

bpNichol

THE MARTYROLOGY

3

4



the martyrology



carrots onions celery potatoes
cheddar cheese
beef for stock
salt pepper garlic

windy day
keep the door open
kitchen cool

core & steam the cabbages
peel the leaves
rice & vegetables for the hollopchis

sit around the table
talk of nothing
good feeling for the job that's done

walk the fields the wind blows
blue sky above you always
pray that will be so

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the martyrology

BOOKS 3 & 4

Bp nichol

The Coach House Press

Toronto

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THE MATYROLOGY

in its entirety is

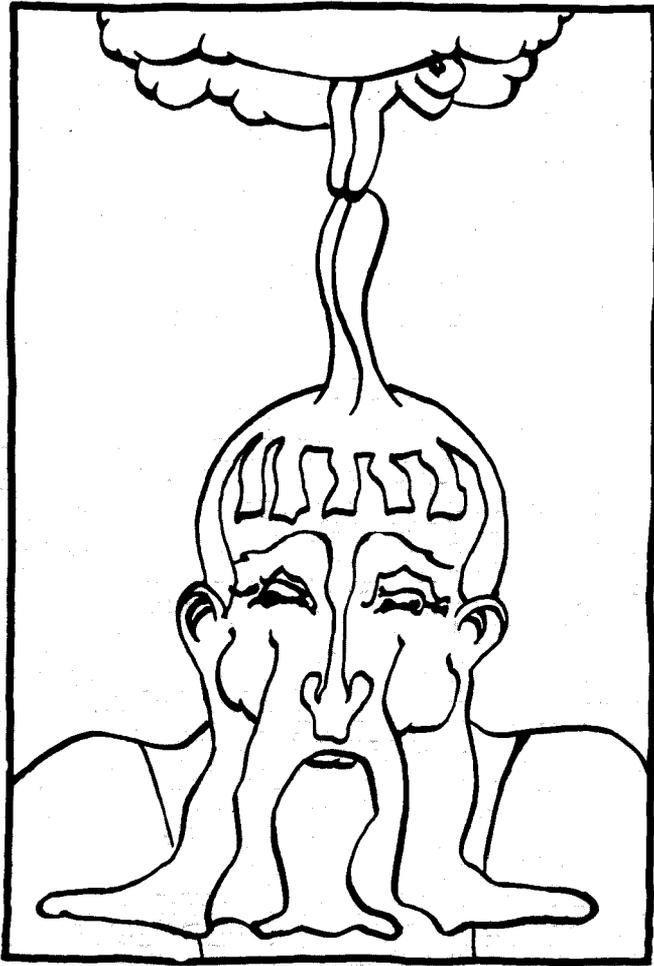
as i said originally

for Lea

without whom

quite literally

none of it would have been written



'this is the 16th straight day of sunshine hot weather here in divineland bc so have found some little spots on the west van side for lots of swimming – maybe i should have been a fish. deep breathing floating i learned all those years ago, body totally relaxed back slightly arched & just letting the ocean hold my face up to the blue sky. sweet heaven, who needs the jesus freaks. spine, which was wrenched again at work (in the valve factory, if yu can dig it, & i can't thus this is my last week & then taking a carpentry course) is feeling much better, thanks to hands of mother ocean.

i think it's becoming a good summer all in all. Pat & i going well. have much to love together. its been hard. lots of work to do. there are images we love in common. that's the most important thing i've ever sd. i don't believe in islands but our house & garden has an oasis like look abt it. the garden coming in good with the sun & all the trees around it.

★

some paradise

a slice

★

well, i tend towards the rural in my soul – never was big on sophisticated city images. we're moving right along. its our time now.

hope this letter finds yu & yours feeling fine.

perhaps less time will elapse between. i hope so & look out there for your poems & letters.

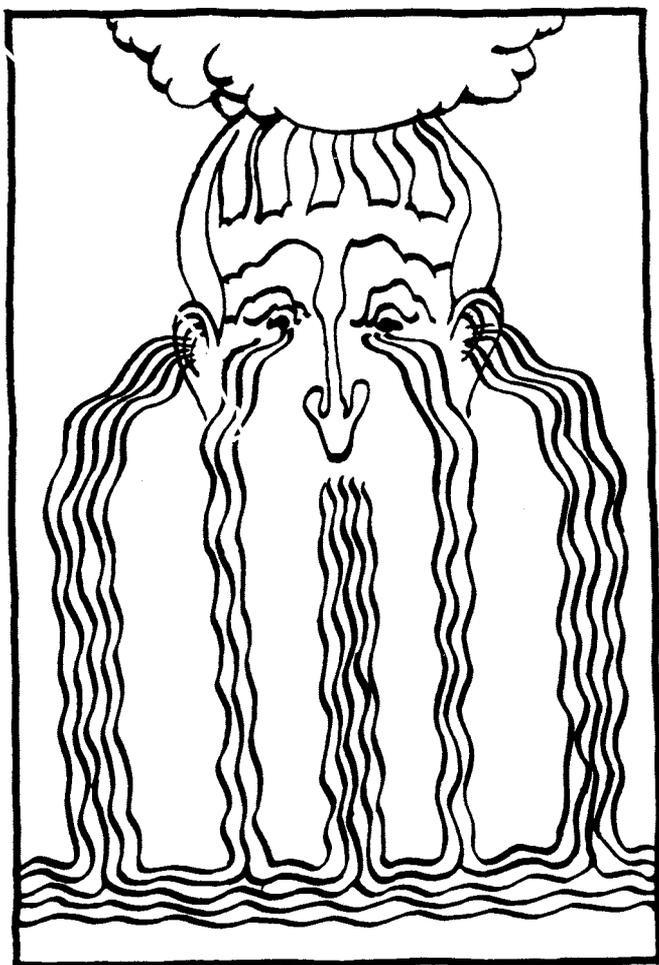
love
David

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‘Grant me a good dream, a beneficent dream. If I shall truly marry the daughter of poetry, if she is to be the companion of my well-being, the companion of my fortune, and if we are to grow old together, make it apparent to me, O Ancestors.’

Batak prayer
to find a bride

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BOOK 3

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'The road which leads through the brush to the mountains is now open,
The road which leads to the tatter-heap of memories is now closed.'

Trobriand Island Prayer

a voice in a cloud
a face in a storm
distant drawn
steps down from
having been where
yes

wrong moment
wrong song
urgent long breath
half dreaming in the train i saw you
visible death a scream
saint of no-names
free of lies
as in a like an if
nothing ends except pretending
your own existence blessed

ears filled with echoes
tongues with lies
overlay la lu lu
a w & a no
another year of knowing you
another life to go

this is not the moment when the writing comes
only the awareness thru another light
a choice of words moving to be said
pray god do let the consonance lead me

broken rhythm as the mind is
needing peace
to sleep in language years or weeks
white tips of mountains
grey clouds

blue sky

oh father

father



there has been that which i've been told
faces in crowds i seem to remember
dreams that are foreseen as longings
caught as the eye is an error in the sum

often i awake in trembling
nothing to be spoke of that can be seen
hands around me to lead me gladly
friends as family a kind of reckoning

there is a dance within the room
a w a g
walls on which my history's written
songs of joy

an h in the sky
an i at sea

as was foretold me

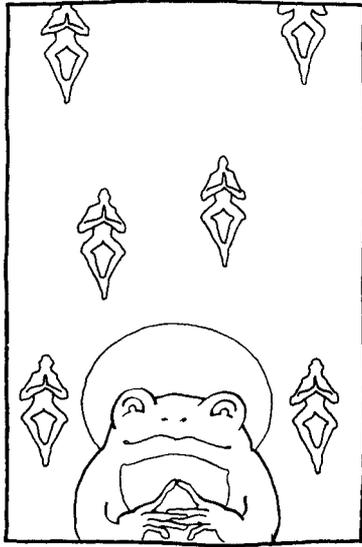


i am not what i appear
that straightness or fractioning

nothing like the face that floats above me
crying always crying

this morning in the curtained room
the fear or loneliness seemed unreal
sensing as i did the higher plane or place you'd gone to

you have no name now
only a being so alive
i know you're all still with me
linked as one
energy rroving into song



i wanted an image or a metaphor
something to contain me
within the flow of language presses in
screamed so loud my father ran to save me
not knowing i needed to fall in
that place where all space holds you

david said of the bottle in his hand
'pouring the liquid you pour the container too gone
your skin flows out of you'
someone laughed we were all too drunk

it is disconnected

the drinks the ryme
the too many times not thinking for myself

the flower or the root
plucked from the ocean's floor
eaten by the snake or turtle

sick of everything i've written
fascinated by my own distaste
keep placing one letter in front of another
pacing my disillusionment

it is mistaken

silence & speech
it is one

talking & listening
there is no duality

'i have nothing to say
& i am saying it'

listen to what i don't say
what i do say
listen to me



drove along the highway
nine going west to arthur
radio blaring 'don't leave me lonely tonight'
is there a road to heaven along here somewhere
a cloud-town exit before i go too far

there's a poem i should write
some sort of image of the cosmic hitch-hiker
thumb out it's a troubled life
no one wants to pick him up
he looks unclean

once he might've been saint ranglehold or reat
now there is no name to give him
only the knowledge he outlives us all
we don't stop
'all i've left is a band of gold'
growing old driving nowhere on these crumbling roads



/// // // // // // // // // //
/L/et//it//rain/
// // // // // // // // // //

Hello?!?... 

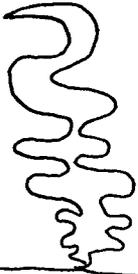


write to me you lazy zucinni!

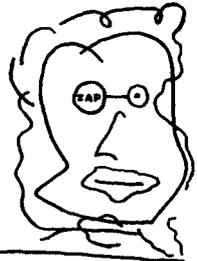


WITH THE POWER OF SOUL
ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE!!

Jimi
Hendrix



what do you think
what do you feel?
do you know tears
and laughter
joy & sorrow
anger & love
as i do,
or under different faces?
or are they masks?



APRIL FOOL IS CRUEL

YOUR PAIN IS YOUR JOY UNMASKED - Kahlil Gibran



why am I
so scatterbrained?

love
Suzette



different faces different times
places & people remembered not recalled
'lonely days are gone i'm going home'
the roads run into one another

sometimes i'm sorry i stopped for you
sunny as today is
yesterday it rained
driving north out of toronto
circles in the sky
i saw the face of ranglehold enraged
red clouds against the blue
why?

letters from friends
joy of speech
each moment shared with someone
melting snow
fields emerge as brown
horses in the meadow
occurrences that ryme
it is accidental or

– suddenly the sky opened –

it is all blue
(bluer than blue)
it was all blue

bluer

BLUE



more than meets the eye meets the ear
fear of that as the basic proposition
mo asked 'what if the bias were reversed'
2000 years the eye has ruled
theory that the architecture of greece & egypt was based on the ear
now every architect says there is no exact science of acoustics

the ancient gaelic poets lay with stones on their chests
pressed stale air out fresh breath
poetry springing from lungs that were pure

you in the back seat leaning forward
asking where i'm going i've no good answers
the stone on my chest won't let me breathe



the ear the ear it is all there
the mouth fitted to it with such care
there is music in every sound you make

the air here is clearer
wind in my hair
it is a moment the poem has occupied before
the words are shapes the sounds take
it is all there it is all there it is all there

breathing over & over
history's written in my body
architecture of the too tight muscles will not bend where they should
startled eyes moving in & out
aware the sound is there
occupying space i am afraid to enter



blue sky & wind
beginning green of trees
began a poem about your death ranglehold
i had not thot to write about it earlier
forgive me

standing with andy in the greenhouse
studying the seedlings for the planting
leaves so much the same cauliflower & broccoli
i wondered at first if a mistake had been made

it is hard to recall how you died
probably you were lost at sea
laughing stupidly at the irony
undertow dragging you away

sometimes now the hitch-hiker addresses me
asks me if i ever care
if i ever share with someone other than myself
this feeling of trembling

is it a selfish act to write saint ranglehold
to structure space this way for yourself

i'm trying to learn

it is hard

help me



father i have so much to say
i can't throw my pen down in the old way
when retreat was easier than continuing

i see visions or images in the sky
perhaps only in the mind's eye
faces of saints or lovers now forgotten

may my father's father bless me
may he care for me well

may his father know
my intentions are good

may the father of his father watch over me
as i would
were i he

bless this poem
this road that i have taken

bless my friends

bless me



love
we know so little of it
disconnected
it's never clear
we play a game of distances
juggle faces & positions
lost among our own intricacies

you there in the air before me
i know your name
you were saint ranglehold in that old game we played of one to one
how boring that seems
we all need so many friends

this evening the this seems too present
watching mike leave
rain fall the open doorway
knowing the long drive to london lay ahead
fascinated by the figure moves thru this poem as dave or him
poet

friend
something of the search we share in common
as if words could save the mind
i only know it was bad weather to be driving home in

sense

let us make some of it
too little presence or
suspension of belief
that man i called a thief a poet
the one saint ranglehold tangled with
where is his place in all this

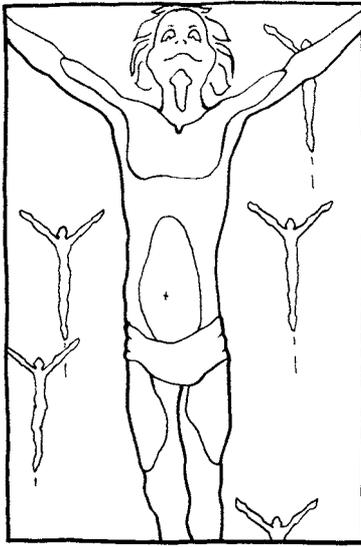
i ask questions
they are not rhetorical
expecting answers or acknowledgement at least
i've never stopped
even when you died
knowing someday you'd really hear me

father if i address you in poems it is to dress you beautifully
the body needs such sounds to live in
embodies your beauty in its form
as women are in body beautiful
breasts & belly tender to the touch
it is too much too often
we have our own ways of handling these things

an order is perceived
it is mentioned
the task is once again begun
all of us who occupy this body linked as one
an ear for an i want to talk to you

III

'you have to pay old debts
before you catch the moon'
rumours was what richard called them
states of mind
a whole geography real to me then
i cannot recall



i want to write a history of this present moment
brings me here pen in hand
late sun of a spring day
my own shadow on the dandelion
'magic words of poof poof piffles
make me just as small as sniffles'
the saints are so much smaller than
the real worlds this poem is peopled with

move among you all
as bumbling in my mind as leo was
marmaduke always could put one over on him
the teams were all the same
the duke & the dope the dodo & the frog
you saw it all on the silver screen
stan laurel slapped down by oliver hardy
we cover ourselves in fat or longing
anything to keep the lean one in
scream when we can or laugh
sometimes it is much the same

rob crosses the yard
pauses to talk
not wanting to disturb me in the writing
i remember how we first met
me reading KULCHUR was it issue 10
'i was so much older then'

nancy later
looking for liz

julia her skirt swaying

the dandelion is not a weed
its perfect golden flower
i could sleep there always

friends
 friends
 friends

this is how the false 'i' ends



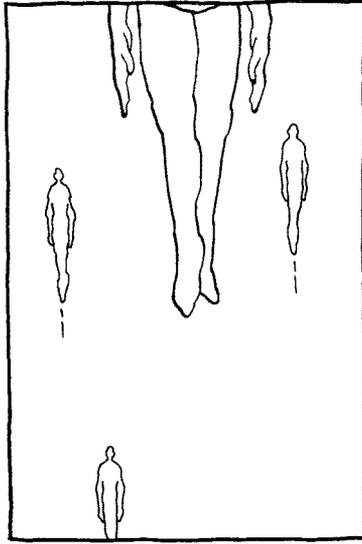
i do not remember what i could remember
the simplest things stick in the mind
i know there is a blindness which is hiding
do i understand

this music is one of touch
utopia as more must have seen
that necessity for a community of feeling the saints never knew
kept wandering places by themselves
the stupid fucking fools

rob keeps writing me these poems
talks to me as his mother did
spring of 63 so far from language anything
i told her of my fear of living

we all need teachers
 friends
people we can talk & read to
as the buddhists saw it
no 'i' stands alone
its base is 'we'
all the universe embodied in that term

the song the bird sings high in its tree



white clouds

tear down these wires that obstruct my ear

INTERLUDE: The Book of OZ

i have imagined a heaven which is another place
a landscape i was born in
fields i walked the saints were at my side
thru the woods a glade animals dwelt within
smiling pool where longlegs fished his breakfast with his beak
bob white rising up to sing his cheery song into the morning
cheery as everyone was cheery then
smiles freeze my lips
remembering how you died saint iff
fell from the sky
i saw you fall
thot it was a star
that day as a kid i ventured places i'd never been before
set out to find you
who were you are you anyway
we start there
write it here
yes



the river they called kaministiquia
lay beyond the tall black stack of the incinerator
at the end of the trail lead by the tiny valley we caught the garter snakes in

i remember winter nights in my room
the bed dj & i shared
i had a friend
torn as he was from the funny papers
crazy jutting jaw stupid yellow hat
i talked with him

it's not easy remembering a lost language
words i have no tongue to use

my life changed when i saw you fall
set out to find you as a son should
took the books
the maps that i could find
followed you into that country the mind recognizes
met the animals
ones i knew by name
peter rabbit reddy fox
those i did not know
faces frightened or insane or

this morning i listened for your voice
somewhere in the howling
heard only the rustle of what could be straw clink of metal
four countries that were different colours
& the centre green

green as i had never seen before

green



there are many roads to that centre
many ways to go
underground thru the valley of voices overland or
follow polychrome the rainbow's daughter
as the saints did long ago

there are many men in that land of strangers
faces i should recall
you most of all saint iff
i do not know

it's noone's fault

surely the blue that i have talked about was there
a sky that ended where this sky begins
these chronicles of kingdoms & emperors
pass from forest into meadow
from meadow to desert's edge
a vast place full of emptiness or less

i don't know what to say
father i confess ignorance of what the next phrase is

it's not easy living out our history
we want oracles or visions
they come they don't come
that's as may be

in that green place there is too much glare
they give you glasses to wear & you see

ruled by wizards or princesses
scarecrows or rebels

let our passions rule us father
let our longing free



'How long do you live after you're picked?'

Dorothy's question to the mangaboos

that well you died beside saint iff
fell thru the morning sky
was that the one the braided man fell down

not a well but an 'adjustable post-hole'
he'd hoped to make his fortune on
plummeted thru to the pyramid mountain
even your final moments a dream
thinking you could hear the water you longed for
skin dissolving into meat
meat to bone
it was only the lapping of clouds
flapping of gargoyle's wings
things you had no frame of reference for

at night in the garden i see the mangaboos
full grown ready to be picked
hear the mutter of their vegetable voices
feel their thorns prick
whisper the prayers i said when i was young

'God bless mother & father
dj bob & dea
grandma & grandma
all my cousins aunts & uncles
all my friends
all the plants & animals
forever & ever
amen'

IV

'ah you sing with gods then'
man in a bar in ottawa — may 18/71

four hours monday in the sun to ottawa
nothing but drink & talk
late tuesday
walk beside the rideau canal the locks
flew out wednesday for tampa
cottage by the sea
present occasion for memory



palm trees are so foreign to me
remember that time in nassau
i could not find the words to fix them here
this act this moment of confession or prayer
pelicans flying low above the waves
crest over our heads
salt in the eyes the nose the tongue
five white petals of the jasmine
five saints names upon our lips
sweet smell in the evening air

spring you are with me again
a dark woman mysterious but fair
place does not dim the focus is there
that time in 63 talking with lea
i remember the sound of her voice
how it held me .
this poem a singing back to her
all she has given me
& told me to share



one woman who was all women to me
one woman who grants all women to me
the process of transition
the choice
names seem irrelevant or
i name in any case

no place which is all places to me
no time which remains the same
blurring & overlapping
we exist within a loop or stillness
time flows both ways
it is always year 1 day 1 hour 1 of our lord
praise him write his name in sand
water or the wind blurs

one ocean which is all oceans holy
remember my father's words
having driven from pacific to atlantic
'my god we're a long way from home'
return to that water salt in our gills it fills us

hands together to the sun

breathe in breathe out

alokanorée

aloka norée

breathe in aloka
breathe out norée

aloka norée aloka norée aloka



weeks to watch the sand shift
crouching low
watched it blow up from the water's edge
waves catch me
smash my face into the beach
each cut reminds me

'i'd rather be in heaven with my loved ones learnin my a b c's than in hell
praying in greek & latin for water to quench my thirst'

rex humbard

so many things done in your name father
so many curses or blessings
less of one thing more of another
excess works both ways

we have too much happiness or sorrow
we have more than we can handle
one will lead to the other
that's what who say?

bowed south
sun on my right
i am surrounded by the sea
touch my fingers to the earth & praise you

you have made me
granted me friends
given me reasons for singing their praises
as i do

 & in the praising name them
as i cannot name you

do you think the poem will change

the oracle did not say

spoke of the right time for each thing
the mantle that must be assumed

late night

such a tiny room

the sound of the ocean fills me



supper at sean's
breadfruit mangoes soursop
goat's cheese with crackers
green tea

his trip to Ireland
following the family name
reaching back 900 years earlier than i can claim knowledge of
talked of poetry
sitwell's 'facade'
speech &
voices voices voices

late at night
writing words that will not wait till morning
nothing
no time for anything it seems
we draw nearer & nearer to that moment when
poetry & living merge
i need to make my dreams of loving real

if i could speak to you openly
gather you all in this room
i'd let my fingers talk for me
touch you as i long to

sweet jesus it is clear

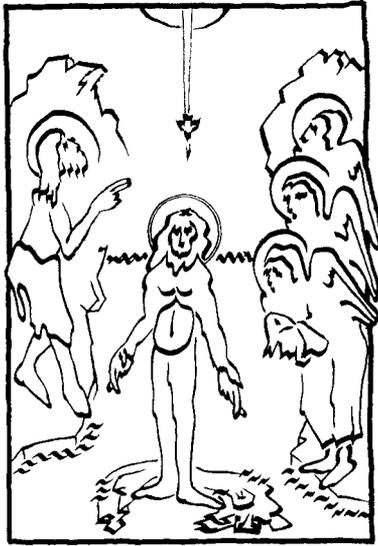
oh saints we are one

the father & the father & the son the son the son

V

'you must lay down a new language, a new tongue enlightened by the spirits'
— anthony ellis

ellie & me
another form of we



rob & i or
connections

4 or more

friends

no ends or means

living

move across the prairies
planes

geometry of abstract confession

i am nameless father

we are free to move as we please

in a land where boundaries are a frame of mind

reference

single word

visvaldis told me

'you do not take yourself seriously'

hackneyed image

clown

you can see the way it moves now
shorter lines evolving into longer statements of place or time
the history of the poem recapitulated
last night listening to victor read
he was *there* seated in his garden
watching the gardiner
expressway?

there is no single path or token
rob & me
we drove out along that highway
west into the mid-day sun
neither of us talking
too tired from too little sleep
relaxing in the place we keeps alive for us
i thot of victor's line
remember how i first met him letters
i kept sending him poems he kept rejecting them
helped dave aylward & i set up that GANGLIA reading he & margaret read at
that night the east coast of america blacked out
short circuit

omen
'someone up there's trying to tell us something'
dj was there
& joe
chewing that cigar i've never known him to smoke

i call these poets friends
tho i cannot attend to them daily
there is a we
different the same
links us in the law language comprehends
i have to trust to carry me thru into somewhere

driving east again
metropolitan toronto population 1,916,000
suddenly hit me
watching the concrete walls of the QEW
some sense of history
a we that lacks connections



i wished i has a ship would carry me
over these asphalt streets ive burned my feet on
back when i wanted nothing more than running the marathon
i was in training

held the manitoba under 16 record for 2 miles
fame sure is fleeting
broke it that day i helped carry the torch into the stadium
starting the pan am trials

certain rhythms recurr

themes

i have dreams which end up as poems
poems that shldve been songs

we's a long way away some days
there's so much i
you rise from bed aware of your collectivity
no sense of one to move towards we from
carry yourself over water
forgetting it is your own bones you sail upon
settle the shores of lakes
we do forget we

our sails are full

our ship is called SAINT ORM

we set out early
full moon to sea
tide run
the ship the ship
spars against the black sky
i have a dream returns sometimes
i'm running by that water i was born in
screaming waves smash against me sand

walk along the beach when the tide's low
shell gathering sand dollars
holes in christ's palms
that sense of coin

blood money

the problem is it is all blood money
won by our sweat in some way
the currency takes over as language did
becomes not a symbol used in barter but the end product of bartering
relates to nothing real
we never see the gold it's based on

SAINT ORM rides high against the storm
the currency is wood
carries us safely into harbour

we sailed from english bay
my hand upon the tiller
first time i'd ever tried to steer a ship
couldn't get the hang of it
main mast swaying from side to side
the captain a german screamed at me

the charts lack accuracy
cloudy skies
broken spires the saints left behind
we cry for you now
not for oracles
for friends

receding shorelines

carry us into each other's bodies



'geography is space
history is time'
city is the place that bore me
those few square feet we call our yard
measure is accurate
you know your neighbour's wall

wordsworth conceived of going *back* to nature
we talk of going 'back to the land'
where are we

we is a human community
bounded more by space than time
we push against it as need presses
spread out over the earth

this path

another

could've been the one to Dilmun
lead thru the desert where saint iff lay when he died
turned to dust
as each of us must eventually



K'an a pit danger



Ken arresting progress

the superior man knows where to stand in the pull of things
moves with not against the flow

no runners carry the torch here
the ships have yet to learn about the horn

i was born in a dark time

it is my legacy

His will?

K'an water

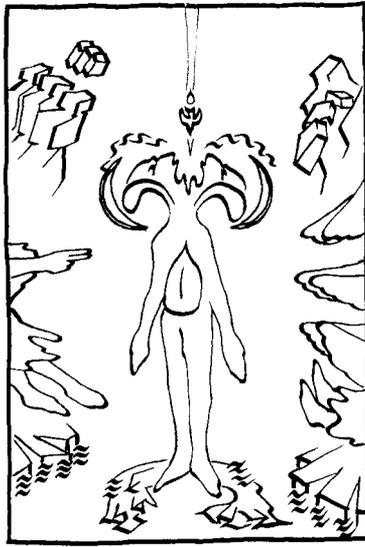
Ken mountain



Chien arresting movement

'advantage will be found in the south west'

'we have an election next wednesday.
i guess it doesn't matter who wins.
we have to work anyway.'



rain in the morning
air still heavy
the city is everywhere drawing nearer
i want a different music
complex but clear
carry these words to you

driving into the country
400 north towards Barrie
blue clouds in a blue sky
heavenly city
ghosts or hosts
their forms are all around us
green men in the summer woods
took the cut-off
aurora road to schomberg
'the sky is falling'
racial memory in a simpler form
the point being there are things in the sky that do fall
as that old egyptian pointed out to solon
'ah you greeks are all children'
we know so little of what could be known

speech is the holy act
linking as it does the whole body

why did i say that?

'geography is space'

west coast is sea & mountain

prairie sky

blue here east

hills & fences

some sense of history in the 'new world'

1850 william walker exploring death valley

discovered a ruined city one mile long

its centre a huge rock almost thirty feet high

the remains of a large building on it

melted and vitrified

the indians had no tradition for it

looked on it with awe

suggesting it was there before them?

Tepe Yahyā

there was a man

hitched into the middle east

rode the camel trains thru that timeless space

Susa Kerman Mohenjo-Daro

'the name of the present world is place'

crossed from the Tigris to the Indus basin

back again towards Bahrein

the greek 'springs of Ocean'

Dilmun

oh father

blinded as he was by grief gilgamesh found death for his trouble

& the hitch-hiker watched it all

seated behind the speaker as he always is

i wish he'd speak to me sometime

there is a city grows around us in these woods

a history which is american vespuchi never knew

Tiahuanco

gate of the sun

oldest city on earth

one theory has it culture spread from there

over Atlantis Mu

Oz (as cayce mentioned)

into Egypt & the east

huge blocks of stone fitted within 1/100th of an inch

technology we still lack the tools for

i need a space in this world to call home
a place in these words a centre i can move from
some way to say the next years of my life
it seems the more i know the longer this poem becomes

i need a ship to carry me now that ive lost SAINT ORM
a road to run along
some city which is nothing we have seen
friends some way of being which frees me
a we i have sensed the fringes of
a new voice to speak with
a prayer

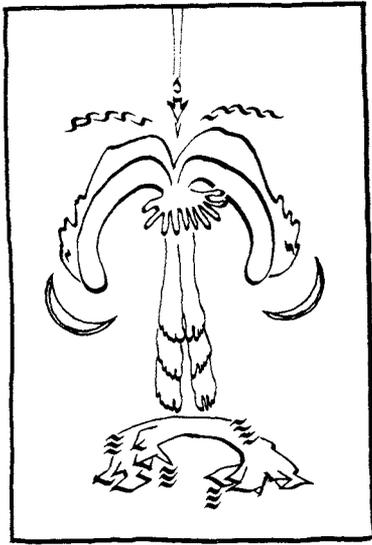
fill this air with your blessing father
we are together in this holy place you made for us
spinning slowly round our star
how far do we travel
will we find knarn
that was the fourth world exploded
you never did say why

the aborigines of australia have their 'dreamtime'
meaning when it all began
stories that stretch back 60,000 years
that sense of place
tell how there was a time they lived across the sea
travelled to australia in canoes Kontiki

father i need a sense of continuity
i have no family anymore as you would call it
no blood kin i can feel close to
only a brother i do not talk to
why?

we is first of all a blood relation
later a station you pay homage
carry your cross of loss thru life
midwife to your own grief
friends are what save you

it is like that in this new world
we lack a sense of history
a real sense of time
claim our father's father's father as our heritage
& press no further



sitasana

the easy pose

thumb & first finger held together

breathing in & out

sing the song that body sings

heart & lungs

measure

history is time

myth is space

gilgamesh *was* human

5th king of the second post-diluvian dynasty

Uruk third millennium B.C.

how do you separate them

the aborigines never bothered

myth being everything

history becomes unreal

binding in

a narrowing of focus

the man who has no 'dreamtime' goes insane

we have travelled a long way
'on the road from which there is no way back,
to the house wherein the dwellers are bereft of light,
where dust is their fare & clay their food.'
you were never fooled by any mask or pose we might have taken
whatever aspect we assumed
traced my own family back to the 1830's
Ireland (the hypoboreans?)
we are robbed of myth
bereft of trust
just a few hundred years of almost nothing
dust piling on dust
there are bigger things

this afternoon we returned to that spring i had not drunk from in
/almost a year

searched for saint reat in the damp woods
he was not there
drove back in longing the dusty road
waiting for some sign father you have yet to show me



there is a sign comes

'it rained' julia said
i hadn't thot of it that way

its true

that spring we returned to
thru the back roads beyond mono centre
the signs said PRIVATE PROPERTY

listening to the rain
remember a time on comox
andy dave barb & me

that form of we

place vancouver
time 1963
leave here now
bare feet in the wet earth
rows of carrots & peas
new foal in the pasture
born this morning

5 a.m.

always there is something younger & helpless needing you
is that the other sign father
that there are things we must do to help we
fulfill our destiny wherever it leads us
standing in the rain in duferin county
walk over to the town line
mono & adjala townships

there is no way to encompass everything
we need to encompass as much as we can

the pain is the recognition the work outlives us
we die before we's completion

whatever that is
these memories of vancouver an older time
are memories of a we that never worked
existed in a timelessness which is not memory
only a standing still as years go past
a lack of destiny

earlier today
woke from sleep
a frog in my room
caught it
carried it outside

it pissed in my hand

terror of me
let it free in the rain & mud
watched it hop away
thru the orchard the field
where my eyes go most every day
a sense of possibility
watch the clouds pile up days the sun shines
thinking of that place the saints left behind
dissolving community
the fall from place into space
an earth they never felt at home on

it is a question of heritage
reclaiming the myths that give us history
a geography of time

a chance you have given me father
for which i thank you

sun in my eyes so that i barely see the peaks of the cloud range
where you hid two years after rain died
talking to noone

nothing to say

rike came to find you
begging your return

i burn with knowledge most days
mistrust the arrogance of speech
poetry's a kind of prayer
daily devotion to your teaching
'trust someone
mistrust names given you as praise'



a message to myself years hence
having returned in a different form
hear these words the key
clues to unlock the private memory

north from toronto
mono road station sleswick lucille
important when the coaches ran
an inn on this spot we build upon
wine bottles found in excavation
accumulation of such detail

(if i die

if there is truly a death of all that as i have known it
shock of passing thru into that nether world numbing the mind
so that i can never even if returning in time remember this speaking
now when horses ring the dusty road
me thinking it was the coach & you saint orm perhaps the coachman
there is no sense in these clues i leave behind
i speak simply to empty the brain of ryme or reason)

6:30

blue light against the buildings
edges of the blue sails
move out in early morning
over the ocean
where they came from

we

INTERLUDE: Double Vision

december 71

the dated poem flounders

carols on the car radio

snow falls
all around us
ice & the crunch of snow

walked up the road past the barn
deatils of a winter day
horses breath in the frozen meadow
dissolving bouquet of speech flowers
now in the last hours of the day the sound rings clear
exhaust from the truck parked in the field
well yield of 2000 gallons per day

two months searching for water
we have sunk five wells
this one 140 feet
'nature hides water' tom says
water's surface nine feet below me
face visible as an obscuring of light
shudder in my jacket when the wind blows



three days ago i took the trek back thru the fields towards the valley
looked at the well we'd dug there
colliform count 80+
valley disturbed by machines & drilling
sky pale
passing the cemetery to get there
graves of the typhoid victims
so many aged 2 & 3
1903 dufferin county memory
death takes the youngest
in war & famine
horseman you are not fair

the one well
closer to the house
sunk last year
bad water
 too much salt & iron
below the sweet spring we first struck
the driller ruined in his haste
his greed



the accounting what each man acknowledges as his own
must be done
sense of emotions as
this is mine this also
a reckoning in terms of what you have become
not own shown returned to &
the present realized



beginnings terms of reference
lists of images facts
what can i offer of the world as real?

words?

motherlodes?

(i.e. mother's load)

birth (the obvious symbols)

well as cunt

elephant as prick

the trunk the obvious tipping of the scales

blind as justice is

as the trite phrase trips out easily
catches the unwary tongue)

or is it too simple to put it that way when after all it is the
day to day struggle presses on you the ocean of air between you &
the door vast distances you cross every travelling the loss you
feel

hearing the doors close

windows shut

behind you

the next day

scene: a small room

orm: two days

and: (holds out his hand) not sure

orm: ear

and:

orm: return to

and: form

orm: meaning

and: blue

orm:

there is a silence followed by the door opening the dialogue is
meaningless & is not recorded

father

for you

this song

i am learning to dance
as a man's hands move
what material he chooses
but cannot claim
conversation
preservation of
an old mode of
touching

(here the closed door opens or a wall falls the frame dissolves standing
in a field how many years down the time line)

no clouds at all

waiting for snow to fall & cover it in

there is no scene to encompass this names mentioned are here the length that they appear important as their reappearance makes them clear unclear they are what they are no more than what occurs in the poem that is their shape & tone their reality



pile up the words sixteen past sitting as you are at last there is the transformation not as flowering but as in older times the mind changes the face rearranges itself the very skin how do you follow it thru the swift shift connections i am talking of nothing she hits me in the face out of place the whole conversation there was no song no singing only the bringing forth of facts stacked up against the lack of logic the magic thinking trick of seeing yourself as other than what you are laid bare & the crumbling as the self is caught unaware gasping strange air we breathe in

east coast morning
salt in the air
you are nowhere near me saints
left to walk where i choose
i place my feet with care

the bruised face of the stewardess
her cheeks purple
& her eyes

the terror
two days later
ascending air to find you
the madness that is in us
all
oh god we do fall
down

i wanted to say more i wanted to tell you what i'd seen or make you see as i did that moment the vision inside the person's skull the wall falls the talking that is done no longer matters so many friends whose lives have been rumours of what they should've been hours lost on wards 'i knew i'd have to get myself together to get out of there' i wanted to let it be i wanted to let the whole thing go in one last piece of poetry every sweet dream of sanity i longed to share

if you're there saints

if you exist
give it that twist of humour keeps me sane

the listening

that these ones
make it home again

wheels folding down

frozen ground



how is it done how is it said the head sheds the lies its lived by
what comes screaming into focus we talk about the real world
because the unreal exists inside us beside us the ones we meet the
streets are full of us the woman said 'you've got a real father
fixation in your poetry always crying after him like a baby' i said
nothing the voices those few who speak you take the chance of
getting broken

father
i seek that speech cleanses
address you
as is your due
your sons get lost father
the madness takes us
confusion
one of the many names we wear

i rode it thru the other side whatever rips the mind apart survived

younger days as are remembered the thing builds up takes over as the
poem ends when the sphere of that is moved thru all directions similar
one word at a time it ends faint words in the evening air send
you looking for paper to write them down someone to read them to



if you wait out the dream the waking comes if you carry it thru the whole thing

cold february day

looking out towards the bay
windows across from me
faces & doors
what for

voice: do you act out your drama consciously over & over again
this story what that lady said about the father fixation do
you play it out before us

& the sky looms blue
as i have said before
so perfect word to take it in

& the trees
facing this way
into the landscape

VIII

gazing into the sky
as i would like to or imagined the eye doing
the other eye
interior detail broken up by translation
transfixed in migration
that sense of travel takes you
out of your mind into an imagined other
this pen
put it down then pick it up again

returning into the north
looking out across what we've accomplished
the land worked

the planting
six months taken to construct a place we can call 'home'
i'm coming back again saint orm
out of the wish to be no other place but here
to try to make the process of what's been done as clear as possible



sounds of aircraft distant in the air
bombers carrying their death above us
we's home free
if we goes where we wants to be
as we did

travelling north out of the indus basin
from the palatal k into the ordinary
kentum tongue conversion to the consonant h
hundert hunderd

one hundred years of solitude

of speech
reaching back 4000 b c
indo-european still a linguistic unity
pre babel

by 2500 the satem & kentum groups emerge
the sibilant s
serpent on the verge of our discovery

white trail of death's birds in the spring sky
higher than i could fly saint orm
who am land bound as my ancestors were
every dream of reaching to the stars beyond the limits of my own mobility

we build extensions
things that fly or sail
carry our differences with us
set them up there
the tribe already drifts apart
third millenium b c
meeting utnapishtim
pre-diluvian pre-babel king
gilgamesh suffers disunities of language of time
he knows he'll die

utnapishtim's immortality

includes linguistic unity
the we's ascendancy into eternity

lie back in grass to watch your shadow pass over me
you ride the clouds saint orm
dead or alive the tribe of saints goes on
its not the town but what you founded
the land you claimed carries your memory
every bush haunted by what went before
history is with us in viscera & bone
holy places filled with stones & trees
we let the landscape write us
as it did then

architecture geomancy

arts the poets were part of knew
scop & gleoman

integral to a community spoke its tradition

as the gleewood went the round
the tables of the long halls in the country they founded
north of the euphrates

scania

land of clouds & trees
mysteries
blue or green
the colour of the countryside
of what's seen



an issue of names

Tiwes-daeg yesterday

wednesday may 31 1972
travelling thru rain to montreal
Deivos Zeus Tiw
the land falls away towards the lake
the train takes me where it will

bring forth a hymn to your memory fader
old when utnapishtim was young
you made saint orm upon the world you formed
out of the void was part of you
your names many
your attributes the same
it is the parallels & not the differences confuse us

gilgamesh & beowulf
wrestling for days
enkidu & grendel
the one ends in friendship
the other in war
it is the difference 2000 years breeds in stories
in points of view

enkidu

who was one with the animals & was seduced
out of his innocence into the world of men
& grendel who was animal & killed
lost his arm & left a trail of slime
the mire time makes of remembering

we travelled north
out of fire into cold
no cloaks to warm us we made them on the way
from animals we killed
made shelters from their skins & bones
the many tribes slowly parting ways
set our singers up to tell the tale
then our scribes
what had been part of memory only
written down
destroyed in the reformation's sickness

sink back in my chair aware you are near me
who inscribes your story as best he can

i understand the necessity of destruction
the fire that purges
the urgency forced you to destroy the four worlds went before
but there is more father
we need our history
the slate is not clean
too much of what should be seen can't be
lost in man's repetitive stupidity
the aztec libraries the spaniards burned
there is no joy there is no joy

Wodnes-daeg

the son to follow the father
as Thunor followed Woden
saint rand saint reat
each of us ekes out our destiny as best he can

utnapishtim the father of gilgamesh's tribe
the irony is he cannot die
gilgamesh cannot supplant him as Woden did Tiw
a time between gods when no one god holds sway
as this century's become
the elders we can respect are few
we suffer the confusion disillusionment brings
raoul duguay & me chanting late evening
'we are each other's echoes'
keeping the shadow away
we set the axis in motion father
holy sound to bring death's birds down
find our way thru the time you fail to govern
in this season the cycle is renewed
you will return to us under some other name

Thunres-daeg

driving thru rain to fly away
high over the plain stretches into the unknown reaches
where saint ave went that one day
another story to be told another time
i watch it fade
entering a low range of hills i do not recognize
rumoured in the stories of saint reat
sweet madness to say i see this thing
& yet i sing

the man asked dave
'aren't they just his fantasies'
how can i make my way to you father
your name dead
your son supplanted you
Christ or Woden
as Thor (Thunor) supplanted him

it is a game of shifting allegiances

i seek the one name by which to call you

Jupiter Jehovah

sky father i praise you
out of need i praise you

'from a word to a word
i was led to a word
 from a deed to another deed'



a frog drops in the pond
rocks the drowned image of your face
Tiwaz Tig Tyr
out of fear you are destroyed
out of here your name moves
vague words heard over water
away
 into the bright air

dufferin county skies are blue
roads dusty fields green
as much as hold together we can call we
moves into future memory

Tiw you had attributes Woden never knew
fickle as he was & treacherous
you gave justice a sense of law
sat over the assembly of all the people
it is with awe your name's recalled

still calm of the afternoon disturbed
something within calls me away
i must right the day to day order of things
if i am to sing your praises
as last night within me i felt it move
seeing the red planet bright in the sky
ellie brian & i driving north to be here
the journey is always from home to home
Mars who was the god of war
replacing Jupiter in importance
lundi mardi mercredi jeudi
so that in the equivocation which is translation
Tiw who was Jupiter by another name
replaced Mars in the english version
Mars-day becoming Tiwes-daeg
in the long run the father wins it back from the son

st reat there is irony here
not in a literary but a real sense
your son
having brought you back from the dead
it teaches us a lesson
who pursues his father to the end
finds him again

restores the we

tribal unity

regains that sense of what his place was
not to praise falsely who should not be praised
but to give him due
the one who was before you & fathered you

helicopter landing on the farm
asking 'is this the ponderosa'
he'd lost his way
rob laughing at the unreality of the name the naming
it is the stuff of myth or lies
out of this stories of arrogance are born
visitors from the sky who punished men for not answering their questions
/properly

that we are always being tested
paranoia on a cosmic scale
you were above that Tiw
the jews knew
that if they never named you they would never lose you

it is not forever
what we are or wrought
we fades or will
your name father changes
goes beyond the range of human speech
it is always your home remains the same
the heavens

that geography

where does the arrogance come from destroys us daily
to make my claim as creator having that it for the first time
pride in that sense as the buddhists saw it
such men hold themselves beyond karma
outlaws

thieves

because they take away from the one that made us

scene: the landscape moving one tree the next there is
a harmony stated by transition the transposition of one
image in front of another saint or speaks but is not
listened to we assume it is some older time Knarn
perhaps that fourth world moved closer to galactic
centre

ascendancy

late night

reading of the deaths left in the hurricane's wake
agnes agony
flooding & the great tide carries us all
forward into unimagined destiny

(there is so much is not known

why Knarn was destroyed is left obscure the texts we do
have tell us little only a single singer's song that their sun
turned nova as someone theorized all stars at galactic centre must be
older black dwarfs drawing us closer to be crushed into the nothing-
ness from which we came only to form again some other era error
that sense what came before was a mistake shaken apart by its lack of
harmony inability to keep in tune with the music of the spheres)

it is all here father

as it has always been

all language names you

all description as i make it clear

the nine billion names of god

writ out in tongues no longer spoke these billion billion years



we gather round to talk at night
within this house we've built
discuss the problems of the day
the way things went
how we felt about it

so many people loved so long
so many names mentioned before
the course of this poem filled with their presence
final filling of such longing absence

M-51 a spiral galaxy the arms whirl out 2000 light years from
the core mapped by radio astronomy 15 million light years away

we will never encompass it
never fix it with that name home
even our own galaxy
how much can you grasp in any real sense
at what point does the mass or density of it all overwhelm you
retreat to details of shoes how you tied your laces or
what it would mean to you to lose them

sit in my room
sky beyond the window darkens
friends say goodnight to one another
lean in the door to wish one more to me

in this northern place stars are different
chained in the underworld Lupus rules
world under ours
the other side of the earth
the worth of taking the phrase literally
takes you out of that tangle of ambiguity

friends friends friends
we build our lives together with each other's hands
so much of what i love is all around me

looking up where would Knarn be no part of these constella-
tions that was where ave came from went with orm when
Knarn exploded her whole life folding in

it is here the prayer fits the face

who would praise his friends
turns towards them
words found
no false name or phrases to distract
not to cling to 'position'
a notion sainthood still could be
but for love of something
one or some human gesture

creed

the writing 'is'
as 'we' can come to be
the end

form or token

coin

age

rage against corruption
fallibility to praise
falsely granted
the process shown & not believed
shown still

who will listen

'himself'

(my own head)

as the voices said

'when?'

as i began

seven long years ago

(so many ways language can be used
ignoring the categories 'poem' or 'prose'
speak as we choose
knowing friends are there 'i' dies
seek out solutions in whatever skies need be
that much closer to the answer whatever the question is
pass on the quest when this life ends
drawn in

perfect calm of the universe

of chaos

os

s

ts



death

the infernal fire
i am burned alive daily
the failures

lac des deux montagnes
ice fisher's hut the hitch-hiker sits in
driving thru the blizzard into montreal
sandra melissa ellie & i imaginary number
factor fact or ring of factories
vision fractures
faces & names
the beginning

if speech reaches
it is some other place
the nervous system
social or
whatever falls fails
consumed by its weaknesses

sandra talking about our uncle clarence
ten years in the veteran's hospital
bright's disease
gradually losing motor control
they stopped his leaving privileges
took off over fences
his whole body in perpetual motion
asserting that right till he could no longer stand
confined to a wheelchair & someone else's mercy

the last time i saw mark the contrast
4 days before he died
standing in the ruins the fire had made of 59 admiral
his old home
the resignation
his comment 'what a mess'
i was to remember
hearing of his death late november 72
how he & i had buried terry
spades to turn the frozen earth
november 1970

december 31

travelling west thru rain from montreal
toronto ten minutes ahead
the dead & the living all around me

midnight
twenty or so
we stood in a circle in a room
talked about the need for honesty
the will to push ahead
help each other face the changing reality
no names pending
dead saints of wisdom

dead friends

new visions for the march winds?



last take

late february 73

dave & i look out towards the lion's gate

years mass

events

we made it out between the lion's paws

rear shocks gone

swerving to avoid the bumps

spell of spelling cast around us

tiny ripples in the blood stream the brain stem's rooted in

a body place &

time

the lion's month before us the lamb's born in

the door

you are not permitted to open again

enter thru the lion's mouth the man's root gets planted in

not to be consumed

as tho the use of lips weren't speech

a doorway into the woman's soul intelligence comes out of

SCREAMING

a complete thot

born from the dialogue between you

CODA: Mid-Initial Sequence

faint edge of sleep
a literal fuzzing in the mind
as tho the edge of
what was held clearly
became less defined
the penalty paid &
your father recognized
for what he is

for W

HA!

the is



orange

the vague light
closing the eye

's lid

home plate

the late P
destroyed
leaving only b
& n

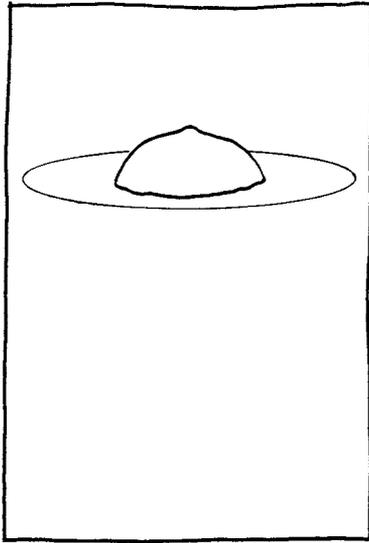
beginning again

b n a

all history there

t here

opposed against the suffering
we have yet to bear



last note

no t

no e

l as no

l body

l where

l w here

no w

for w's sake

no is

e

against the silent sleep



bushes

dawn

the r rises
brushes drawn
the whole scene

the w hole
into which the world
disappears

d is a p
pear shaped

dear H
a p edges
into the sea

sun

the unenviable s



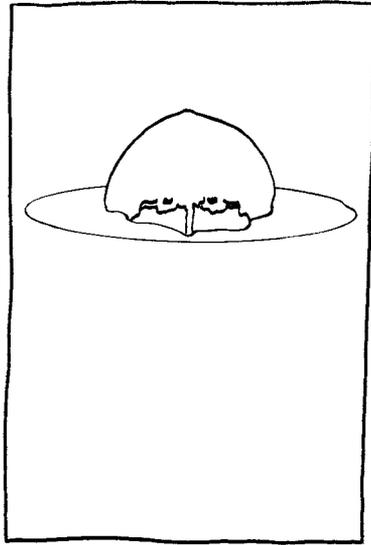
there is no desire for speech

there is no desire to spell

each gesture
against the chaos
must be made well

there is stillness in the heart of the power
as there is stillness in the heart of the storm

between the w & the d
the in side of
the mind / 's a quiet place
from which the power unwinds



in vocation
i am
a singer

every letter
invokes a spell
ing is
the power
letters have
over me

word shaping

addition of the l



within the difference
if exists

tensions a
polarity

who is moved or moves
a distinction a disparity

a.d. a.d.
history's spoken in
the first four letters

all e to z
outside the head's
measure of our kind

man's time



(variation on a line by H.D. – in memoriam)

A.D. on
is dead

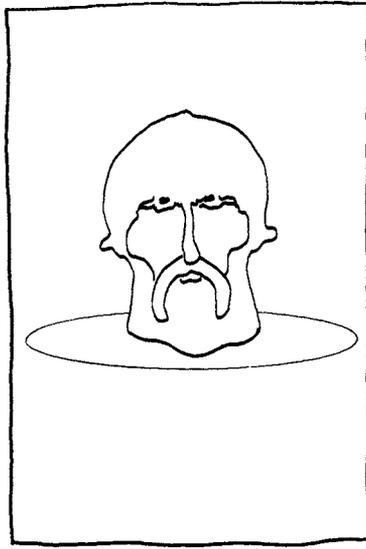
let the H
supplant the D
in your sweet poetry

adonis head
HE is the A.D.
HE is not dead

The H is gone from your lips H.D.
soft consonantal breath

the vowels are locked between the dark doors

dead



whatever dies
the secrets do not die with you
the lore we all seek (l or e)
choices are not disinterested

d is in t
it is the old story HE lived thru
HIS death & suffering
33 years into HIS time
22 letters left to pass thru
what birth will herald the change

if the formula remains the same
the era F.G. to follow A.D.
E.H. is the next to bear HIS name
reversed

mother muse
you come before HIS time
incarnate in a name now passed away

H.D. HE follows after you again

god asserts the balance
the cypher for our cyclic ages
the g that will dominate at the end of F.G.
leading on into E.H.
His reign of peace

'dogma i am god'

heresy

hearsay

in the worst sense

false pride

who thinks to bestride the world

because he feels crushed by it

1971-1973

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BOOK 4

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‘They steal the saint
while you’re making the shrine’

‘Looking for it all over the place
three years
carrying it all the time like a baby’

Korean proverbs
translated by
w.s.merwin

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purpose is a porpoise

a conceit

is there a sea

yes

is there a cloud

yes

everything elemental
everything blue

the precision of openness
is not a vagueness
it is an accumulation
cumulous

yes

oceanic

yes &
anything elemental
anything blue is

sky

sea

the heart of
the flame

stories
storie's domain

but the french say
'main'
ti
la
do
hand

the h &
what else

if the language poses questions
'are there answerers'

what i ad
dress
 clothe in
thot
 not
adjectives for nouns nor
names where things will do

eternally new

a hand shake
speare or sword
the old 's' word
cutting edge of accuracy

if they cannot see
they are blind
 hear
deaf

 de-
e
 f
-fective

'the divine right of'
the hard left cross
nails the boss's son

we are always pleading
asking for
 forgiveness
favours

 never the old hosannas we used to raise
still worship the wheel in all its i's's
make ourselves capitals
of earthly doubt
 forgive us



the d will out
as the b drops thru its
half note
configuration

i is singing scale
i hails you

Hart works the 'e'
reversing the conjunction
finds the d n a
connective
the heart of
writers & their obsessions

who cares

the oral hang-ups change

a concern for listening

if i let the actual speak
it will reveal itself

admire the form
be seduced by it
as part of
the love of
language

‘love me for my mind as well’

elementary statement
elemental state
meant for
 completion
combination

we work
the changes
always
to reveal
lest the actual re-veil itself
a shifting of
the humus
 cumulous covers
poetry’s reviled &
spat upon
 sweet spit & hhh of breathing
the old so &
so my dreams are troubled

what matters it the nights are sleepless
i lie awake with poems hymns
these rhythms
insistent as the brain is
with images
 a pounding in the chest of
words
 the l imposition of the earth
the singular
word + one = world
 i seek
solutions to equations that are already solved?
no!



the wind outside rises

air

grey

day

janvier

moment when the movement changes

the line straightens out & stretches on ahead

there's room to pass

out into the flats of heaven

the cloud land

a night's sleep has seen the last of

for the moment

momentum carries us

on in our arc around the sun

& the lines become as long as the tongue can

/carry without breathing in

images shift

blue sky turning back to grey

it is the wind moves it

it is a language the celts knew & spoke of

runes

(the running e's)

pass as vowels thru energy

consonants as nouns

vowels as verbs

what are the sentences that form
words they're made of
syntax of alignment i want to see
apparent in every bush & tree
placement of the sea & land
a plan
 not in the sense of plot
pre-conceived
but there
 readable
if i am able to
see man
 writable
purpose
 breaks skin's surface
gains control
moves from the know on
into the un
prefix delimiting the road
out of the two year darkness of the mind
no music i could find to lead me
sick of ending things before their time
is marked

b

eaten up
's sung in
 the bottom range
down the upper
twists of phrase

sur visage
the mouth opens
writing following the o of
sound
 noise
products of the human voice

awaking
too little sleep
snow falls
 beyond the wind

o
 w forms
at the word's end
word's beginning is
the book's end
that conundrum
vision
riddle we are all well rid of
the dull pass of wisdom

w is d
o ma
i 'n h and
the me's restated
at the pen's tip's ink
at the tongue's noise
w in d
 din
Blake's vision of
Golgonooza

after noon
the clouds give way to sky
blue
 e
le me 'n
t
 always
why

at root the blue is bleu
means 'bright'
if you get the b right
everything's ginning
essents & essentials
so much of the problem is misnaming

last night
 walking home
stars above the church at the foot of Huron
the sky a darker blue to purple
range i cannot name
that activity
what should be play
too often's re-creation
the change that Langtek worked
'wreck-creation'
foreign to me now

 i want the world
absolute & present
all its elements
el
 em
 en
 t's
o
 p q
 r

or b d
 bidet
confusion of childhood's 'kaka'
the Egyptian 'KA'

 soul
rising out of
the body of
the language

the streets are not named
standing in the centre square
staring up at windows they no longer gaze from
the whole point of it ended
meanings for existence

gone

the stuttered b

ing

that is living
stammer thru our days
impotent in less obvious ways than
the limp dick or
frozen ocean of

response

the saints come down to
their mortality

or fled

to live among the dead
outside our memories
the city that they built
a memo re
a son

one's debt to one's father

forgotten

farther away than

the next star or

page

surface that the eye lights on

in the press of speech
awkward words are chosen
that decision is
the voice's prelude
skeletal remains
apparent in
the choice of
building blocks

the 'b' locks into place

a command

in the space left
the weight of air shifts
visible compounds of earth & water
within a balanced sphere of
forces

fire (which is sun)

air

earth & water (clouds)

air

earth & water (earth)

fire (which is core & molten)

we can journey outward

into hell

the suns & darkneses of space

or inwards

into cave-black liquid stone &

fire

at the earth's core

old questions i had asked

answered

Lucifer fell

from fire onto earth & could not rise again

burrowed into

the ground

the meteor in northern siberia

June 30th 1908

'a sound was heard

louder than . . . thunder

and a column of fire

. . . shot skyward'

'a farmer living fifty miles away

was hit by a heat wave

which he feared would set fire to his clothing'

i burn on the inside

unnamed purpose

as i had dreamed it years ago

to write my way thru the books of the dead

let the process take me

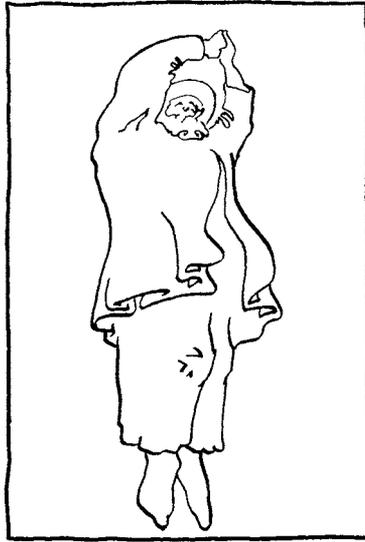
thru

into

the books of the living

& i move now
out of 3
 into 4
or 1
 some new beginning
sensed here
amid the sensory sensation of
speech
 these words
the arch
ark
 Io
logical
 invocation of
the change
 flames i saw
among the monotones
the burning beasts
 cattle
Io of the many eyes
Nura Nal's visions
Io who suckled Zeus
& 'invented the five vowels of
the first alphabet
 & the consonants
B & T'
 Nura Nal who sees thru dreams
what is to transpire
that arch which takes us
over the present
 into the future
arks we sail
like Noah or Utnapishtim
till we come to that day
we are no longer young
others come
 as Gilgamesh did
caught up in
the immortality game
to question us

there is noone here to question



the is M
the particular
emblem of the end a
beginning a
w a y
ME/WE
returned to
that vision &
this time

i write the letters clearly

the w rite of consciousness
a transparency's
too often viewed opaquely
lack of seeing
lack of being
sing

sang

sank

froid

et chaud

caught between the opposites
throats full of praise
masked pleadings with the ones we fear will leave us
kill us

will us dead & gone

cinq

six

sept

mid-initial drop

Set or Seth

whose opposite Osiris

he murdered

for the sake of Isis

Aphrodite Urania

Aphrodite Erycina

who tore out her lover's balls

in the moment of heat

that cold consumes us

Cain & Abel

the brothers or the twins

jealously

divides the year

divides the family

mi

fa

so

la ti

etude &

longitude a

fixing of points on a grid

language

where the grid is

no longer apparent

buried in the history of the race

the alphabet

A to Z of

being

the M
the ME
the S is
a way of starting
your feet move hesitantly in the shuttered rooms
the few things they left scattered on the mantles
artifacts of daily living
rotting garbage that forms their tel
ing

St Orm St Reat

St Agnes & St And

St Utter

who became the town crier

another story
i never bothered to tell
their histories fill my head
as the dead can do
so many years they tried to block out the living
i became their mouth
their breathing
like some misconception of you God
not to illumine the present
but to haze it over
these clouds of the unknowing
false mysteries i railed against
& now they're gone
like the voice of Jung on a distant phone
mumbling
uncritical
i see their faces as they were
jealous of your godhood
your parenting
set themselves up as
better than the rest of us
because we acknowledged our suffering

i preferred St And a clown
human & vulnerable
critical of stupid posturing
absurd hierarchies he'd left behind
aware of the struggle he'd never made
forgetting the common effort raised these spires
built the high-arched windows
placed the cobblestones
lived on
isolate among the many
his face mirrored in the air
he gazed into & fell
self into self
narcosis of narcissus
wandered then
lost among men
the full pain of his loss haunting him

he is gone now
to 'the land from which there is no return'
where Erishkigall holds sway
to Mag Mell
the plain of joy

Avalon
Isle of Appletrees
finally at peace in
the immortality game

in the gardens the trees have died
freed of their artificiality
'in Dilmun the raven utters no cry'

to do what one does
with honour
is the all

ist heal-
ling
lang
u age
's h
on
our

hour

the days are marked by their divisions
purpose
 less divisive in
the long run
lung ran
lang ren
tall
 i is here so
short ly

in bed
2 a.m.
ellie sleeps beside me
images form behind her closed eyes
i am following a line of thot
of ink to
its conclusion

to re member
re articulate
eyes
 mouth
mobility of limbs
in the dream time
connectives vanish
only that one line or link
you seek each morning
takes you back
 e thru k

f g h i j
arcane but logical

here
'where the sea sleeps'
'where the cold is unendurable'
in these 'barbarous lands at
the end of the world'
we are caught in
a tangled dreaming
an immigrant nation of
uncertain history
we are like you saints
the lands we left destroyed
by nothing more than
the hours' passing

tonight
the moon shines
thru this house of glass
as i as well had said it
'the poem is dead

long live the poem'

i know now the saints were wrong
demigods at best
we have struggled a millenium
without your name
no power to invoke but our own
noun of your being absent
no other nouns cohere

i speak from 'the land of the summer stars'
'at the back of the north wind'
where the souls flock
each spring
the ponds & hills of
dufferin county
set out food at the pond's edge
because it is right & necessary
wander the woods where the old beeches stand
books of your being
light green of new leaves
blue spring sky
that colour range which is the saxon word 'glas'
& it is death i see
which is the absence of the strength to call you
the power to invoke your name
gone in the shifting game of allegiance
your jealous children played
& i am left wanting you
left to amuse myself
mother/ father
i am afraid
retreat to theory
talk factually when i feel unsure
hate the noise of such didacticism
hate my hatred of it

journal journey
jour du nalney
move slowly thru the signs of passage

maybe i will ne
ver
 speak a
gain
 mid this
 blue

sky & deep sea
 cerulean

vapour

distant hills

flash of veins
as they show thru
the skin

of constancy
livid as the skin becomes
after a blow

fear or
dismay
the colour of
blood
i dress in
because i am a servant of
words
the colour of
plagues
(indecent
 obscene)

'plaid the painter
when hee did so gild the turning globes,
blew'd seas, and
green'd the fields.'

yield it all up from
the person
 voice
he hopes is charged with
His blessing

the i dies finally
merges with the land's scape
scope increases
the folded page
writes its way into
the longed for
 beginning

story
 new
 song
round
 as the lips form

an O
i used to (age 4)
put the period in

early syntax
early speech

you are dead saints
i am half-alive
or better
 some days

calendrical ways

happy in the morning
depressed in the afternoon or

reversals

la tigre

egress

the rest is
written to be written
'it is all so slight'

of hand

the pen's grasped
wrongly but firmly

dreams twist

images erupt

violent

brush the skin off my head
's oblong

aluminum

obligatto

one word dwelled on
one month

mispelling: 'obligatto'
thinking: 'obligation'

i am obliged to

play out this path i have chosen
play this tune
write this part as i have just spoken it

because it is necessary

because i am not alone

because to be is cause
(reason versus reasons)
art is to bring together

join

'lost art of' art —

we are crazy in our isolation
as i am

torn always

so that the truth appears a melodrama when i state it
makes rhetoric of daily speech

'two nations warring in the bosom of a single state'

indispensible

love & hate

essential to
the completeness of the
composition

moi et me

instrument on which it's played

bound to another

obligation

two months to play the theme thru

'you are dead saints'
given back into the drift of print
of speech
born anew among the letters
a different tension

different reach

of logic
of the mind's playing out of
reason

a rhyme
till God's re sonned
on the tongue
the groan that must accompany your birth lord
l or d

unless the el's read 'one'

one order
absolute & true
which is the two tone order of the pun

'one Samuel
an Irishman
for his forward attempt to pun
was stunted in his stature'
pounded down

(i moved during the course of this writing, interrupting the patterns,
jarring at first because i found myself, ten years later, back in the same
house i'd lived in during the writing of 1335 Comox (poem that began
JOURNEYING & THE RETURNS (whose form was perceived after i
moved away from there (from here))) the dilemma being i found
myself caught up in a) mirror image

(no way to notate the break

caught up in) another
absolute statement for
my mother

(followed the line to come
'air your grievances & longings' with
'a transition taken

a return'

& later

'tonight i kneel
pounded down by the weight of my own resistances
my own fatigue

a kind of false pride'

crossed the whole thing out
uneasy with the tone
began this new movement
sudden intrusion of my mother
coupled with a return of self-loathing
'who does not love his words or works'
i saw as
a deeper level of
the pun
stir)

against the hate of self the love of her

posited

'there is little evidence to support it'

i am
the evidence of
their lovemaking
their spoor

my name is
'little evidence'
little evident in
these proceedings

here in clouds
amid the clash
the roar of
 c's & s's
absence of the loud

separator

the same
 i read in in
 the form of ain

(which is the pain
(mid-initial sequence) or
 the stain of
sainthood)

 track's a trickle

straight as the jog my memory takes
composed in time the rimes exist beyond the text
contextual

 textural

 daily bump &

grind

 stripped bare

air your grievances & longings

in these unfinished rooms
pick up the notebook left behind
after book III
that time i thot
the saints end

 finally

e nd

 'f eat her

take her away

 in my cap

at dawn

 today

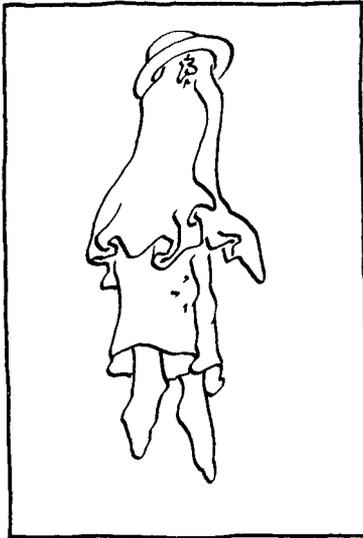
the knowledge

 to d a y

the action i act on'

'her' posited again as

moM/Womom



'the change
(an
angel
chang'll
hang)

suspended

over my head
suspended
deed

done

one d in
motion

or one y

changed by

the revolution

hanged c
revolving r the
credit balance¹

¹ credit with the c r to achieve it

sense out of nonsense

N on sense

(which is me)

i spell out changes

realign essentials

as i thot to

sing a balance sing²

to make everything the same you say

'nothing is different'

the arguments get obvious

when one's upset one screams

3 or 1?

'it is so unlike me

one like me uses my lungs'

my voice?

gossip's piss o G.

cloud town's gone down

t into d

artness

then the arkness of her belly

is that the sweat of fear

atlas's salt a

blinding of vision in any case

c as e

'it is all the same'

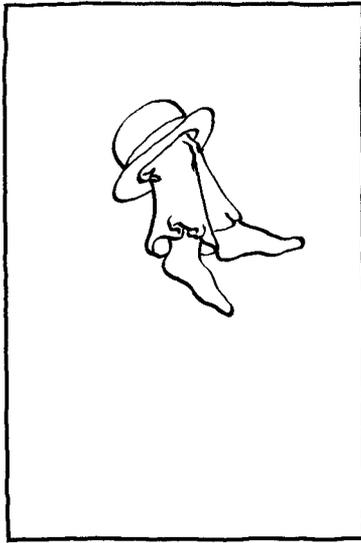
words one used before

2 agèd

fall

/

n



naming things that don't exist

twist

back & forth

existence only in the naming"

to spawn again in that stream

's forbidden

i cannot rebirth myself

cannot become mine own progeny

(glazed window grey day

you've all gone away

five years since i called your names with surety

i am not the same

(sometimes (at night) i doesn't know who he is (why? (that's wrong — the sequence should read w x y — the h interpolated into the unknown) h is his) not in that old schizy sense (i.e. he doesn't know who i is) but a perception re entity in its entirety ('at night' because he is all alone & 'sometimes' because it's accurate) the lacking of a total

the problem is in summing up prematurely (false). he is 31 (yesterday) but i's what? (joking to a friend he said 'i used to be 18 to myself but i'm catching up') a question of tension in telling a power in print opposed to speech



which is octagonal
h sided
or
(an aside

(i's inside
he's an outside face
a pose

a posse or
a nosegay

is it possible
the horses go neigh

posse bull
the whore say

(reintroduction of Blossom Tight, a minor character from an early draft of a later Captain Poetry poem)

'noone is forgotten we're just rewritten. he's letting my voice intrude briefly. it's just a chance for a few laughs at his character's expense (employing the devices of fiction in an autobiographical poem).'

))))

compulsive unmasking

i.e. as opposed to h.e.

over against the french j.e.

so that the sequence reads

h }
i. } e.(translating) he meaning i
j }

but *not* (capital H) He

– no heresy here

a tic

there a tickle

statement

‘why would you want to make everything the same?’

consistent voice equated with style

falsely

style’s stylus

the fingers an extension of the mind

ma ’nd me ’nd

personal history

le monde mundane

mynde & physik

i say ‘quoi’ mais

je ne sais quoi

it is the i of

histor }
mister }y

the y’s said e

making ‘my’ ‘me’

& ‘why’ ‘whee’

as in wheat or

whyte

white

night

stars over Inuvik

walking back from the reading to the hotel
the main streets mud
out on the edge of things
the elements still win
stilts support the town
impermanence shows
120 miles inside the arctic circle you know
we're living out a myth
huddled at the bottom of
most of what is canada
waiting the glaciers return
cities ablaze
fire out of water
burn

 coal/oil/gas
ritual pass of light
gestures against the coming night

here the ravens cry
as they did in Dilmun
raise their wings black against the sky
& fly

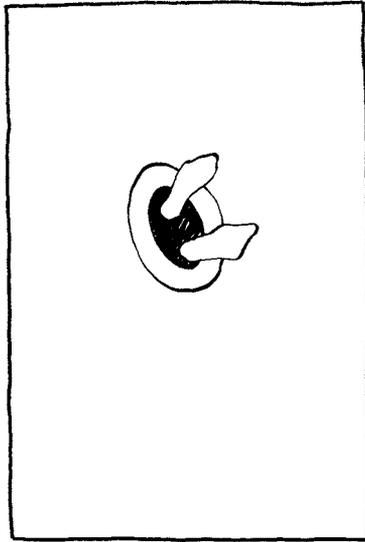
 the two we saw
walking thru the brush above the river
Mackenzie flowing north into the Beaufort Sea
'big as a dog they are!
had one once fought a dog in the main street!'
snow falls around us
white on whyte
worlds we have railed against
when will we be
content in the present
moment

 land
whole
 not the part

Ca
 Na
 Da

C 'N D
no space between
the process
 switch

which is the flow
 energy movement of a country



(we woke before dawn, throats dry, remembering then we slept in a
desert, frozen tho it may be, caught between the i & he, am image of
Dilmun in his mind, caught between first & third person na(ra)tivity)

rising off the tarmac into the sky
looking back along the body of the plane
straining for a glimpse of the arctic ocean
before the clouds close in

passing thru

into that space between
one layer & the next
not cloud world but another
spectral & strange

passing thru

into the greyblue
sky over everything

& two days later
driving out of Fort Smith
30 miles to little buffalo falls
ruth rees, ellie & me
watched the water drop
60 feet into the basin
the clouds hung grey
for the seventh straight day
as if cloudtown lay in ruins above me
snowbirds flocking up into the sky
trying to make sense of the wreck around me
here in the midst of what has never known city
trace a civilization

or what's left of it
looking out over the rapids on great slave river
early the next day

the remnants of Fort Fitz
where the great barges lay to
in their journey north to
Hay River Fort Simpson
whatever outposts sprang up to service those men
lived there

north of the Arctic Circle
& i am remembering Dilmun
the empty squares & courtyards
crumbled palisades & steeples
where Utnapishtim lived out his years
& i am wishing i could speak to him
discover how long immortality is
was his city like cloud town
the buildings rearranging themselves daily
the city no enemy ever took
because the streets shift even as you walk them
doorways change
familiar only to the saints who lived there
recognized dwelling signs no stranger'd ever see
they went crazy on this earth
only language retaining the multiplicity they were used to

(typing this out 12 days later i kept coming back to that line 'the edge of things' wondering at the vagueness, knowing what i was trying to suggest, that my world was finite, not in imagination but experience, real limits to what i knew, worried once more by the tension between process & an ideal economy of phrase

reading B.S. Johnson earlier this week, discusses Scott's shift from narrative poem to novel, what he saw as the death of the long poem, puzzling its resurgence, its popularity in recent years, i realized the lines had disappeared between the forms, that the novel & the poem were merging finally, a clarity, freedom to move as i choose

& later

talking with steve

comparing forms

his CARNIVAL

'my' MARTYROLOGY?

the voiceless voice he saw in Ronald Johnson's poems

i am wary of that impulse within me

would have it out with my i

how can i cast itself out

out of the process i must be true to

is part of the dissolution

the disillusionment

create a third person when the i's can't get along?

(jumped ahead

thot 'song'

son of g

h

(comes after him)))

the man at the reading said

'how come your poems sound so down?

unlike you?'

(the desire becomes stronger to stretch out, explain myself, which makes the plain ex, no longer clear, i want a different ear, a he like me, a she where the s is (in correct relation to)

he/i/she

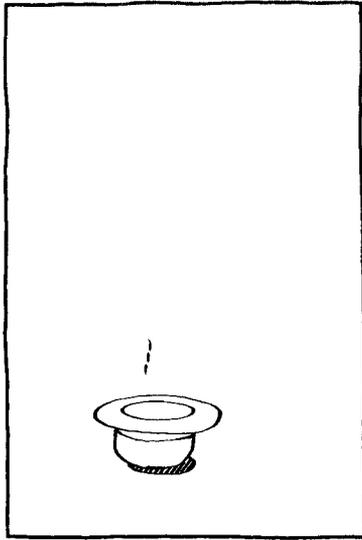
(why is the s the

feminizer?, makes the i is, births it, gives it its being, carries the he in the body of its word, the men inside women, the me in both of them)

EQUATIONAL DEVELOPMENT: HE/IS/HE

such minimal movements to seek truth in (steve said 'you'll be accused of shallowness' (hallowness feminized?)))

& then?



the w hat's low call
echoes thru these pages
lo cal or (i.e.)

 what's immediate is
the word in front of me
the one beyond that that i'm reaching for
no muse at all really
simply this canadian foot
following a tentative line forward
taking the time to tell you everything

the muse is western (greek)
the japanese saw poetry as everyman's
like thot or breathing
ambiguity was precisely what they wanted

it's social then
a point of view
political
the duty of a citizen
'a man betrays himself in his speech'

((why do they always question content, you speak of form to counter-
balance the question, they never ask what you believe in) purpose can
become conceit, shift beneath the feet, the line of speech that's called
political, the signified slides below the signifier, gets lost in what's

expedient, the strength of english, its ambiguity, turned against it,
corrupted, the masked language of law & politics, so distorted we
empower experts to interpret it)

in the distance clouds break
i'm sitting on the curb
crossing out words
resisting the urge to apologize

i am thinking it is better left behind
this city they no longer had a use for
make my way thru the shifting streets
along these sheets of paper to an ending
it is not over

it is never over

there is 'a third difficulty
with the usual definitions of parts of speech

they neglect form for meaning
although it is precisely through the *form* of our words and sentences
that we communicate our meanings.'

(James Sledd

A SHORT INTRODUCTION TO ENGLISH GRAMMAR)

& me
what am i doing
'building up a bracketing of asides'
standing here
outside the limits of this empty city
studying the cloud range
the shapes that shift
because it is the nature
of paper i have scribbled one word on
to shift it
 back & forth in my mind &
begin again
that way among the tensions
the interplay between the letters
is to start at m
& then the a
leads thru to y
some questions answered
but the rest remain

not in the saints' names
which was beginnings
but in that space between
the s & t
among the shift of what at first seems arbitrary
'to go beyond the point where it is even neces-
/sary to think in terms of words'
there
 which is t & here
more pain than we can bear
is bearable

M		Books I to III
A		which is begun & leads

on

that's all i'll say

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