.”

I flushed with the brush of magic, unseen,
for a tree is not a tree
and that could not be shaken loose.

I listened to her battle on
but with no pronounced enthusiasm
for I could see she was not a Namer,
she was only a Conceptor, of the original
shine shouting in the world, whose radiance
she enclosed in the bark of words,
naming not the glow or the name for glow,
landlocked dam that denied the prize,
renamed divinity, obtuse layers of an abstract.
Before we broke up our little band of tourists,
bounding along like images of crazed horsemen
and plowed persons, I whispered in her ear,
“Unless you’re native, give the tour next time
from the sequoia’s point of view. You will see
that trees are not trees.” I picked up a stone
to throw, as when a boy, to make it curve
around glory, and, also, inglorious,
so as to smash the school windows, it hit
a sequoia. I heard the shout, “Tourists!”
come out and replied, “Human doubt never trusts in shouts.”
Finally, I see.

GIFT PEARLS OF WEeping

We gather in our friend's living room,
seated around our friend, who invited us
to be here after so many years,
to hear what he had been these many years:

He sat in the room and wept.
The leaves began to weep, then the bushes
cried, the trees grieved, the flowers
convulsed in agonies, the stones
drew rains from the pores and spilled over,
as the insects and animals lacerated air
with pitiful heard turmoil and travail
as they trotted in urge to help
the released rivers of suffering of ages
and the mourned of elegies and funerals
and dirges that attracted the clouds,
who rained torrents, without let up,
as if all the pent up anguish of human
and their kin came out of the caves,
that bent the ears of sky, whose depression
despaired the very blue out of the air.

Our friend looked at each one of us, intently.
"Why do you weep," I asked? "Because I do."
The friends laughed in unison, absentmindedly,
then guffawed like bubbles of the mud
of the Mississippi, hip deep in shit.
We had all been stuck in the morass of waste;
we suitcased our weeps, put away in haste.
What happened next, we did not expect.

In an audible voice, we each heard, as one:
No, oh, no, we wept because
he could not stop weeping. We come to show
you when you weep, you cannot sleep
the dreams roam you to where tears are rain,
your throbbing pain of being,
whose soul in each pore opens the mud to flow
into the sufferings of rivers that swiftly
thrash the desperate ocean of oblivion,
where you are kin of beloveds, who lived there
and died there, as you must do, find treasure
where none had looked for, falling in
with no forgiveness for what killed you:
you are in the fabric of life, learn by tongue,
as needle, words and images as thread,
and silence as rhythm, what greenery
you desire to give life back for its gifts,
in the most difficult act of your life,
that you must do, do, and do until you exhaust
the you you have tumbled out of, upside
down, in order to be one that truly cracks
the egg of existence, again and again,
until the entry into the cosmic night
gives you night sight and day's life,
a fright that shakes your needle's thrust
into the divinity being infinity in you,
to delight with confidence, whose golden
breath breathes back into you awe,
that is, out of water earth for green grows,
out of which you may walk, a continent
able to bridge the oceans. Grow by weeping,

make it wine that needs sun and rain,
a soil all have turned over, blessing
out of life of distress to peace,
last stitch of grief, a pearl of the moon.

The friends drawback, each into themselves,
fearful they will have to open the suitcase,
make this abominable journey that they cringe
in terror they would not survive. Many pearls have to be lived in the
bottomless sea
before they're with the light of night
made boundless in the endless robe of sobful

delight

those who never returned their pearl,
those who have can stitch for them
to give honor to those who deserve
our suffering and our love.

None of us want to fall in, fall through,
involuntarily, nor go in voluntarily,
into the real world, a pearl we glimpse
yet prefer distance to the intimate fear
that like beloved's soulful pores
waits our blossom weepings to cry out.

ASTONISHED EARS

Each morning as I wake,
I am in a parachute over Europe,
circa 1940's.... Then, I see
by the landscape familiar landmarks --
we are parachuting into America.
The invasion has occurred for years.
We are the rangers of the invasion force.
It has happened here, I say, to astonished
ears.

The train came by today.
I did not travel on it.
I, or someone similar to me, was watching
the Lascaux caves' deer dance.
The railroad crew upended the tracks.
The train no longer ran through the dying
town.

The canopy was made of blood
whose change no one noticed,
not I, for the danger to our vitals
came not from the sky but from our eyes.

CLOUDS OBSCURE MOON

Clouds obscure moon
rodeos radio ruckus renegades
tall grass and cinders salute
and off goes the pheasants
a sober judge throws out of court
any testimony against a state of seige
that exists. I go to the cupboard,
get the liquor, drain it dry, loop over
the moon, wake forty miles from where I slept,
at peace with no one, at war with no one,
on the lookout for slaughters run by night

runners,

who never drink or think
only sink the grappling hooks
to make you blink before you speak
institutionalized lies modern flies

No one is reported in the newspaper as having

died

from long obedience, even obits edited
headlines so I read to see my whimsy
of a death notice that is not whimsy,
cringing at the deluxe model, shaving
every hair, charging for each one, ad in-
finitum, marble shovelers, money mergers
to streamline the receding hairline
as if it means dick -- it doesn't.
Harbingers crowd out what before your face
harlequins for the marvels of Love City.

WINTER TREES VARIATION

For William Carlos Williams

Two brown birds sit
on thin limbs
on winter trees
by
dark gray clouds
Two brown birds
the two
birds move
to see
to feed be bird
No birds
blue sky

puffed up
wrapped
join
winter trees
are still
no clouds

BOUND AS RED FOX

At the edge of the sand, the water laps
softly, gently,
easing storms into bliss --
when red fox loops down the beach,
heading straight for me.
I cannot get out of its way,
don't want to,
all that I hear are storms.
Red fox: when not in your territory,
listen, take the sound of territory
to hear its tale. Off, red fox trotted,
not a care in the world worth worrying,
carrying his disappearance into vanishing.
I listen to serene laps of the water
up my body soothing the heartlessness of love,
trying to learn the secret of vanishing,
as I am the animal of my heart, learning
to be a cartographer of sound that I may
bound as red fox bounds, free, full of heart.

HERACLITUS

Foot put into waters of Heraclitus
Foot pulled out, foot drenched
and withdrawn -- not the same person

Along our street
children run
among passing cars
sprung free
in danger to death
where else to play
they've clear cut
floods follow.

AMBER

Murmurings
the cat lying in its litter
unable to move
unsaid forever
unclasping silence
silent stillness
all life in one moment
murmurings

NEWS

Short bush bends up
air around it bends to bush

One branch flows out suspended
by its own sinewy thrust

Bounces as wind has its way
with the yield to yield

Never seen brown leaves lain
for years rest along the bush

No urge to urge rain and shine
as urge to urge rays and roots thirst

Earth's green pungency tastes
the silence of pinpricks of evergreens

Gum resin bathed in green pollen
give flow to glow moving lichen

Sweep the broom across the floor
of the world: swallow, come back tomorrow

Has the news ever been any different?
I am

CONTORTIONS

Gnarled

contortion of trees

Split

driftwood sculpted

tenacious

grasses never relent

fissures

crack boulders empty --

passions hot

looks for grace,

none found

among unrelenting contortions:

what fragrance

to be to become the graceful

curve of bark

able to roll off river birch.

I bring stars -

they have no pity;

I implore clouds

as they know how

delusion

is unseen; I take a

drink of moon

to distinguish

love and lust

from dust to clay:

the sculpture of grace,
 that, like mercy,
never comes
 willingly from the sky,

only when
 bending bends you straight
with fissures
 emptying you

to ferociously wear
 your contortions
as passionate
 curves of distinction.

These lives are ropes
menageries try to hang on
I hit the hornet's nest, a buzz
rattles the cage dwellers

no ropes
please me today
having soul fallen into blemishes
no regrets
like a swallowed sword
an operation to open without bleeding
to death

every moment this rope
this climbing upward down the tree
bringing horizon
into hoot

THANKS FOR THE WELCOME

“A long way, you’ve traveled,”
I say to the weary soul, plied full
of stew and coffee to welcome the night
on the full stomach. “You may rest
here the night.” Morning found no
trace of her. She left before dawn.
She left no forwarding address,
her only words were, “Thanks for the welcome.”

CURL OF SPRING'S EYES

The pear trees' winter buds
hover like gray clouds
as sparrows beak the brown grasses
a feast of the hawk
The nakedness of things
entwined roots of soul's beauty
for the forever fleeting moment

I walk away, they don't need me
this curl of spring's eyes.

The wood chips arrayed

among the grasses

have nothing to say,

saying nothing

they speak

to the passerby

as pecking

redheaded woodpecker

meals through clutter.

Chaos spreads.

There are no threads,
no teasing

draws out the water
underground...

endlessly scattered fear
named order.

Dropped fingernails
of the forgotten,
uncaring mind,
careening undone
byways.

THE LAUGHTER OF THE RAIN

The laughter of the rain
brought the workmen running
to feel the intrepid loosener
of the world's woes. They agreed
it was not a thing extraordinaire
and not something they wished
to repeat for regrets flew
among those experienced in woe.
The sound of laughter, even of a child,
had never withstood the onslaughts
for more than a few days, for when
their backs were turned, a negator
scooped up the woes with laughter's belly, stretching life beyond
recognition,
no sense made sense of sense,
told a tale that relieved moon's pain,
and still no relief but grief spread
thinner over the amazing pools of waters.
Amazements blaze worked wonders
for grief forgotten, relief spoken.

DELICIOUSNESS

The apples watered my taste buds
until I watered the land around me,
attracting the squirrel who sat on a tree stump,
tail straight against its back, except
the curl at the end holding up infinity,
a discreet meeting of question and sublimity,
as it now faced a tree stump that froze
its movements into a pleased with itself
glance, staring at me to see if I were real.
I gave him the same taste of deliciousness
that watered me into roundness of juice.

MOUNTAIN

Thin leaves hold up the mountain!
The unimaginable gets said, the impossible
gets lived, and the grief becomes a reef,
millions of years old. Up here
in the wilderness, where in the very windswept
of going around the bend, another time,
another bend, to end up seeing yourself
and seeing the leaf, letting the two, be
what they are as they are, twining
and binding, mountain, leaf and me,
letting the boulders crumble with wind waters
that soak me deep, smooth me thin.
I am become to my impossibilities the mountain.

NO CENTER

Pouring out moldings that circled you into
spinning wheel

Pouring in night water for clay runs
songs of water fire

of sun the noon ears your love a flower
to speak honestly

You who sunshines out of your head radiance
from the flower

circles spiral the inside outside
into the center

where you make a circle to go into
healing spiral

It is not you, you are sun, truly, glow
flow, new moon grass

ready for a new you, who never breathed
before creation of pyramids

a presence of who you are knowing nothing
of god and gods

walking into land where there exists
no center

everywhere the wheel spins you still
silence as fuel

UNWALLABLE LIFE

Quaking aspens, flying cranes,
bear metamorphoses into stag --
inside the walls where you sleep
the dream waits soul to fright you
awake in the night, shouting "no walls,"
deer runs at the cracked twig
you never thought to look for,
spit out by the soul to speak
what you are in your most intimate
of secret places you turn into
in the next phase of the moon,
they turn into you when you live
without walls to show you existence
that stages you with its undeniability
without the incubus unleashed
as strife into unwallable life.

COLD

The cold of long winter
becomes complexly cold
around and then circulating
slowly around feet and angles
losing feeling in extremities
as if they can never warm
though rubbed vigorously
with black knit gloves roasted
over open fire and arctic wear socks
layered onto wool knits

cold as a stream through foot
biting me as a chill that never
will go away no matter what I do
where ever I go making me trudge
to get warm to avert freezing
so close is the wearing bitterness
cold as if from the heart out
of the long hardened regrets
of snow cracks as I walk
that breaks underfoot crunching
into chewing the frosted feet
surrounded by white silence
of horizonless emptiness

bone of cold reaching the splayed grass
the tundra that will not yield
nothing warms against the bitter cold
feet of the loon swims its life
into vivid matings with the lines

of distinction crossing the lake
with its rudder sailing through and beyond
the frozen water into the brown reeds
passage of laughing ripples release
in widening wave the cold mirror

INSIDE OF THE EGG

Being inside of an egg is hard
when you are liquid
when you cannot stand liquid
when you shake and want to congeal
when it is dark moving
is awkward when urge moves

Being inside the egg never gets easier
madness births in the dark
madness tells us we are animals
that is why we're dark
in the egg we forget we are in
we run the leaves eat the chlorophyll
we run the leaves tell ourselves
that we're human that very telling
the very evolution of madness winds
and madness twists that we are wind
and madness is when wind told it is spirit
when we are spirit and move the wind

Being in the egg is madness we are
that we cannot get rid of
as being nurtured on the myth of birth
we suffer madness and call dark dark
where the history of egg shows our
very naming is our very insanity

Being in the egg who's to blame
blame is a game the mind makes up
to delay its urge to crack the code

to be neither womb, zoom, tomb
yet still we rattle against the walls
that never fall though cracked
we say the egg is when we are born
the darkness blesses otherwise
the light, then, our enemy as friend

THE BARBED WIRE TREE

Embedded deeply into the fleshy bark
of the tree barbed wire punches out,
each barb sharp and rusty, a drunk on a thistle,
a loon in a bar, a scarecrow in NYC,
a lost puppy in the subway, the canoe
down the Amazon full of piranha. Forever,
the strangulation at the throat of the tree
warns it of the dangers, of the barbs
with snag scar around it, a traitor or eye
into insanity, poking out other eyes
with gashes, drawing blood from wound
that tightens each year with no relief,
no matter the grief, the belief;
the leaf, the insatiable soul
cannot be so bound by body but body will
and can root the tree to bend every which way--
not knowing how to escape the inescapable,
release the unreleasable, forgive
the unforgiven from the soul snag
bloodied by brutal torture, enemy intent, unsavory bitter flutters of
the taxonomic

butterfly,

the cursed curse that gives humans
their name as a shame that they can never alloy
to blame onto another or claim fame
for it damns the shame that barbs, never
frees, the lacerations of the weary.
Tears are made to be shed, I have heard,
they're ground pepper to make you sneeze,
to sneeze: to be in the presence of a god,

enthused Dionysus, players of Pentheus
and the women, and the tearing apart
of ecstasy when ecstasy is undone
as it must be undone when cruelty plays games.
Killing has won the ecstasy wars.
Tear aqueduct is our ecstasy sailing
without anchor, without paddle to shore
without nothing to cling to even when
the barbed wire chokes our breath,
trained to bring us to heel -- never heel!

FISH MARKET

Fish Market packed with every kind of fish
and every kind of people
one silent
others never silent
one unmoving
others constant movement
one dead
others living breathing
eyes open silent unmoving

(you hold your life in your hands)

drop the meal, like dreams that risk all of you,
into newspaper wrapper with today's head-
lines, filled with black netting and knives.

Eat the nourishing sockeye Salmon,
I sway to myself
as I the eye becomes mythical

of succulence

that lands on my heart,
pulling deep into the ocean and back to
source.

drop

the

Gutted and gristled, flesh
of the fish, bones get stuck in my teeth,
choke me, almost -- slaughter
of all the oceans -- I pick up
the fishes that have no heart beating.

(I praise the blessing of the fish) I ate
that I may not be eaten

in such a manner
though I know in my bones
that I am right now
in a world whose teeth
chomps through me
and would just as soon
eat me,
as hosanna me
alive.

CIRCLE OF BELLS

The bells ring out the circle,
telling the hearer to bear the burden
of carrying the water up hills
and down through valleys,
to weigh the feathers of the heart,
as soul whispers fiercely into the fear: dance, damn you, dance
for life has awoken here
and shot echoes of earth through you
to water you with dragon smoke
whose sky you fly to abide cruelties
the mortal cannot ungnarl that you
unravel, here.

The first circle of the bells,
strains the back ache burden
that never once let's it lift
or shift, as the spiraling up
in luring a coterie of birds off
the limbs with delights and morning
equal to their bells to wake
the stag and jaguar to nearest
crossroads -- plunging all the way
into the circle of the bell
until percussiveness spirals ripples
the marvels of unwinding time.

SECOND BELL

Airwaves collapse with weight
of saying what it's like to be alive

at this time. Is it a curse or worse
this burden of clean meaning?

What would be better: a letter you want
to open because you want to hear from

your lover, who you yearn for, who lives
in your very desires for passionate love-

making, rolling over and over, like en-
jambment, or tool making, like rubbing wooden

sticks to invent fire to eat to stay alive?
Or dig grave with first human to coffin grief?

I am in the cave of the darkest nights --
how do you go through the uterine heart

and come into the daylight transformed,
a being alive as another being, not know-

ing whether animal, vegetable, star, mineral,
or having fallen into the earth from space.

TWO SPELLS OF THE HEART

I travel the caravans through sheep fields
of ancient Mesopotamia, the thirst of oasis

palms into oratory of salvation, stand
with the drop of oil on me.

A shamanic stag cures souls.

A dying king clamors for ending of sacrifice

to the sun god, but reason cannot give reason
for the water land of the moon, as

Odysseus adventures the complexities of soul,
a thousand passions reason sails on.

Dragged behind the rocks, raped & murdered
on that mountain, body never found:

perfect murder, to be alive, to be alive,
what causes the heart to beat, eye to see,

the root of story and silence, souls wait
for justice for the naked truth, alive,

alive, it never dies, until we die, as we
will and so shall being alive – until alive

ends the spell of being alive enchantment
and disenchantment, two chambers of heart:

lived, delivered, ensouled, gurgled
from inside out, played, stayed, made.

thousands of birds rest
the night in the tree --
dreams dream The Dream

designs on the loon
seen on the spiral shell
moon at harvest

limb up and down waves
on wind -- my backaches:
that is all.
Roots root.

Sparks crack, pop,
paper blackens, curls,
ashes of wood:
new fuel... gone
light, warmth no use

falling off the petal, insect
clamors up stem, ant
another pollen lover, laughing
fool

CLIFF JUMPING

In the valley, you can't fall off the cliff.
I fell off the cliff.

On the mountain, cliffs are everywhere,
high and low, with narrow paths
fraught with hazards and fallings
unless you root as the grasses in stone
openings to die into on the road
with your wine is just foolishness
without a lovemaking companion
abiding you drink the cascades of life.

A wide road loses focus, gives balance.
You die in other spaces
usually when you haven't taken
the experience to heart. You are camper
in danger of imperiling yourself.

Years of disasters dangles from my eye teeth,
don't fall next time, jump...
the net will appear, you trust.
If it doesn't, gratitude
for the cliffs and the net,
possibilities whose existence
invigorate being the mountain.

Pebbles
bubbles of eternity
anchors stillness

birds sail
glorious shining
mountains where smoke
had been

roll, roll ever on –
smooth being so soul
can take your roundness

FIRE OF RED FOX

Red fox rolled out of hiding.
We heard, "I am always in plain view."
Red fox danced in prance aplomb,
sidled up to our campfire
and stole our hot dogs and coffee,
spitting out the marshmallows,
"Too sticky, chewy. I show you."

"Red fox is here to unstick you,
keep you from being on the end
of the stick," as he fried the dog,
burnt it, matter of factly, knew
what he did and did it, actually.

"Are you campers experienced
in the ways of night animals?"
We replied, truthfully and in unison,
that we weren't, although my father
was a panther in the night, who lived
far away, and at my call, ran to me
in the dream, and has been in plain view
in my life. To which red fox,

jumping in the fire, grabbing the flame,
ignited small fires among the grasses and brush.
He arched his spine, back flipped and
landed on the other side of the campfire.
We stood awed, until we realized
our dilemma: our awe for animal skills
held us in claws; we needed the skills

to release ourselves from what we
did not possess, and we resolutely refused
and refused to see how clawed we were.
“It’s in the wrist, the ambidexterity
of the wrist twists the treats
you need to eat. Meals you catch,
not the meals given you.” Out red fox
ran, as if his fur were flint
and he starting a fire, disappeared
with the clawing word, “Fire!”

JOURNEY TO THE SEA

Snow melts into river,
rapids over boulders, no mercies.
Don't even look around, fool,
go straight through shipwreck
of battered whites of griefs --
being the canoer who knew the gorge
opens to a canyon into a plateau,
you knew the land, not the water,
fire of water, the rage of melting
from years of snows at the summit:
cool mercy when mountain bubbles
into spring making the valley what it is
this year, every year, never another year,
giving the valley warm mercy
floating mountains impossible to stop
to find a snowflake on the way to the sea.
The search is on: how much change
will be required for eyes to grow,
psyche to transform mind as fin,
heart to say: no matter what shape you
take, heart holds water as salt,
if you want it pure, start fresh.

A very seed of substance, stalk
Of reality of white star, a brilliance
Its brief resilience to catch root,
Milkweed flung in every direction
To visual nothingness of lighthearted flight,
Lighter than air. What gets done
In truth is lighter than life and death.

Moon a pregnant belly
almost full
cushioned in blue
folded in as infant in blanket
Under boulder, loud sounds
disturbs unheard human

SLUICE

empty water cup out in the barnyard
waits for rain the drain pours out

pachyderms thunder through glue factory
silks the Saturn insurance rates rising

flamingo dancers flute duende
through arteries to head
unclogging disease

tiara diverse ladies hold
spellbound the agitator spectator

a goat on the roof eats grass

while natives shy away from one another
having caught cold flown in on suits

a modern baggage empties out the Acropolis
of sacred eating away at its foundation

in the middle of Main Street freakish sleet
storm couldn't travel farm goods to grocers

no crossroad suits they left on the banisters
of Aunt Sophie to sew into attic boas

they left for a bountiful time never
returned nothing to return to

LOCK JAW

skinks all over the boards
in and out
flashing off the sun...- No,
out of themselves... What?
purple... blue... selves
alert
poison to eat

as our two cat huntress'
go after the skinks...become log
to catch the skinks going in and out
of the wood boards. Grace has one
in her mouth, delivers it as a prize
to my wife, proving she is queen feline.
I encourage Sparky to let go,
when she won't open her jaw
I gently pry an opening of teeth
and the skink drops, bent...
at an angle to itself, and with effort
goes into boards, like an underworld.

... my skinks, I let go... watch appear
and disappear... flash glow inside out.
I disappear, and I swear I glowed.
Now, now to repeat the glow when trying
to repeat the glow is impossible.
Possession possesses me that I refuse to
open, lock the jaw in conclusions.

FULL MOON

Small brown bird
unnamed
flies into winter bush.

I watch.
The bird wings out
to tree
hangs on an angle --
ah, not hiding
the bird was revealing!

When will I radiate out
of the bush? When I reveal
myself to myself--
after all these years
and how many wars, civil unrests,
to change the fundamental seeing
of humans that they're
not yet humans.

I still look at the leaves
and don't see the bush.
Silence because it carries
what I haven't
and the turmoil of my years
on earth evolved
for me to swell into wings
you wait
to see you have
and learn to fly.

Still, like phases of moon,
always something hidden,
until the full moon, when
you throw blackness' awe
of the contours of revelations
of the scars of the land
into the radiance. Half
the moon remains hidden in dark,
to us, and forgotten.

Wings give eyes to see by,
yet nothing remains, nothing forgotten
yet eyes
on the other side of the moon
has no use for memories.

TRACER EYES

His tracer eyes blew the daughters apart.
The three of them on that night in August
planned his murder, three stab wounds to
opening of eyes for they vowed no heart
of his would stop the hatred from so
penetrating them, to drag him to the creek,
weigh him down with stones, bullet in water,
into the mire of decrepit desperation,
a poverty of law so barbed wired
they were like sufferers of multiple sclerosis
with scars the length of their bodies
to their three headed heart that at one
would end his infliction of infection.

On the starry August night when they approached
the door to the bedroom, their conception room,
where they threw out their curses curling
through the keyhole, curving
along the floor like their lives,
as they poised, ready to enter the bedroom.

ORIGINAL RIVER

A swelling with the river,
the potatoes taste like Steubenville,
yet the donkeys come around the farm,
cars rust, fenced in at the end of the road,
the only unpaved road in town, still
the vinegar flavored water and
pickled eggs banjo children
into wishes times three as the swelling
of the river tells tales
of the original natives of the land
who to this day tell children the song
playing them in the meadow grasses
is the original river: They are the brush
to paint the beauty from the terror,
the roar the trembling swelling river,
the color of rust, they mix their wishes
to wish away wishes, paint the painting
they see themselves walking through,
yet being a stalk of brown cat-o-nine tails
swaying in the torrent, hinting at
how deep, how swift the current,
how putrid the muck passing downstream.
They are the artists of their lives
if they can be the native song sung
somehow claim themselves to play
near the danger through which we all walk.

EVERYTHING IS POLITICAL

Everything is political
in the bed
out in the shed
shaking with dread
pleads the heavens be silence

for corruption spews ashes
in the kitchen
baking scheme pitching
mountain climbing itching
yeasting silence to heavens

who are silent faces smiling baby kisser
safety in a face in the crowds
you're in shrouds
cacophony's doubts
loud farts from D.C. blisters

of nothing to live your life
all possessions in the car
they possess can't get far
defuse you mire you in tar
care where grease never ceases

No language, no poetic feet
you live without eyes
blind to the green ties
deaf to the yellow lies
buying everyone rigor mortis sheet

every morning coffin political bite
empty up the bile
vermins of the vile
for woodbine cow
crowds out heart with darts

the ring of vicious prisons
well of congress we are ringed
thrown against the wall pinged
ponged spaghetti you twinged
Cringed nothing to do

open your clothes thieves
have taken your heart
made of you a mart
not able to smart
your recovery with green life

their hope life of obsequiousness
in which you are played
you are a ballgame splayed
knowing the score so staid
loved soap operas hail

nails to the chief dearth
the mall now to ditch
listening to bulldozer bitch
mass graves bullet niche.
Emblem all you do is political.

I ROSE EARLY THIS MORNING

I rose early this morning
in order to be on time for work
hurriedly ate breakfast
barely heard the ringing,

no wind, sunny weather
forecast... gone for 15 minutes

the family tragedy, uncle slept with
wife's mother and last week's sex
smell -- out the door, back,
forgot keys, enter kitchen,
close eyes to find self,
think I do, as the voice says "Yes,"

then chatters on, criticizes
 what will happen today
at work: not see to let go
clobbered hammers head
and go into day, start car:

no driveway, no roads
anywhere... in what world am I in
where go, how get there, be here,
how get groceries, now summer
how stop going to different worlds
be here with the paved over life
that like the old train tracks --
a narrow fated coal burning engine
that never returns to work

(doesn't know how) because there was
no way to get there from here.

What is here? Opened door
and walked back into house, making sure
it was my house, called my wife:
she told me: You love me, so back out,
we need the money, you are where you
have always been until... She stopped:
you died, I lost you, you lost me.
We are free, stay where you are,
I'll be right here, and we'll swim out
together and not look back.

RED FOX'S RELEASE

Red fox peered around the boulder,
strode forth from around the tree,
sat, looked straight into our eyes.
He trotted off, we followed
to the waterhole. He drank, we drank,
he ran into the gully and hid behind a bush,
we hardly kept up but pinned him
until we were before him. He stated:
why do what I do when you can do what
you do -- I bring you this fur, my fur,
that you may do as me where ever you are:
since your command was freedom for all,
you are set free to plea others freedom;
your trails of shit led me to you here,
a vomit of finitude, couldn't steal
a treasure in front of you. You have my smeller,
now, use it for the scent, don't believe
your eyes and ears, soul gives heart.
Shared people as you and they are --
I leave you for bigger beings
you have passed on the trail,
and you've honored them. This fur honors
you. You are known to honor others, honor them.

I do, we do: we wear
your animal energy light.

"You've been released of bending grief,
teeth roots, the gases -- release you

for your act for your brothers and sisters
embraced by arms full around.”

TREE OF EXISTENCE

I rub

the ribbed bark

across,

down,

cut my hand

on a splinter,

roll over holes, knots, ridges of falls and rises... entry
into the tree of existence
of consolation and ascent.

Soul consents for brief resplendence

kiss of oracle

racks

upon

racks of

antlers, horns

of up and down and trunk, nothing
level,

level only when don't expect
smoothness

-- when you think smoothness,
wham, right between the eyes --

your agitation fears
no trance

of the ridges
of flute dance,
loss of tree, no love, every energy
cross ribbed
the body of the tree,
gone under earth

where I have no access,
except digging and imagination,
for the undertow of lovers:
gone,
no turning back

(you recall the hole
in the knot of the tree), AH!,

buds full leaved
out of my rough mouth,
recognize grief impression,
imprint bark, deep in

...like pressing a button,
stuck, ringing, frantically, unable
to go forward, back, sideways

...go in,

flow
where soul's new shape
loves the rough bark

unstuck

loves all seasons
and weather

that moved the tree here.

SOUL COMPANION

What appears to you as blue sky
to soul shines as night
leaping tongues of fire lizards
lick of delight and fright
fire extracts the boring ticks
lost in mystery.

Soul kites
words birthed on light.
No mystery.
You sting, you sing.
Lifetimes
live in you, live them;
adore
your soul, mystery
is
you are the mystery:
soul
loves you into
lostness;
never lost, can't be.
Lost.

Rejoice, sing praise, be
quiet, lie down,
soul is the tunnel through
of the light,
no need to center, center
lights you
as night paints blue sky.

WASHING MACHINE DREAM

Washing machine dream
you put yourself in
to be washed every night
you become wet and wild
tossed and turned undone
lost dissolves moving vines
tumbled find way
you can't find firm footing
no solids to grasp

head over head
upside down not
make any difference
all one all many
the more bizarre
startling shining
more imprints
wrinkles
creases without ceases
changes forever changing
until sudden stop in a heap
you don't recognize
where you are
who you are
what you are

you are heavy with pregnancy
sperm in uterus
looking for treasury of treasures
waiting birth any opening

shines dark of burning stars
of you are you see you do it
trying to decipher the endless
hieroglyphics scenes of passions
what else is consciousness enough
to dream these mountains on top
of mountains whites over colors
on whites intertwining energies
bigger than the magnitude of the sun
going endless rooms to rooms
homes to huts walking and waaalking
a plaything of playing
an invention of inventions
be the dream you fear madness
crazy random chaos chatter
uncontrolled vibrations of the wash
to dry cycle after brief silence

you enter the dream
or the dream enters you and you
are the dream images dreaming you
or you live the dream by being
the chaos play madness
enter the dream chamber
when it is not running your
imagination or it will run your
imagination
until you change and be the change
as chaos is the clarity of where
you are in the wrinkles and folds

that the body abhors but sloughs off
fear to tumble into
what otherwise cannot be lived into

you are a world creating you
yet have no clue how it is being done
to you and how you are doing it to you
so much fun and frolic to play playing
being upside down like the fool when
colors run and clorox clears whites
and plays one uproariously in contortions
impossible to fold and hold
grinding forever on endlessly playing
change and changeling and what choice
you don't know though controls give you
the world made to look like you
have appearances of dials and smiles
when so much unspoken unwritten undone

claustrophobia trapped stealing from bank
of yourself trickster treat so much like
fairy tales you hope they are not true
they are true and not symbolic not mirror
washed clean every night in the evidence
wet with William Blake that your waking
denies and you a Denier over and over
and over and over gifts tumbling tumult
of tossing and turning the pearls laid out
what phase wears you on the journey
down into the heart motor
where night and day are not separate
are familiars and you in the cave

of night are loosed as coal to find
diamonds burn with light shining stars
in your exploration into the origin
of your being pulling in jumble jumps
images scenes sentences word phrase of
wet dream order to make you actor
be all the people you are in dream
dreaming the people as you are
giving sight perception giving sounds
voice giving imagination play

nightmares of unbalanced loads
when the alarm goes off
you have not been facing
in dream your watching back
what's coming forward all at once
side to side looking at your true faces
real fictions tumbling you
in life that is not in the skin
in nightmare that death is kin
in heart that dreams birth being
new to cosmos seen at night seeing
invisibility and how it will be to be
the seen in what lives within
incarnated into what we live within

AS WIND

As wind
I go anywhere
under doors rugs through
the rough terrain
as if wind is water
water wind. They are one.
They are not one.
I keep my sails afloat as wind
Until I can live as water
cannot be the wind

The brook ceaseless
untraceable
wings of wind
joy undisturbed
running downstream after myself
out of breath
am here and back there
twig cracks startles
settles in
pebble sinking like love
to the bottom on wings
being smoothed
a bed of still waters
always one twin wings

LOUISE'S PAINTING

sky
rain
SOUL
SUN
y treadmarks i
water Longing c n f
e i
g n
r TRee i
U t
y
lassitude
grasses NO *longing*

carotid ultrasound
searching for stroke with
gurgling percursors

percussion

spear fishing hang gliding
over the River Styx
to be the drum beep many worlds
be them all give them breath
many beings and seeing things

way back

(leaving the uncorraled country)

kiss belly of the pregnant whale

SOUL'S PEAR TREES

March warmth and light sight pear trees
white eye blossoms shaped inner ripeness,
like the pears of summer, centuries
in the moment of rivers of lake roundness
delighting the eye with deliciousness,
succulence in white vision, to salivate
luminous threads weaving seer into spell--

transfiguring flesh out of genetics
into being flow, being scent,
urging and drawn like lightning,
as soul as to wine startles my thralldom
with shapes, figures, passion leaps --

soul's call to tell what fires fold
into the inside of love into your breathing
inside the very whiteness; soul shouts
and mazes me to blind blindness to see
that you must do, always do,
as centuries into one heartbeat, here:

you are fully hear, round, replete,
an erotic trunk and branches merging,
surging, pushing, urging, yielding
the very brightness unfolding whiteness
that shines out of the seed, to be
the white juice eye circling spirals
into green skin you've yet to be in:

soul's gift given when never asked for

blossoms resplendence to dance
into and out of on soul's wings'
green trance, millennium moment.

Life has spoken to you, soul rejoices:
did you hear it, you cannot know it
though soul gives you the ears
of the sounds of whiteness to live it,
love it, anything else is extra;

when wholeheartedly life you'll shine,
what life calls you to be when free.

TO APPEAR AND TO DISAPPEAR

He had been declared dead thirty years ago.
He walked out of the woods
to his old friend's house, who recognized
him with great difficulty. "You died." "Indeed," he replied. "What
did you learn, thirty years in the cabin?" he queried.
"How to appear and disappear,"
was all he said. Then, angrily,
the old friend exploded, "Thirty years
of shit and loneliness, anger and madness,
drilling only to appear and disappear."
"I disappear because I did not have to appear.
Today, I dwell, do both, neither, either,
without fear, without fever though I burn."
"A waste of life." "You cannot waste life,
only time -- you've appeared on stage,
never let curtain drop nor went off stage.
Wrong stage."

Guffaws came from friends who now gathered
to hear the fool, angry at the waste:
they had expected so much of him!
"I was all potential, forever. I dropped
the potential for the infinite." Smiles
of solicitous kindness for delirium
in need of strictures came out of their faces.
At that instant, he disappeared.
They awaited his return, found nothing magical
about his vanishing for visibility they thought
they knew well -- after all, the carver
kept carving the wood of air.

Now, he never needed to disappear and
never to appear where he did not wish
to be seen and be the seen seer seen seeing
and giving up seeing, letting go fearing,
leaving the unconquerable to the ineffable.

NEW BIRTH CANAL

The last time I saw into my heart
I found it uninhabitable, was appalled
with anguish of beasts, maladroits,
foolish hyenas who didn't know how
to eat the dead, onions oceaning nothing,
conflagrations of hell and the ripper
slashing the inhabitants to shreds.
So when I asked soul to open my heart
to become the heart, soul kindly sprayed me
with the tears to anoint me to death
for soul told me in the softest of voices
that the embrace would be my last breath.
And you've nothing that is a clue to entry.
Soul tenderly visioned a furnace burning
the coal of my bituminous Pennsylvania youth:
the coal you were no longer burns and warms,
nearsightedness falls away. Every entry
into the heart grows an owing in gratitude
of the living beings and things you become,
inherently the expression of their owing,
every day, until one day, the heart appears
as it is, a new cosmos, nebula of warmth
and light, a freer of inhabitants, the
new birth canal for the incarnated human.

all that you wish you've been, you no longer wish for
as you live with no regrets

all that you heard, you let the conch of silence well up
before speaking

all that you've urgently worked to see with clarity, you've
spun it and willingly give it up for not knowing

all that you've been deaf, dumb, and blind too, you mint the
extraordinary from the deaf, dumb, and blind

all that you breath in depth and height of the mystery of life, you
are

so that only by being larger
can you be what you never can conceive only be
but only when each thing is your breath, depth, and
height

all that you are living, you can ask Life, the figures of life, to give
credence to being who they are, who you are, a
shared being, out of giving, throwing away what is of
no use to Life, your beliefs

dogwoods
welcomes
a thousand
never
night
into
to see
in the owl
branch
of ineffability

night
morning
another life in dark
energy fires
last evening
the same
another world
I've fallen
in day
soul rose out
and made night
moon
today though solid
has transparency
disappearing

into my heart

instead of me

the one who is

ephemeral

2,000 miles

from home

in bed

with my lovers