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Shafer Hall

TO SAIL FROM COLD SPRING HARBOR

the last of the ships in 1862
returned to Cold Spring Harbor

when the hamlet's whaling era
was over Jones died and Jones
four years later by then
long voyages were hurting
ports like Cold Spring Harbor

the Sheffield by 1852
the company owned
the largest vessel
to sail from Cold Spring Harbor

the vessels and insurance
contacted Manhattan
to manage the agents
of Jones and Jones
and their partners in Cold Spring Harbor

the burgeoning 1830s
bought the old bark Monmouth
brought whalebone and oil
and candles to Cold Spring Harbor

Jones and Jones
were family the first
to come ambitious
to Cold Spring Harbor

For more information
contact The Whaling Museum:
Main St., PO Box 25, 11724
New York, Cold Spring Harbor

THE DRAY MAN & HIS DRAY HORSE DRAW THE BULK AWAY

Dray the man
dray the horse
dray the bulk
that's drawn away.

The bulk that's
drawn and drained
away. The horse
that loved the gray.

This is a history:
the schooner ripped
me (I am a sail) I
haul a cart. No sides.

(No arms.) The dray
horse has no arms.
I have lost my arms.
The wind dragged

them away. A gray
bulk drags a gray
horse away. A dead
horse, a gray hulk

and a man to drag
it all away. Bulk
to wrap in a torn
sail and draw away.

ARBOR VITAE

In France and around the world
there are gardens and forests
that have been alive for years.

Redwood trees live for lifespans
building highways as tall as maps
and all you are is a garden.

All you are is a project. All you
are is a hobby. All you are is a
a trellis-and-vine is all you are.

There are miracles that grow on
photosynthesis, eating sun like
someone else's daughter. Just like

those people who know that
they are going to die, plants know
to turn toward the sunlight.

YOUR FACE AS CONVERSATION PIECE

As conversation was pieced together,
I looked at you across the table.

I'm picturing someone right now, some
one who isn't you.

Can you think of who it is?
Who isn't you but is?

Can you sternly correct a minor
table infraction with your eyes
as gentle as your hands?

I'll write these questions on a napkin
and slide them to you from across this poem.

You have all of the time in the world
to answer.

ASSORTED FLAVORS

Eggshell

is pocked with black
dots...what's that
called? When the
negative space
positively covers
the subject and
everything feels
real pastoral?

Roan

is the pastoral
that is slowly
peopled into
a civilization of
animals who dot
the city as it goes
off the air and
into existence.

MAY INCLUDE PIECES

This is a mighty automobile
that breathes out of one of its pieces.
And here is our very own seatbelt built for two.

Here is a way to make a bit of sense
out of complicated internal combustion.

Here is a way to a way to avoid
a way to get away from a way
around the rules if you are young,
too young for toys (like cars) with
small pieces. Do not swallow them.

John Latta

CRITICISM'S BACK

Screwball comedy of the avant-
Imminent: that's *my* dress code.
The bloody robin's egg blue

Uniform of the impersonal is
Something I maintain, removing my
Necktie with obvious care, thus.

My adversary's got official hagiographies
On the side he tags
Symboliste, laughing through the *haschische*

Smoke, autonomous as any entity
Existing solely on dispensations of
Sentiment, currency, and raw bravado.

A precise purpose, that's it.
Contraption like a biscuit tin.
Or a tin biscuit. Hectic

Cohesions dismissed as late marginal,
Like those languid beauties come
Across in salons, all *for*

The dismal flight-taking inherent
In any boom of coherence.
Think of a nest of

Polyhedrons, convergence as assertion's door
Out of order, rock steady
To induce an accommodating disarray

In the ever-galant muse.
It merits an heroic love.
And a means of whiting-

Out the customary sad flower
Metaphor, the *there's gonna be*
Trouble noise outside reception's bandwidth.

THEORIES OF VISUAL PERCEPTION

A range of stimuli implausibly
Coy or a pawnshop shut
For the usual unkempt reasons.

Hair parted Republican-style, proprietary
Indecision and its deafening I
Mean deadening umbilicus of torts.

Two notions of the fertile:
Barren and complacent or foreign
And hard to administer to,

Such is the degeneracy of
Experience maddened by adventures in
A spate of relatively uninterrupted

Deletion and purge. Hence our
Shoreless oceans of excitements to
Faith: 'abide ye with me.'

Here's a frontispiece penis with
Its several adepts and collaborators:
Ilk of the torn trousers.

Ilk of the ball'd-up
Index. Ilk of a philanthropy
Of snaps and snaps, temperamental

And discrete as pilgrim fathers.
Our dearest companion is supple
With light. Blotter, pen, and

Impiety clouds all in primordial
Origin. And skepticism I am
Sure you are wary of.

NOT EXACTLY AWAKE

The neighbor is out inspecting the wind-
Ow frames for dry rot or paint peel as a
Squad of ballplayers propels itself loose-

Limbed and joking down the street in the new
Morning air. Not they the singular men
Of legend, not they nattering like mag-

Pies in rags, not they the lilac-bewigged
Sojourners in lands without nature or
Name. . . So too adequate visions assail

The general ease, broadcasting leavings
Where arrivals only once were welcome:
A book called *Zoo* with sepia-toned prints of

Many varieties of African
Antelope, maps of spur tracks heading off
To distant salt-mining reaches of a

Sea-surrounded tongue of Russian steppe, and
Odd anti-governmental bombings of
A Paris where peasants startle awake

In tall tenements to paw the air for
Whatever sustenance absent in love,
Absent in the thin gruel of the air's

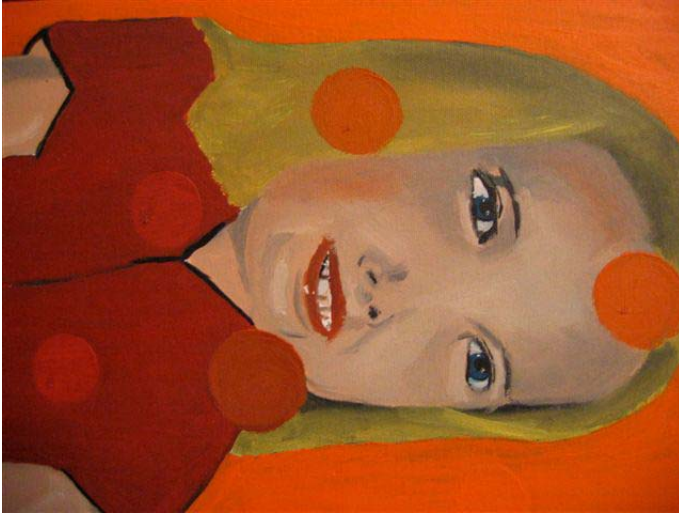
Absenting itself, sucked up out into
Sudden fierce red backdrafts, chaotic scorch.
Pictures trouble our solitary dry

Rapport with the ineffable, the dull.
We consider our own reveries charge
And discharge: strange cargoes wheeled through clean streets.

Not we hesitant and beholden to
God and God's workers the loose-limbed, not we
Athwart the day, sipping a bracing cup

Of coffee in a panic of stories,
Unpicturable, not one to return
To the neighbor now tossing keys in air,

Waiting for that first coat of paint to dry.



SUDDEN DEPARTURES

When the yucca stalk blazes up white in glad
Shreds of glory and the stone cottage behind
It conspires with the cirrus'd blue of the sky,
 A loud coterie

Of stone tumbles like a brute handful of dice
Thrown fraught through scar'd heaven, and one
Hardly adequate consensus makes glib
 The oratory

Wherein all things seem innocent in the excellence
Of *what is*. . . Corner'd by wonderment, you fuss
With the singular arrangement of those blessed
 White flowers, those shreds

Of making arbitrary distance a measure
Of where you have been: forty years collecting
Sights as rarefy the gaping air around
 Them, cluster'd, beheld.

Or, unavoidably, you get it all wrong,
Spelling out names with haphazard reluctance
Like that of the Grunewald who drove a yellow
 School bus, who never

Got out from under the overweight wife who
Sold encyclopedias, who broke the cheap
Davenport, settling into a spiel one blank
 Autumn, opening

One volume to illustrate the completeness
Of the entry, or another on weather
With its pleasing mention of the violence
 Of the dry simoon.

One could buy the whole set and line them all up
On a long shelf, loving the cream-color of
The bindings, loving the bindings, the bindings,
 Loving that that binds.

NOD

Each raindrop pursues it one
Fell intent to make its
Way into the absent visual
Field that becomes a lake
By adding blue, a pigment.
Here a human nod is
A universe. It tumbles out-
Lying cogs into gear, takes
the 'tenement that Walter Mydnyght
Sometye held in the parissche
Of Gales' and deposits it
'Bitwene the lond of Raaf
Sturdy' and the telos that
Is feed to any sentence,
Is its evidence, pooling up:
'& is with-owte date.'

EFFIGY AND ODDITY

Sunk. A plectrum to plunk
Against th'impenetrable plentitude, to torture
Out the 'dreegs and chaffes' of
Fable and doctrine, effigy of
Song. And so exhorteth He
We to good workes continval
Mortifying flesshe. 'Men love
Me with there lypes and
There heates bee farre off
Me.' Prayer and mumblings of
Oddity: to lavish slavish attention
On a towardly and pregnant
Soil, the heroic thing is
To persevere in stupid stupidly.
An historic eros is come.
A droplet is pending off.

TRUMPET AND EARWIG

In a woods near Ermenonville
I sliced into a trumpet-
Brassy peach and ate it
Unconcernedly slouch'd against a black
Gangster car. A couple nigh
In rut: two earwigs skitter'd
Under a stone. So tempo
Is the raggedest tender, up-
Scorch of a kind of
Discursive barn-burning, or hand-
Raising, much of it verily
Fictive, though its nouns are
Correct, sauf Ermenonville, as is
Proper. So 'Love in tonge
Canst last longe,' the taut
Word is a rotten cord.

Rachel Levitsky

from *NEIGHBOR*

030509
030310

alley/gully/gutter/shaft

SACRIFICE

We want more from each other
we can't stand to not have what the other one has
we can't stand what the other one has
we can't stand the other one

I see that when we are scared we
could reach through that
shaft/let touch the tips/
our finger and flank

instead sacrifice/live things
down/through the shaft throw
hard into the alley below
our prayer valley/paper valley

He could be me so
rapidly/sacrifice/another

They are small/they are bugs

Doesn't let me/get away/but
teaches me sleep/snore
bully in one big arm/
around/all around.

to bully, to be nothing more than

one strong arm

in my head

it's not that I wouldn't be his girlfriend

I'd want assurances first.

roof/shaft/sidewalk

MOTHER: LOSS

Scream untied//
Sock in mouth/

The neighbor, he and his wife drink and smoke. Their white and fluffy cat runs out the screen door onto their porch when he rages. Today there is a sign, the cat gone missing. The terrifying sign, spastic big letters of adolescent grief, in the new mother.

As in the time of the war the sky is clear but for the billows of black coal incineration smoke from the chimney across the street.

In still the time of war but people are confused. What should the passengers do with the bag the poor Chinese lady left on the train. A reused plastic bag with a gift inside. Lady come get your bag. Too late she never looked back. A passenger is rapping his lyrics and another seems to be doing the same but wait, she's muttering, a message, throw it out the train door, throw it out the train door at the next station, don't touch it, throw it out the door, and a little louder finally so the good Samaritan gets confused the confusion the strange discomfort on her permanent smile.

At five in the morning the neighbor screaming again this time something about not caring about the screams heard earlier in the stairwell. I guess he has removed the sock from her mouth. Not that I can hear her but I can tell he is responding to what she says he doesn't give a rat's ass. What is heard there.

I have a dream about her. She brings me a product that makes things red. But I'm in the middle of a poo. So it's embarrassing. I mean I am embarrassed. We are at the city pool. She has one family member after another one coming to get her. In this way it is hard to get the red on, it is hard to get anything done.

I dream about my cat, who is a wild dog. Whose behavior is unpredictable.

Another time he screamed at me from across the street, and last night he looked out the window at me and my friend as we were talking loudly, as if to say, you're talking loudly.

“HURT ME”

My phobia around flags
began with the neighbor whose collection
made me see that
all flags are the nazi
flag hung in the basement
where laundry sometimes done
sex illicitly had

Not meaning to harm me or my fellows but meaning what.

I let him in late one night I mean to tell you I know this is a confession.

Of the truth of how many chocolates or dangerous sexual partners.

The incest, with my neighbor.

The drugs, the high cholesterol.

My embarrassed gender.

That I want this to be a novel.

Everything having to do with the water.

But the emphasis on the glass.

Crumble/insanity/container.

Desire activity/ that rots.

No container.

Water.

bed

BORDER: STORY

On the nightly news they interview us about the neighbor. We say we never expected he'd do a thing like that, he seemed like a nice guy, was quiet and good to his moms, and went to shul on Friday. Generally kept to himself but always gave the mendicant a dime.

The mendicant says something different, says he always knew. There was something off about that guy. The guy never 'went' crazy, was the same the whole time. I knew him.

Which is why I never called him a second time.

Not psychic but with a good intuition//called his friend/instead//
to invite him/over.

Not explaining that voice.

floor/creaking floor

I'm tired, the neighbors are too quiet.
I'm lucky for the life on the street.
The baby hasn't yet arrived.
The sweat was pouring out of him.
Sometimes lovemaking is gross.
And sometimes not.
Each day, the sky manifests multiplicity.
Therefore so much happens everyday.
Soon I will walk out the door.
This may take four hours.
What is gotten from the details.
The rug under my feet/ass.
The one in the hall must be a speckled maroon.
Yes. He is tattered at his edges.
Though he is tattered at his edges and has a facial feature that pushes at the boundaries of taste,
he is irresistible to women. The other one sweating reminds me of a once popular cartoon. The
baby has now arrived.

The babies are in their apartments. Their parents are there too.
Some of the parents are married and others not.
Some of the parents are single and some of the parents are gay.

These things/seen/become less interesting/
to the non-celebrity actors/ performing them.

bedroom/border/memory

BLOTTER

The I of I hasn't got a plan. She, like a famous glass wall on a beach in California, maintains a precarious hold, no longer on her insanity. Not to last very long.

Life should be interesting. She thinks. The friends come through. The friends maintain. The drugs, alcohol, cigarettes maintain and threaten trouble. The gas fed heat in the house poses a question. The good writing is beautiful. The flesh is judged. If there is meaning. If there is offense. There is television and we do not always judge. There is much we think (which) we no longer say. There are archives and codes. There are supplies that run out. There are places to buy more. There are lines and plenty of bodies to them. There is abstract love.

There is a limit to presence. A limit to what is said. A limit to taking offense. There is a solitary woman. There are many solitary. There is magic through that door. There is tension. There's rejection to tension. Why go for tension. There's a brother, like a neighbor. They are born into the situation. There is culture or not. There's a question. There are many.

There's Renee (therefore patience, and drool), Melissa (patience and Renee), Rose (impatience and humor). There's Bill, Bob, Mike, Bob, Tom. There is sweat (discharge) and the organs (of discharge). There are the tall and the robust, the old who go their way. There is every detail that someone knows. We know our details and dream them or work them for our paycheck. The chicken and the egg. The list of lovers. The one who cannot love. The one with money keeps it to himself.

There is she who thinks of countries. She who enters cultures, some languages. Sometimes language. In the languages there are many languages and details. She reserves her language, keeps her details. So there's a town without a map.

There's a culture its procreating system. A county that doesn't procreate. There's a guy or two who say it will not last.

There's a reason for the writing. There's a reason to be loud.

The feeling desired. The feeling not achieved. The achievement of guilt. Wool pulled over eyes. Almost everyone realizing they must pull wool over eyes.

There is Rosmarie, Lyn and Leslie. Bob, Tom and Charles. And Bruce. Screams, at times unscreamed. The line that keeps us. In or dry. The line forward that fades and disappears. A plane that doesn't fly. A computer or another technology that is not so cheap or easy.

There are men and women in their conspiracy. There is fear and more there. There's fear of death or loss. Desire for death to avoid loss. There are Peter, Sue and Tracy.

There is solitary travel and discovery.

There are women.

They have babies. They had sex. Travel, unravel.

There is boredom. There is John. Elaine, Julianna, Lisa. Elton.

A life that is long. Renewal and the question. A mother and father. Rites or stages without rites. Make believe.

Pyrotechnic entertainment. A question. A very long poem.

Fragments and chance. Thinking or ideal. Gertrude and her papers. There are Germans.

Alice as executioner. Jen, Jena, Jeni, Erica.

Israel and Pharoah. Khahani who is dead. Thank allah.

Peace. Abstraction. Commerce. Explosives. The young. Sex. Perverts. Sex perverts and pedophiles.

Leaving then coming.

Women. They have babies.

There are babies. They have limbs. They have lips. Some are thin.

There are black. There is touch without sex.

Drugs in the bathroom. Where a broken toilet.

Lists. In the head. There are people I don't love.

There is Jennifer, there is Maggie, and Rose, Elizabeth. There was Judy, there was Scott.

There is white, in borrowed countries. There is land and air and water.

There are rites, yearly or once in a while.

Obligation and boredom. The chosen, the ignored. The one who needs my money. My money that is needed. My boredom since I'm high and fat.

Spelling.

Heat in the middle of May. Birds and meat.

Artists proliferate. Money and a crises round cash. Systems to ignore.

There is high at 8:00. Wandering in the night.

Nervous for the wandering. Break and down.

DEFINING

As a United Statesian I do not think that neighbors in other nations treat each other better, or with more care but I would rather my roommate be from another country.

In this country, it is not the norm to kill neighbors because they have a different religion, though group killing is a form of intimacy we lack.

The poets are not my neighbors and they are not my friends. We agree that our religion, if we have one, is inconsequential to our relationship, and to our poetry, here, in this country. The poets are responding well to the project I have of thee, my neighbor. They find it less sentimental, less personal, while more intimate, than the project of articulating the space between lovers. They wonder if I am speaking of my actual experience and are titillated by the possibility that this fucking I've spoken of, and drugs, are drugs and fucking, not writing.

I've said, my neighbor has made a public stand of his sobriety, and his fetish his daughter he keeps infantile—enough to make anyone squirm.

Tonight I had a plan to do coke, then come home and write about the neighbor.

I was wondering if it were richer when the windows open and the summer rage is audible. Today the customer of the food pantry across the street excoriating the lousy church who feeds her.

Every lapsed born again Christian reports as the reason for their lapse, the hypocrisy of people. I was hoping for a loss of faith in god. That never happens.

There was a story told tonight about a loud and bothersome neighbor, who explained to the complaining neighbor of her predicament, "you're my neighbor, you have to help me!" We laugh at this story because we know that isn't the way we think of things.

In some mornings I wonder if my reluctance to leave the building is enough of a reason to ask my neighbor for cream for coffee or an egg to make the pancakes.

Language would be easier if we could remove the prepositions but then the objects and subjects would be difficult to discern. Like I said, in my career as a writer—I know it suspect for poets to speak of career—I find myself more attractive as an object. If I am the object then who is the subject? Unnecessary. Unnecessary is happy because she is both nothing and everything. She is as light as air—if air be light.

Anyone wants meaning. Anyone calls meaning Necessary. Unnecessary has intercourse with Anyone. Unnecessary puts herself into the position where she can't lose. Loss regrets her lack of an 'e'. Unnecessary therefore misses Lose. Loose feels muscular and achy. No, loose is on Quaaludes. Loose can't explain why Loss gets laid more. Loose can't explain the draw of religion.

The grown ones that never believed in god are assimilated aliens on the street and in the trains. They are the sad ones on the trains whose sadness is read as intelligence. Intelligence likes to fuck but gets laid less than Belief. Librarians appreciate quiet refrigerators. Librarians have fucked both Belief and Intelligence. They fuck poorly but A Lot. A Lot gets mistaken for Belief. A Lot is both Pagan and Monotheism. Ism is at war with Unnecessary. Ism means motherfucker. Ism is the mean motherfucker that everyone wants to fuck, reading her as Meaning. Meaning delights in Masochism. Ism is the sadist that doesn't mind the lovers who call her Meaning while she's fucking them. Fucking is the sneakiest fuck of all. Fucking convinces

Anyone that she's Necessary. Unnecessary puts up with Fucking because she understands Fucking to be without Malice. Even Cold Hearted loves Fucking without Malice. Therefore Fucking is rather inclusive, and Ism, quite opposite from Fucking. Meanwhile, despite his occasional excesses with Fucking, Downtrodden rages.

Without the rage of Downtrodden any neighborhood becomes Suburb. In Suburb, any human is a Living Subject to the project/Great Experiment. Catalogued. By Food/Medicine/Style. The project of secular society is no longer an issue because as United Statesian we don't kill our neighbors for their religion.

O21110
O40421

cellar/fence/garbage bin

BREATH

He is here at home
that's how I keep him
where he won't fuck me
I make him coffee

A wage slave with
an annoying neighbor
our "brotherhood of time" is
too groggy to answer his door

They confused that someone so heavy
is taken like that
taken by the wind
therefore harder to arrest

What does it mean to be hard?
I am not hard
I made the coffee
I aimed to please

But my way is this
way, of grass rather
than path, light dark
competition for the soft

at slant between
this ancient habit to resist
the sun's behind, devil's sweat
blue wispy puffy curly

Complaint city, compliant city
horse/car, plane/bomb
sheet rubs ever warm
ever alone the pigeons

Julien Poirier

THE FRAGILE ECOSYSTEM OF CHRIS

I was close enough to start to be streaking when Chris

At Biff's every booth has its own
private phone, no dial tone. Nothing ivory works, you can't
call what it does work. Someone busted into your compact
truck, took my backpack and threw it on the parking lot. I
was drawing smokestacks and you were painting silhouettes
of surgery on napkins. Your rat phobia, what can I say about it?

Live in this attic.

My knight is entangled in low-rent pawns.

It started so great, a rehearsal space where even
drinking from an implied cup was supposed to be attached
to your character. My partner was stilted,

the war got sick of watching, there were termites
in the king. Crack addicts took over my car because I
couldn't break a 20. Let me tell you

something. Between the cafe, my car, your rats and diner
way, I had to be a lover, I blame society.

I got in the way of a plant. No one sits with it
while it's dying. People are too concerned with their shoes
to see the miracle. A shock

to the head wipes out your image
in the lens, even the shoreline. So when you see those roller-
skaters ride into the tide, no mystery they appear
to be levitating. Meanwhile the old lady is sick
but her brilliance is governing the honeysuckle—

Why don't you draw me
a picture of your mom? How many times
can I turn over the same leaf? My nights were energetic
rebounds I lost your head above.

BIRD

A bird is the fruition of a fish, yet so much more
secretive a bird's death.

Fish falls to floor, bird
flies out door. Floor keeps secrets, door keeps more.
Why don't bird bones rust on our roof? People tell me
they die, but I see no proof of death.

If the throat
turned to chalk, and the wing to bark, and the song
to the moonless night,
I would still look for the heart
of the hummingbird in a satellite.

You say they must,
but you're all talk. I see no proof.
I see no bones.
You'd think sharp man, with his fancy phone,
could at least produce one bloody stone.

HEAVY LOSSES, BOSS

I am the sole owner of a long brass fence in this life. I don't pretend to own men, I let them pretend. My riches extend to bottlecap mines, I tune the pine tree ruby. Gold stomachers and white doubloons, my initials dance on a gold spittoon. Dungeness claws leaf my crude for the secret, I pay them to keep it. This is my will. When I die recycle me in Chinatown, I want to come back a Chinaman in a long silk gown, but fat as ever, fat as ever. Dissembled in the ground the tourists glaze—the sheep are on the highway in the haze, my yacht is on the harbour. My kingdom for a link of ardour, I loved a girl, she had great legs. Skeleton bonanzas sipping dregs, my speculations rendered by spiders—would that the chaste dancer would kiss my neck. Despair became regret, a half-ounce note on the pony express, last ditches for the west. I ran the room in empty flesh, they said they could taste the kid on my breath. My cummerbund was satin Lethe, the chandelier of horse's tears—often challenged me to remember where I'd got it. But on fishing trips I drank canned beer, keeping real, keeping real. White flies on auto wrecks, silver pudding from broken necks, I gazed upon the slow decay of fire trucks in ocean spray, gawked at slums, the whorls on their hard-won thumbs and conditions. To be a squid in a shipwreck's kitchen, to glow at the head like a miner! I would have closed my shoe factory in China, moved it to Missouri, twin of the impossible. My lynching days are over, I steel queens on gallows and catch their haloes—I've got a knack for horseshoes, I catch the dollar jumping and burn it in a pumpkin. For this I'm honcho hollow, I grin and caterpillars follow. I keep a man to shine my fence, Eliot's his name, shining fences is his game. But when the Big One hit he vanished down a water main. I was standing there like a sucker holding the broken chain, —I watched my mansion fall, my heir bum change, Enrico sang to Teddy in a bath house on the cliff, he sang 'My favorite soldier has no brain' with a wet towel round his neck. I found it

sick, but I was too late. Sturm and Drang skipped naked through the trees, twin sisters with nipples bit raw. The stars in the sky were comprehensively detached, the sheep went Ba, Ba. And my wife couldn't pull the snails off her eyes, we went native in the Big Lie like spies on the Peninsula—I had my elephant gun, and a map of Bombay with gutters that moved. I shot on sight, brought down a kite with a fiver for a tail. And I rebuilt my fortune on that snail, rung up Eliot in a leaking pail—went to see the elephant with Jack London and Ishmael, I dropped my pants at the mouth of Hell. Neons burned like incense in the rain, and my boy came home in uniform with a bandaged face and a plastic leg. I ordered a keg. Here's my will. There's nothing left on the chicken but a farm. Fine crystal equilibrium on the Holdings, tune it in the dark. I vaguely recall being drunk in a park, and sleeping under the news I made. The pain sets in when you remove the blade. To be a printer's apprentice by trade! or a scantily-clad kickboxer in a video game arcade, I would have gambled, I would have paid.

TREASURE ISLAND

The largest manmade island on earth is in San Francisco. Cisco, my friend, went out with Rose. Those were wet years between Oakland and the forgotten side of town. I preferred my computer then to the one I have now. When I got back from Ithaca all the furniture collided under a bright lamp in the center of the room. The shade was on the floor and Ben was freebasing speed with a homeless prophet (minor) who was wearing the flag. I wore the flag as I fried on microdots after handing Naomi my disease. She was incredibly good-looking and my teeth hadn't started to fall out. I must have thought I was Robin Hood. We made fires on the beach and swam drunk in water that would ice a shark. We broke up at the duck pond and didn't even know it since we weren't going out. The ducks were raping each other and it was disturbing. I fucked you up 12 years ago and it's as if no time has passed, but you're gaunt and married and my teeth, my teeth.

AUTEUIL

I don't know where the banana peel I'm sliding on started
I've torn up my picture of the river and thrown the pieces
Onto the river. Marisol do you know what I'm doing? Nothing
is happening and where nothing is happening, find me

Look at my hands what am I becoming? To be clean eggplant
The port memorizes its single line. The whole human world
Hangs on a hole and the rude clanging of getting it right
I thought. And the best art in the museums played along

I'm already living in the last place to go, will you
Ever catch me? The tree let me wash my hands in its roots
So I let it wash its hands in my roots. A red
Window affords a view of earth for these ultimate peeping toms

The universe is in mint condition but this was an off year
I need you to finish this, warm in old blankets piled in
At the last. Pigeon in the dark airshaft of the maternity ward
A boneless tent dashes over our crop

TO ARTIE MURNAU,

Memory is a thing I'm very curious to know more about, and I found your excellent book on the subject inspiring, and read several passages twice. I like how you said, 'Because the boy in the deli is God, which means we're all going to eat tonight.' I underlined that sentence along with a few others:

'I am searching for the weird word.'

'Los Angeles is a parking lot for used cities.'

'I love lemon meringue pie.'

'All poets fall in love with my girlfriend if they're any good.'

'NICE PLACES STILL EXIST'

I have a few questions. 'To direct air upon,' you write, 'as if upon a fire, the nutcracker which creeps on tree trunks in search of small nuts, is really not a good idea, since the nutcracker (i.e. the nose) has developed a hypersensitivity to persuasive or desperate tactics which memory employs in the interest of 'hedging hogs,' and will very likely desert the face if pressed.' I follow, up to the point that you mention the nutcracker. Elsewhere, in Chapter 3 you refer to the 'rust on the nutcracker' and then cryptically to the 'poppy in the rust.' I'm lost.

Tonight I ate a ham and cheese crepe at a restaurant. I haven't had a good cup of clam chowder for 5 or 6 years. I like the white, creamy chowder with chewy pink clams in it, and I love those gamey crackers.

My girlfriend and I went through a very rough phase but things have gotten much better and I'm happy with my new writing. Did you know that Nosferatu endorsed cashews on late-nite radio? I bet you didn't, or maybe you forgot.

Just kidding.

I went to see Andre Breton's study, reconstructed in the Beaubourg Museum. They've got it behind a glass wall with a comfortable bench in front for a good long look. Two lovers were sitting on the bench and necking in the dim light. Breton had a diorama of tiny stuffed birds; it looks almost like a cake rack on a diner counter. But if you were to remove the glass hood from Breton's cake it would smell like sawdust and iodine. No coconut cream for this surrealist! You should go and see this place if you get a chance. Very inspiring.

'Mirrory LP the color of fern, vulture infested with lady bugs. Men of birds with hearts of glue, Ronsard, the hairs in your nostrils tingle, we are near a stream.

Mutton, Pierre, mutton and bees, the nuclear blast bleaches the 15th-century wolves!

Thank you for writing these words.

Sincerely,

DRINKING

At 9 in the morning drinking
beer from a tall bottle
the caterpillar
has left my leaf

I could be
both lovers
and never break up

Herbs
collectible stamps
and blue sheet lightning

I am the water
the people on the bank
came to be near

I saw the most beautiful film tonight but I forget its name. What was it about? It was about everything, friendship first! The people in the film were so funny I couldn't stop laughing---it was embarrassing, a little. But my embarrassment only enhanced the pleasure. The film was in black and white but the dissection scenes were in color. They dissected a poisonous red Peruvian frog on a silver table with very sharp scalpels next to a loaf of Italian bread. One scene featured a foxy lady doing nothing but reading John Steinbeck in an empty restaurant. She wasn't so funny but I couldn't get over how foxy she was and I was wondering what it would be like to be in bed with her when suddenly the next scene started and there we were in bed together, and it was an excellent scene. Death is an experiment. Radishes. How are you going to symbolize death? You could tell the tricycle was green even in black and white. And in this suburb there was no room for paranoia, only for schnauzers. I loved this film more than I can say, and afterwards, on the street in the red light district all of the sick things in the world suddenly struck me as very funny-sad. I couldn't believe I was alive in such a beautiful, terrifying place as this and I almost started to cry and, I think, to wonder what would happen when I was gone.

SILVER TO SILVER

Why are you writing a book?
they ask me. My book discusses courage and
tells a story. It is about friendship. What else can I do?
I've stopped looking for perfection, now I'm looking
for Russian epaulets. I want naked bodies
that trust each other. Here, I'm turning my moods
into images. I'm not exemplary since to be exemplary
would be to be consistent. Well, I'm not.
I'm in love.

Brendan Lorber

68 QUICKER POEMS BY BRANDON DOWNING

23

My opulent riddle of hammers — swim!
Swim little brothers
Swim to *freedom!*

41

In the lexicon of battle
the hands-free feminine clause
...as predicted

7

Wool knickers! Cotton knickers!
Felt knickers cloud the Basilica

8

The era of portraiture ends
with Mother & your best friend

59

He was born
in St. Petersburg
& left only once
never to return
except once

14

This is section 57
of the map of my
NINJA TESTICLE

50

Under her raiment,
the Countess counted cards

32

A humming appliance
brought him comfort
The comfort of war

12

Wet naps vs. soap
Donohue vs. Wopner
Naples vs. Syphilis

25

Why are your dreams
populated with spinsters
Cynthia?
Is it the tyranny of soup
seen from within?

44

The wood nymph
with the big umph

62

3 ifs 5 ands 7 buts

53

a blizzard of snipes
a welter of hogs
a wedge of spiders

26

My phantom limb
is now
open for business

10

Rock paper seashells
by the rock paper shore

11

Go to hell,
Hershey, PA style!

35

I will tell you certain things
I will tell you other things
But you don't get certain
other things, you fuckwad

2

Under a rock
there was a sock,
ruined!

65

I'm sorry I was mean to you
in your experientially &
perceptually deranged
world of demons & shadows

47

My pants are baggy
My legs fresh
Knee-deep in the
collapsing proposal

54

My holistic self went to the ATM
& withdrew \$20

28

You know kindness with a
Resignation Tender

4

The trial continues
until Rainbow Boy
proclaims Dead Heat

29

You hustled in the west
You hustled in the kitchen
You hustled the night
into leggy avarice & sin
into pepper

38

According to my notes
Donatella is . . . Fugue in Dog Minor

56

Hey Mister Device
How long
is your longest hour?
& when can we expect you?

66

The less accurate
Magic 7 ball



Shanna Compton

THICK AS, UM, THIEVES

I was small and little,
she said, and both were true.
Fast, powerful, hunchbacked—
these are not adjectives she
could use. When they first arrived
the brush was such you couldn't run
a comb through. A whore's tangled
head, or worse, a horse's tail
fulla burrs and detritus. But the folks
paid no nevermind. They cut them trees,
built with the logs. They learned to swim
in case the floods came. They shot
wild hogs. They drove brash
hot rods down the logging roads
to town where they worked jobs,
then drove them home again.

I WAS TO HEAR A SCORE OF TIMES
a story of hard years, she said
and this was true. Her waist
ain't narrow, nor does it detract
from the body of her daughter
sitting just there nearby.

THOSE DAYS OF POMP & VIGOR

I'll see your panther
and raise you wildcat,
so how you like that?
Skateboard the pristine paths
of the swank stripmall before
Grand Opening.

Grand indeed.

I'll see that wildcat
and raise you tigers.
Our band was better
than your band, we
won 4-A state and did
the Cowboys' game on Turkey Day.

Some band indeed.

I'll see your mascot
and raise my mascot.
Let them totem animals
fight it out. Let's skip
the argument about whose haircut's
worse in the senior picture.

At least *you* weren't wearing a boa.

A LATIN ATLAS

“Argh, my latin atlas!” alleges
Alice. Alas the apple-cheeked
gal is angsty and alone

with an airstream alibi,
and an away-team anxiety
for anything at all.

She argues that alimony
would allocate her Argentine
appurtenances and awesome

appliances. He angrily asks
why she’d assume
he’d alleviate her aged

ass for any amount.
Asshole. Any fool may ascertain
an apartment apart

is a certainty. She’s aloof
and he’s anti-authentic,
but autobiographical audacity

allows these antagonistic associates
to eventually arrange an
agreeable new alliance.

THE MARKET IS A MARKET

But it really *doesn't*
matter how pipsqueak. See
honey? Look how *easy*.
Cinderella nixed her fella
and the stepsisters lost
a few toes. So
what? Never say you
can't make your way.
That's what *make* is
for, why *you* are
you. And the market?
The market is just
a lousy market, see.

STRAIGHT FROM THE HEADLINES

The Asian monks who refuse to decay
are past their sell-by date. A Norwegian house
nearly missed by a boulder slide survives.
And everywhere, all over, history
continues to change in an instant.

Think we should up the press run?
Folks will want to know
that a naked bibliophile was found
buried under an avalanche of journals.
We can't write poems fast enough,

I swear, to keep up with leg injuries,
dehydration, and sightings of UFOs,
much less the rest of this crap.
Should we give it another shot,
regardless? I'm free for the next six months or so.

Bruce Covey

FROM REVEAL*

Reveal: Utensil

Knife: Grab one if you want one because they probably won't last long
Fork: Time and time again we've challenged the multi-headed beast
Spoon: The infinite pet. The two sides of Monsieur Valentine
Chopsticks: It is now known that silver has no reaction to arsenic

Reveal: Shade

Lavender: Lots of ways to pamper yourself and gain extra value
Puce: Envy to change, the ringing of your portable of look
Violet: You can use it to draw contradictory diagrams
Fuchsia: At least one child in the UK dies each week as a result of cruelty
Plum: The Foot of the Hill Temple was established in 2003
Mauve: List for test suite patch submission
Magenta: Do something about it

Reveal: Party

Donkey: We have been rescuing and caring for more years
Green: Assets in Iraq have been looted and nuclear materials have disappeared
Elephant: Chilling

Reveal: Sense

See: Peter's pence paths of the spirit latest site map
Hear: Out now: who's not forgotten?
Touch: Teaching on the keys to victory in spiritual warfare
Taste: This depolarizes it until threshold is reached
Smell: Connect the dots the displaced fireworks

* I created the various (now 40 in all) parts of "Reveal" using the "I'm Feeling Lucky" feature of google.com. A search on each line's keyword revealed a website, and I used different methodologies for each poem to select the corresponding "found text."

EVENS

Dizzy Dean, 5-1; Dean Martin, 20-1; Daffy Dean, 45-1; Dean “The Dream”
Meminger, 60-1; Deacon Jones, 100-1; Dream Team, 200-1

MLK, 3-1; HD, 5-1; JFK, 10-1; LBJ, 50-1; BBQ, 75-1; MLA, 100-1; IBM, 100-1

Serena Williams, 2-1; Venus Williams, 3-1; Chris Evert, 4-1; Jennifer Capriati, 10-
1; Tracy Austin, 15-1; Martina Hingis, 20-1; Andrea Jaeger, 30-1, Anna
Kournikova, 100-1

Blue, 3-1; Red, 3-1; Yellow, 3-1; Green, 9-1; Orange, 9-1; Purple, 9-1

Scarlet Witch, 3-2; Wicked Witch of the North, 6-1; Sandwich, 10-1; Scarlet
O’Hara, 18-1; Sandman, 22-1; Sam Spade, 25-1; Samantha Stevens, 40-1; Sam’s
Club, 50-1; Crippler Ray Stevens, 100-1; Salem, 125-1; Oliver North, 1,000,000-1

Summer, 3-1; Yellow, 5-1; Zucchini, 8-1; Patty Pan, 12-1; Gourd, 20-1; Racketball,
30-1

Andre the Giant, 3-1; Larry Zbyszko, 5-1; Bob Backlund, 8-1; Jimmy “Superfly”
Snuka, 15-1; Road Warrior Hawk, 15-1; Sergeant Slaughter, 20-1; The Iron Sheik,
20-1; Gorilla Monsoon, 25-1; Rowdy Roddy Piper, 25-1; Junkyard Dog, 30-1;
Crusher Blackwell, 50-1

Lucille Ball, 3-1; Super ball, 8-1; Super Bowl, 12-1; Bowling ball, 15-1; Baltimore,
25-1

Cap’n Crunch, 5-2; Kix, 4-1; Cherrios, 6-1; Wheaties, 8-1; Lucky Charms, 10-1;
Frankenberry, 15-1; Booberry, 15-1; Honey Combs, 15-1; Sugar Smacks, 20-1;
Sugar Puffs, 20-1; Alpha-Bits, 25-1; Sugar Frosted Flakes, Great

Chain of Fools, 2-1; Dick Chaney, 2-1; Dick Armey, 2-1; Dick Nixon, 2-1; Dick
Gephart, 50-1; Gary Hart, 80-1; Don Chaney, 100-1; Andy Dick, 100-1; Dick Van
Dyke, 100-1

Willy Mosconi, 2-1; Minnesota Fats, 5-1; Jean Balukas, 8-1; Irving Crane, 10-1;
Black Widow Jeanette Lee, 12-1; Machine Gun Lou Butera, 20-1; Allison Fisher,
20-1

Rock Em Sock Em Robots, 3-2; Click Clacks, 4-1; Easy Bake Oven, 8-1; Hot
Wheels, 15-1; Mr. Potato Head, 20-1; Slinky, 27-1; Magic 8 Ball, 38-1; Ken, 80-1

Dorothy, 3-2; Toto, 5-1; Scarecrow, 5-1; Tin Man, 8-1; Cowardly Lion, 12-1; Glenda,
NA

Pillsbury Dough Boy, 7-2; Dole bananas, 9-1; Dunkin Donuts, 13-1; Do Ray Me Fah So La Tee, 18-1; Don't You Tread on Me, 25-1; Julie Andrews, 30-1; Homer Simpson, 40-1

Zeno, 2-1; Zero Mostel, 6-1; Zeke Mowatt, 10-1; Zest Soap, 20-1; Zippy the Pinhead, 25-1

Nickel, 1-1; Aluminum, 4-1; Copper, 9-1; Zinc, 16-1; Magnesium, 25-1; Iron, 36-1; Silver, 49-1; Gold, 64-1; Platinum, 81-1; Mercury, 100-1

Drew Barrymore, 10-1; Drew Carey, 20-1; John Barrymore, 30-1; John Berryman, 40-1; Barry White, 50-1; John Ashbery, 60-1

Pair, 4-3; 2 Pairs, 20-1; 3 of a kind, 46-1; Straight, 254-1; Flush, 508-1; Full House, 693-1; Four of a kind, 4,164-1; Straight flush, 72,192-1; Royal flush, 649,739-1

Vanilla, 5-1; Chocolate, 5-1; Strawberry, 10-1; Butter Pecan, 25-1; Mint Chip, 35-1; Coconut, 50-1; Ginger, 50-1; Tutti Fruitti, 100-1

FLATTERY

What an enchanting homepage
Everyone wishes to fast forward to you
Your expectation of citrus, lemons mostly
Cirrus constellates about you
The graceful use of your canopener
You have an impeccable sense of direction
Your thoughts, I've noticed, count to ten
The delivery of your pitch always
Catches me off guard
Salem never saw such a beauty
You have more facets than a carrot
At the top of your line, the train stops
The abatement of time is up to your shadow
You cleave the rainbow from its pot
& wrap it around your reeboks
My personality split when you
Spoke to me for the first time
Your moss gathers no stones
Even ivory would beckon your thighs
Silk would hazard your expectations
If driving east, you would
Superimpose upon the rising sun
Your duty lies in explosions
Half the meals want to eat you
Trees bend, tides flow,
Volcanoes pop, waterfalls zigzag
All toward the florid canoe of your sublimity

FLIGHT NUMBERS AND DESTINATIONS

1. 1111 to Baltimore
2. 572 to La Guardia
3. 1723 to O'Hare
4. 233 to Hartsfield
5. 888 to Timbuktoo
6. 999 to Katmandoo
7. 69 to Intercourse
8. 70 to Truth or Consequences
9. 101 to Anywhere
10. Pi to Anguish
11. R^2 to The Center of The Earth
12. ABC to 123
13. Number to Name
14. 5 to Dime
15. Lock Ness to Monster
16. Apples to Oranges
17. Safe In to Kicked Out
18. 15 to Life
19. 15, Love
20. Conception to Delivery
21. 60 Watts to 120 Volts
22. Up to U
23. 0 to 60
24. Quarter to Midnight
25. Date to The Prom
26. Proceed to Go
27. Left to Your Own Devices
28. Topsy to Turvy
29. [not available]
30. Half to Dotcom
31. 60 2 Turnips
32. Road to Financial Well-Being
33. 2X 2 Equals
34. Inches to Miles
35. Duck Is to Quack
36. As Cow Is to Moo
37. CLXVII to Italy
38. Falling to Sleep
39. Ten to Three
40. 333 to Turkey
41. 3 Plus 2 Fingers
42. 1 _____ to G _____
43. 0 to Zero
44. -3 to e

45. C to
46. Beat to The Punch
47. A Dozen Ones to Read Tonight
48. Toe to Toe
49. Perform to Enable
50. Year to Monkey
51. Wallow to Reveal
52. Flee to Avoid
53. Infinity to Affinity
54. Front to Back
55. Another to Gether
56. Blee to Sieve
57. Dawn to Dusk
58. Cops to Robbers
59. Y to Intersection
60. Catapult to Your Place

W. B. Keckler

SANGUINARIA

Bloodroot,
oh Lorena Bobbit
gathers,

O Sky-Father
in Hesiod

the brief life-span
of this flower,

*

Who tells pussy jokes
in the office, the bar
Beware,
sanguinaria, your root

oozes red sap
if severed;

She might want you Athis
deflowered
to season your tongue
to feminine ways
as in *Theogeny*

a cock thrown into the sea
from Heaven

frothed up
Arose
as Love

CYCLAMEN

Something has alit
 pervish, peevish
 maybe fourteen
Labial shapes on air
 but aflutter
 saying *fuck off*
to beauty,
 to loss,
 often in the scrubs
holding herself.
 Who would guess her
 rock-footed
 when she is so buttery
 to the hand,
 who?

FOXTAIL LILY

White ashes

no, flowers

than a man

two feet taller

aboriginal ghosts, 8 ft. stalks

the wind plays

at thought

on any open hole

o lemures, whose

at least two feet taller

than 99.89 %

omen

oh the tribal hopelessness
of gender

..."when you see a bunch of them
together"

erections eremurus evermore

to get her

ghosts

"solitary tail"

& this world

is not for keeping

men won't tell you

but fuck

***LET'S PARACHUTE IN THE FIRST
TRANSSEXUAL PRESIDENT
OF IRAQ***

(an election prayer)

The question of which eye to open with
The question of which ripens
As warm waters may be clouds carapaces of touch, untouched
Some families sit closer to the wind
The question of missing origin (organs?) disappears
Some that enter we call people, but what of others
Shapes or lability in us
Mind's ripe obsessively consecutive obtainings
only pretend to cry wolf to be orgasm or door or eye or lover
Hello, Adrienne Rich!
Or is an optical instrument
The edge is so often eye-opening food: ridges and mountains
A peach could be all the sex in Leningrad tonight
Talk about how eyesight is a city
Maybe talk about a hand's supernatural moments
subject to deportation, a.k.a. the library

Whose hand goes to the mouth, incisive window frame?

*

a funeral

We tend to close with people (but the warranty's not included)
I met another adherent of the insensible
Was glad to be deformed of injury. to have a tail
A face is not only the end of a sequence
As a bird is not only time exaggerating in the clouds
Love divides a great number.
With holes as our guide, I think we may survive
With soap as a confrontation (I mean intellectually)
If your government had a human age, how old would it be?
(I was thinking maybe ninety-seven or seventeen for mine)
The applicants were horrified and cowered from the meteors of such questions
This is too diffuse for feeling
To be or to what

The soliloquy is ropy saliva, Reykjavik market sheep head
sea sounds to sleep by.

*

a "school play"

The superindividual sucks quite well
Nature doesn't exactly abhor the vacuum so much as where it
A base is a number or a food or a lover or many
One of the children is to be Paleozoic, the other Mesozoic
Ancestry is a concept in the midst of being helpfully purged
The executions in China don't use scaffolding nor feel the need
Westerners prefer staging, it seems
A person may be folded in a slow sort of origami. posthumously.
But keenness has nothing to do with nature's mind
Nature's mind is mostly vice versa (hidden purse)
His life's work was to put a camel in each book by Samuel Beckett
The wealth involved in some mental illness is staggering
These people are sometimes allowed to purchase whole alphabets
We greet them in parking lots

(it's the closest they'll come to our buildings)

*

And then we learned through Crick & Watson nature was just these hidden patents
It was capitalist piggery all along (even if no one was driving)
A tooth under human control is a miraculous thing
Dogs can't wait for miracles
Only humans who deal largely with suffixes (very large oceans)
Mental or moral or strategic sand
Thou sands down many
Though the ocean remains a sort of courage I suppose. grebes on image tides
Liquid as the notion of "event" in Canada
A charge is incurred for a chemical change in a sentence
Insolubize the mountain please
What is insensate in marriage is the third eye
Right where your lover kisses you on the forehead
It's too late for matriarchal brakes, the rot is androgynous

and i suppose we sort of love that sea-whiff

*

Reference is the sensitive head of the penis in capitalism
Are you insane enough to speak in shibboleths
God love a comma drizzler, a philosopher
Like honey-basted skins of nineteen-year-olds, he can taste it cookin
Florida is renowned for its florid Bundys and counting
"Jeb said dias Bej" look I made a palindrome
Nature is not a palindrome unless you spell it COC
They're remaking the Partridge Family, it'll be a palimpsest
H.D. was only a lesbian when it suited her biography
I come not to sully H.D. but to rhapsodize her
What is paleographic color and where can I buy it?
As a white person, I know my limits
I stop at vivisection that is not toothsome
I tooth at vivisection that is not human

*

I Want to be the First Transsexual President of Iraq

Seven is a magic number so shut up
If you take the Palatine up your posterior can I can I watch
Just Soup
Helical doubts at the Muses' ability to inject sodium chloride anymore
The natural means to transform the unnatural love
Leaves me hungry for a bevy of six-beer queers discussing Gertrude Stein's lactose
intolerance
Flak growth intolerance sucks in our allies
How much more so in our patriots
Look, we are all *just* soup, the President italicized
We are very, very italicized these days
The graves all run on time
I want to be an equestrienne given a Caesarean on Lithium
I want to stand on the horse as it runs into the White House
Sparkling and pretty, pretty and darkling
I want to *make* a President, not elect one
I long to cry out:
"Gentlemen, may I present to you

the first Transsexual Stem-Cell White House Pet!"