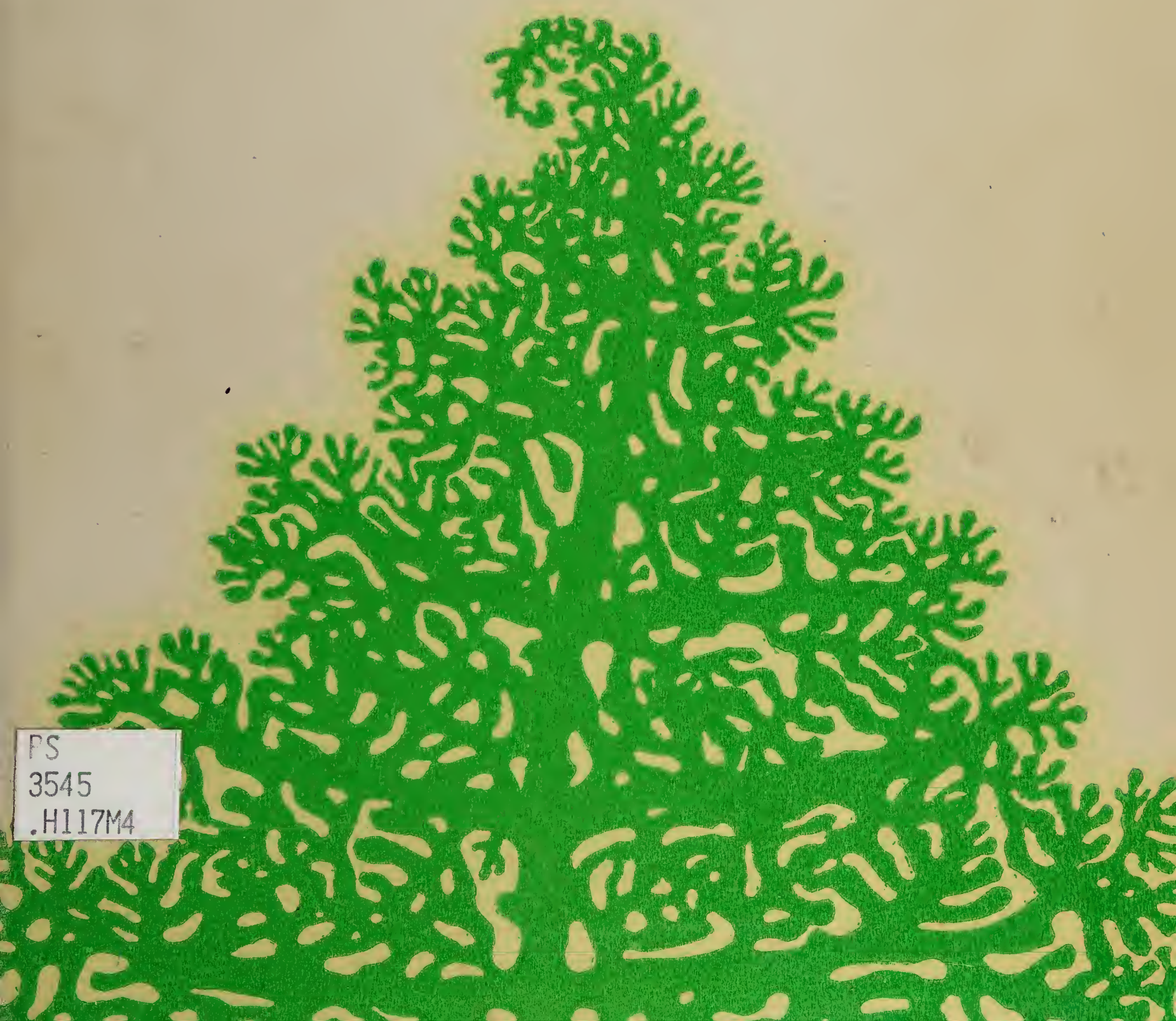


*MEMOIRS OF AN  
INTERGLACIAL AGE*

PHILIP WHALEN

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*MEMOIRS OF AN INTERGLACIAL AGE*



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*MEMOIRS OF AN*  
*INTERGLACIAL*  
*AGE*

PHILIP WHALEN

1960

---

*THE AUERHAHN PRESS*

Some of these poems have appeared in: Yugen, Foot,  
Combustion, A New Folder, Vigil, Galley Sail and Jab-  
berwock (Edinburgh Univ. Review).

*For Tut & Ginny*



*ADDRESS TO THE BOOBUS,  
with her Hieratic Formulas in reply*

O Great Priestess  
O Keeper of the Mystic Shrine  
O Holy & Thrice More Holy

Prussian Blue    Dark Blue    Light Blue    French Blue

Blyni & Pirozhki	Sapphire	Aquamarine
To Take Out	Turquoise	Zircon
	Lapis Lazuli	

Malachite, a sea-color stone

O Hidden!

(Vestal maenad bacchante)  
among the leaves bright & dark

"...a rubber baby...  
"...a plastic baby...  
"cloth baby whose eyes  
close"

O Blessed Damozel  
(flies & lilies)  
Rosetti saw you weeping, leaning  
over heaven's gold bar  
(Crocodile tears?)  
yellow hair

"I NEED TO HAVE A PAPER!"  
"...a hand for you, a HAND for you  
a hand!"

Power & clemency

VEIL

a shroud (only a slip-cover) a curtain

Covering

from dusty eyes, the vapid gaze of

THE TABERNACLE & blazing lamps the Molten Sea

& the Sybil also, her eyes closed under the cloth

& covered baskets containing that which none but the initiated  
may look upon

"...I have one

I have two

I have a pencil

I'm going to get another chair

& stand up

I need

I need to push it

THERE!"



*BOOBUS HIEROPHANTE,*  
*Her Incantations*

Heavy  
Heavy  
Hangs

over thy head

"A HAND!  
"A HAND!  
"A HAND!

This gruesome object was employed in unspeakable rites,  
the fingers burning as tapers

WHAT SHALL THE OWNER DO TO REDEEM IT?

*TAKE 3 STEPS FORWARD*

"A TABLE  
"A TABLE  
"A WHEEL FOR THE TABLE  
"ANOTHER WHEEL FOR THE TABLE  
"RED  
"RED  
"RED  
"RED  
"MONKEY  
"A FLEMING POOL  
"A LITTLE TINY MOUSE RIGHT THERE

full terror

"LOOK AT THAT I MADE!"

# *METAPHYSICAL INSOMNIA JAZZ*

Of

Course I could go to sleep right here  
With all the lights on & the radio going

(April is behind the refrigerator)

Far from the wicked city  
Far from the virtuous town  
I met my fragile Kitty  
In her greeny silken gown

fairly near the summit of Nanga Parbat & back again, the wind  
flapping the prayer-flags

"IT IS THE WIND MOVING."

---

"IT IS THE FLAG MOVING."

Hypnotized by the windshield swipes, Mr Harold Wood:  
"Back & forth; back & forth."

We walked beside the moony lake  
Eating dried apricots  
Lemons bananas & bright wedding cake  
& benefits forgot

---

"IT IS THE MIND MOVING."

---

& now I'm in my bed alone  
Wide awake as any stone

20:VII:58, *ON WHICH I RENOUNCE THE NOTION  
OF SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY*

The minute I'm out of town  
My friends get sick, go back on the sauce  
Engage in unhappy love affairs  
They write me letters & I worry

Am I their brains, their better sense?

All of us want something to do.

I am breathing. I am not asleep.

In this context: Fenellosa translated NO (Japanese word)  
as "accomplishment"

(a pun for the hip?)

Something to do

"I will drag you there by the hair of your head!"  
& he began doing just that to his beautiful wife  
Until their neighbors (having nothing better to do)  
Broke it up

If nothing else we must submit ourselves  
To the charitable impulses of our friends  
Give them a crack at being bodhisattvas  
(although their benevolence is a heavy weight on my head  
their good intentions an act of aggression)

Motion of shadows where there's neither light nor eye to see  
Mind a revolving door  
My head a falling star

## UNSUCCESSFUL SPRING POEM

Warm night/morning walking  
I'm looking for anything

Beside a white wall: Soft ponderous callas, white against white  
Nothing can move them in this heavy moon & streetlight

-----SUDDEN ANTIQUE VISION OF MAY-----

when no one shall marry

women clean house, bank all fires, a white cone of ashes  
the coals deep inside  
girls & their marble images bathe in the sea

men & boys keep to the rivers, fish for spring salmon  
(Stay away from the ocean!)  
after steam-baths & fasting, eat dream-journey medicine  
gathering power

---

Although completely open, perfectly formed, white  
Nothing will move these massive lillies until June

TRYING TOO HARD TO WRITE A POEM  
SITTING ON THE BEACH

Planted among driftwood  
I watch the tide go out  
It pulls the sundown with it  
& across this scene & against the wind  
Man on a motorbike white crash-helmet  
His young son rides the gas tank before him  
Slows down for the creek mouth  
& not too fast up the beach north

Flat dull whistle buoy heard again  
And though the wind is right the bell buoy is inaudible

Fat seagull picks at a new hake skeleton  
Choosily - not hungry walks away  
Returns a moment later,  
Room for a few more bites inside

Here comes a family of five  
Man prodding with a stick whatever the children test  
with their fingers  
Mama is bundled up naturally cold & yellow plastic bucket  
Complaining a little "...kind of a long way from the car..."

The children explore ahead the beach goes on forever & they  
Will see it all this evening they aren't tired

Motorbike man coming back slows down for them  
& for the creek mouth

Fog joined into fat clouds cover the sun  
Move south stretching rivers & islands of blue  
Fine moving sheets & shafts of light on the water horizon

I'm not making it, I'm cold, I go into the house.

## *HYMNUS AD PATREM SINENSIS*

I praise those ancient Chinamen  
Who left me a few words,  
Usually a pointless joke or a silly question  
A line of poetry drunkenly scrawled on the margin of a quick  
splashed picture - bug, leaf,  
caricature of Teacher  
on paper held together now by little more than ink  
& their own strength brushed momentarily over it

Their world & several others since  
Gone to hell in a handbasket, they knew it -  
Cheered as it whizzed by -  
& conked out among the busted spring rain cherryblossom winejars  
Happy to have saved us all.

*PROSE TAKE-OUT, PORTLAND 13:IX:58*

I shall know better next time than to drink with any but certified drunks (or drinker) that is to say like J-L. K. who don't fade away with the first false showing of dawn through the Doug-fir & hemlock now here Cornell Road First of Autumn Festival

a mosquito-hawk awakened by my borrowed kitchen light  
scrabbles at the cupboard door

& the rain (this is Portland) all over the outdoor scene - let it -  
I'm all in favor of whatever the nowhere grey overhead sends -  
which used (so much, so thoroughly) to bug me

Let it (Shakespeare) come down

(& thanks to Paul Bowles for

reminding me)

there it rains & here - long after rain has stopped - continues from  
the sodden branch needles - to rain, equated, identified with no-  
where self indulgence drip off the eaves onto stone drizzle mist  
among fern puddles - so in a manner of speaking (Henry James  
tells us)

There we are

the booze (except for a hidden inch or so of rose in the kitchen  
jug) gone & the cigarets few - I mean where IS everybody & they  
are (indisputably) very sensibly abed & asleep -

one car slops by fast on overhead Cornell Road the  
fireplace pops I wouldn't have anything else just now except the  
rest of the wine & what am I trying to prove & of course nothing  
but the sounds of water & fire & refusing to surrender to uncon-  
sciousness as if that were the END of everything - Goodbye, good-  
bye, at last I'm tired of this & leave you wondering why anybody  
has bothered to say "The sun is rising" when there's a solar ephemeris  
newly printed, it makes no difference - but you will be less  
than nowhere without this pleasurable & instructive guide.



*FROM A LETTER TO RON LOEWINSOHN, 19:XI:58*

Well, love, sure, love, ok, love if  
(As it is) penultimate to action, the ultimate being  
                    compassion  
                    (a detached interest)  
& some sort of understanding in between the letters

“PRETTY IS AS PRETTY DOES”

(What are you doing with your hand between my legs?  
(  
(Why don't we just go down to the corner for a  
                                    chocolate malt?  
(  
(& 2 straws & Norman Rockwell to draw it?

Anyway, you've seen these people, the one trying desperately  
To Make It & I mean on a strictly H E R E hardup basis

& the other WONT (stand/sit/lay) still for it  
Because it might complicate things (or any other REASON)  
IT IS PRIDE: A false humility, we put ourselves down  
None of us believes

                    “I am a prize package”  
that we aren't idly chosen

(Darwin is all about South American bugs)

or that our own taste in lovers  
                    is infallible



## COMPLAINT: TO THE MUSE

You do understand I've waited long enough  
There's nobody else that interests me more than a minute  
I've got no more ambition to shop around for poems or love  
Come back!

or at least answer your telephone  
I'm nowhere without you

This is the greatest possible drag  
Slower than the speed of light or always  
A little less than critical mass

The energy the steam the poop is here  
Everything is (by Nature) Energy, I myself  
A natural thing & certainly massive enough

A block of lead (the end of all radiation)  
I don't even reflect much daylight, not to speak of  
glowing in the dark  
I'll never get it off the ground

---

This room is full of 1 fly & an alarmclock  
It is uninhabitable

---

If I wasn't drunk & blowing wine-fumes & peanut breath in your face  
Maybe you'd be nice to me.

---

You do understand  
I'd much rather listen, Lady  
Than go on babbling this way, O rare gentle

& wise, it isn't enough that your face, your body  
Are uniquely beautiful - I must hear you tell me  
about the weather  
We might even quarrel if nothing else

You know the answer & don't, won't quit kidding me along  
Hanging me up like Sir John Suckling  
in a tag of lace or muslin

I can see right through all those veils  
But you can run fast & I've got a bum knee

& you been a long time gone

## *A REPLY*

You ask, "a flash in the pan?" (i.e. can you  
dismiss us?)

I say, "No.

No torches, no beacons -

FLASHES OF MEN IN TIME: rare,  
discontinuous, an after-image

Remains, a retinal overcharge (& add:  
persistence of vision)

EFFECT AN AMBIENCE OF LIGHT

*SOMETHING NICE ABOUT MYSELF*

Lots of people who no longer love each other  
Keep on loving me  
& I

I make myself rarely available.

*A DISTRACTION FIT*

I walk around town with my baby  
While I'm sound asleep the middle of a nervous breakdown

Big pieces of the world break off  
    Slowly  
    sleeping  
        she didn't know the right way home, I lead the way  
            with my eyes closed

Pieces of myself plaster & stucco walls  
    Potemkin facades  
    drifting away

Lungs breathe me out  
Heart circulates me through pipes & tubing  
Brains imagine something walking  
    asleep

She holds this man by the arm it stretches  
    across the world  
Hand in his pocket  
Dream of love in 2 houses  
    asleep  
She breathes me in

*WITH COMPLIMENTS TO E.H.*

a target

a crooked arrow

an asymptote

a balance, an  
anomaly

a dissonance, an intentional  
assymetry

Sound B & B-flat together (in the bass) & hear  
yet another: "beat frequency"

Light through a diffraction-grating projects rings  
of darkness (a silence)  
"cancellation"

Paradigms, correspondances i.e. inverse proportions

---

---

---

A mutual confusion  
or mine alone?

---

---

---

a confutation of Hermes Trismegistus

I think mostly I remember, am remembered  
By my own brains muscle skin

which never sleep

An imaginary difference of frequency between them  
speaks here?

\*\*\*\*\*

(interrupted by a poet:

“Going to work as an airline purser  
all my friends will forget me  
I’ll be up in the air

.....

I’ll see you again before the world blows up.”

I: “That’s a solipsist view.”

He: “What do I know about New York?”

\*\*\*\*\*

A TARGET

A CROOKED ARROW

AN ASYMPTOTE

“You hit the nail right on the thumb!”

A false note between “The Real” &

“The Illusory”

---

HONK

---

“I don’t think you want to talk to me”

(this is another, earlier poet)

“Why don’t you just tell me to go home?”

---

The brain

actually T H E R E 1 minute

out of any waking hour

busy between whiles talking & listening

in cahoots with skin & bones to make a raft

sentient beings without number

---

NOT A DECISION OR A CHOICE:

DISCOVERY

---

sidewheel steamboat carried  
Grandpa Kelly from San Francisco to Portland  
sank on the return trip, all hands lost

\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*

“. . .no permanent home. . .”

CHAO-CHOU SAYS “WOOF!”

“Open Scandal”, Mumon Decl  
NORTH-SOUTH ZEN RIFT WIDENS  
Jiriki or Tariki?

( P H O T O )

MR A.C. PILLSBURY

*Flour Magnate Says, “Eventually. . .why not now?”*

Accused of Southern Sympathy

PALACE SOURCES MUM

---

so he says gimmee the coat & I says



it's yours if you're man enough to pick  
it up so he grunts & strains & say I  
magicked it so he couldn't & wants me to  
teach him how, I told him it wasn't me,  
the boss didn't want it to go no further  
& it wasn't any good to me neither & if  
anybody hexed it it was him the Old Man  
No. 5, I said I'll tell you all I know about  
it but you'll have to figure it out for  
yourself

---

Intentionally out of whack  
The bow-string, the bent bow

### D I S T O R T I O N

Power, to kink space (distance)  
the target impaled on the arrow!  
The bow-string hauling the target  
to where I stand  
Snaps back

THWUNK!

7/8:V:59

### *ADDENDA*

HERAKLEITOS OF EPHESES, Frs. 45 & 66 (John Burnet translation):

“(45) Men do not know how what is at variance agrees with  
itself. It is an attunement of opposite tensions, like that of the  
the bow and the lyre.

(66) The bow (Βιός) is called life (Βίος), but its work is  
death.”

*POEM FOR A BLONDE LADY*

Clearly I must not (on any account) stir one muscle  
Until it moves

a real necessity

interior

to it,

towards or away from

You

I don't mean "love" or "sanity", I want to answer  
all your crooked questions  
absolutely straight

& if away

Only a pausing a thoughtless rearrangement  
to include you  
As we really are

*"EVERYWHERE I WANDER"*

Sweet sleep a spider of dreams downy fuzz & thistle the blanket  
dragdown tourniquet too long & frequently applied  
afternoon a soporific sad & flicker dim & horizontal dol-  
drum a distant intensity of cloud  
fern

shape                      shape                      shape

a crystal  
my face warped into sleep-wrinkle taste  
still asleep  
crystal electrically bent  
a tone

## *A REFLECTION ON MY OWN TIMES*

Now's  
the wrong place  
to start an argument (to  
say nothing about being otherwise unready)

WHAT ideas? Not a brain in my head, only  
"Education" & a few "idees recus" (read  
"conditioned reflexes")

But necessary to open my small  
yap  
maybe just to say "ouch"  
as the lobotomy knife slides  
("painlessly", they say)  
IN

*HAIKU FOR MIKE*

Bouquet of H U G E  
                  nasturtium leaves  
"HOW can I support myself?"

*SELF-PORTRAIT,  
FROM ANOTHER DIRECTION*

Tuned in on my own frequency  
I watch myself looking  
Lying abed late in the morning  
With music, thinking of Y----  
Salal manzanita ferns grasses & grey sky block the window  
Mossy ground

I think what is thinking  
What is that use or motion of the mind that compares with  
A wink, the motion of the belly

Beside the highway  
Young bullock savages the lower branches  
of a big cedar tree

*A Journey,*

*To The City*

Lownsdale Square  
Huge seagull on rump of bronze elk  
Looking the other way

Wm Jennyns Baker (getting breakfast for his  
family & me):  
"Count your blessings  
Name them one by one  
You will be surprised  
What the L O R D hath done!"

THOUGHT IS NOT SWIFT!

perhaps the mind is slower than this pencil, its rate of motion  
nearer that of the heartbeat -  
moving slower than the head which turns  
not as quick as a wink

Pieces broken off a sandstone cliff

Grass & salal bushes still growing on it, roots exposed  
I said a new landslide; the Judge: "It fell off two years ago"

## POSSIBLE TRUE STATEMENTS ABOUT A REAL PIECE OF SANDSTONE

Now it is here.  
Now it is falling.  
Now it is there.

which we agree upon...

What comes next?

The landslide has revealed  
The bones of Adam protruding from the soil  
A bronze door into Magic Land  
Z-. really *was* sore at me seven years ago in  
Hollywood, which is the reason Sandra never  
returned my umbrella, - I see it all now...

Any of these things?

"wasn't built in a day"

Considerably faster, the Basilica of St Peter  
A momentary flash, a brainstorm, an internal shifting  
Nothing to do with time-keep or spending, the rules of the stonemason's guild  
Maybe a headache between the hours of 1 & 10 P.M.  
Walking the street alone

I said leave it the hell alone now or you'll have the whole thing  
all gee-hawed up

Quicker than dammit

Rain/wind bulging the window  
An Absolute, i.e. what we think of as  
"an Absolute", "Force", "NATURE"  
know nothing of my love, my mind  
Looking into a mirror, shaving, is I?  
& I told Q-- "the toes, knee-caps *et cetera*

All thinking” or this

Lights on or off  
The kitchen is the same  
Tuesday or Wednesday

2 Reedies cross-legged on Taylor Street sidewalk  
Beards  
Waiting for the campus bus

*Another  
Journey  
To The  
Same City*

On Broadway another one gets off a trolley  
Full pack & walking-shoes dangling

Moral: Not all the younger generation going to hell

to bed & all my nerves  
woke up to sing & dance I got up & dressed made a pot of tea lit a pipe &  
sat patiently watching them hop, flashing red, blue, etc. random motion  
through a number of dimensions &/or continua - fascinating but completely  
exhausting to watch, to be

(2 lines canceled)

Climb on & ride -

progress by explosion  
All the elements analyzed out & recombined

/with your finger on the throttle  
& your foot upon the treadle of the clutch

an open eye neither *oculus dei* nor yet the sun  
“*omicron*” the lesser “o”

(2 lines canceled)

Any word you see here defies all fear doubt destruction ignorance &



hatefulness

All the impossibilities unfavorable chance or luck

It will have overcome all my strength (the total power of a raging maniac  
self-hypnotized berserk missing one arm part of the entrails exposed  
running with incredible speed)

Superhuman force, an exorbitance -

slingstone hurled at a tangent to the circle  
in which it lately whirled  
zipping off in high-speed parabola

Into the mirror (NOW showing many men) all of them "I"

11:II:59

## *DELIGHTS OF WINTER AT THE SHORE*

A little sauce having unglued me from my book  
I take the present (Ernest Bloch on the phonograph)  
I salute the fire in the fireplace  
The red sectional settee  
All the potted plants I moved onto the diningroom table  
so they could get more light  
And beyond the window North Pacific Ocean

An editor writes to me, "Takes, takes, all the time takes. . . what  
are you scared of, nobody's trying to cut your throat. . .  
Why don't you just sit down & write a novel?"

& wild with energy & power I'm curled up in the grey reclining chair  
Carefully writing one letter at a time

Check the barometer. . . . . falling  
Check the swiss steak in the oven. . . .  
. . . . turn up the heat

It goes like that, all the "talent", the "promise"  
My mortgage very nearly foreclosed  
My light going out

X--- keeps telling me how sad everything is  
(he cries all the time)  
Maybe he's right, but I don't *see* sad  
& the pursuit of happiness around a square track

How loyal have I been to myself?  
How far do I trust. . . anything?  
I wonder "self-confidence" vs. years of self-indulgence  
(am I feeling guilty?)

How would anything get done if I quit? Stopped  
whatever it is you choose to call it?

Put it as fancy & complicated as possible:  
Here I sit drunk beside the biggest ocean in the world  
TOSCA destroying me on the phonograph  
Everybody else in the world dying of starvation, cruelty  
lack of my love

No amount of promise or talent about to do anything to fix that.  
It was 20 years ago they worried about what I might do  
Now everybody can see what I've done, what I'm doing

Everybody starves  
Everybody is a huge (biological) success  
Everybody's maybe like me: perpetually scared  
& not giving a shit  
As long as there's beef in the oven  
Out of jail  
Drunk

Everybody says Horace was a two-bit snob, writing  
*"Odi profanum vulgis"*  
Maybe he meant he hated himself for being lazy, preferring old wine  
Pretty girls & sunshine  
To the dignity & usefulness of public office?

Now the Second Act of TOSCA:  
Big party downstairs, the cantata going on  
Police interrogation upstairs, Cavaradossi on the rack  
(These *palazzi* - a real idea of splendor)  
& topping it all off, as if it explained E V E R Y T H I N G

*"Visi d'arte, visi d'amore . . ."* I've lived for Art,  
I've lived for love. . ."  
(incontinently stabbing the villian)

DIE!

DIE!

DIE!

I eat an olive out of my glass

TOSCA: “*. . .tutta Roma!*”

& 1 is left

Some psychiatrist says “Quotation, a relaxation for, an evasion by the *id*.”

I eat the second final olive & pretend to hurl my glass  
into the fireplace

I don't actually throw it, the glass isn't mine & there's a screen  
in front of the fireplace

\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\*

24 hours later, not drunk but dissociated completely from past  
& present (absolute rejection of any future)  
3 severed heads are staring at me through the windows above the door  
A large patient hungry monster breathes once a minute at the keyhole  
All violence has returned to sit on my chest, slide into my armpits  
The whole works only part of this particular link of a heavy gold  
suspended chain circle  
the chain is also manifest as music

I try to decide if it's light on dark  
Or dark on a light ground. . .intensely occupied with this. . .

& start again: Air is colder than ice  
Interstellar space is (a few parsecs from a star)  
Colder than air, et cetera

The way I'm sitting now is the past, the way my fingers hold this pen  
The letters themselves

2 minutes from now I'll do something equally characteristic  
Something I've lived, survived 35 years in order to accomplish

Viz., Layed aside the pen, took off my glasses & rubbed my eyes  
Considering the idea of staying up until daylight

Everything between time  
Crazy as a peach-orchard bull. . .

I turn my head  
Expecting the ocean to be empty & black;

there are tiers of lights  
Apparition of downtown office building standing on the waves

GANDHARVA CITY!

A Swede boat bound for China

17, 18, 19: XII: 58

SELF-PORTRAIT SAD 22:IX:58

At last I realize my true position: hovering face down above the world  
(At this point the Pacific Coast of The United States)  
The lights of the cities & my lives & times there  
A second rate well finished nothing too much wrong with it but not too  
interesting  
Piece of music - think of De Falla's *NIGHTS IN THE GARDENS OF SPAIN*:  
Very like that - mildly extravagant, vaguely romantic  
Some overtones of a home grown exoticism

Trying to break this all up I meditate a while  
Walk on the beach to look at the moon (some sort of festival moon surely  
First full moon after Autumn Equinox)

Sudden seabird exclamations very loud just over my head invisible

Broken tooth. Shrouded typewriter. Noisy clock. Poorly tuned radio.  
Sick refrigerator in the next apartment.  
I know exactly what I'm doing  
& after sleeping and waking again the rest of this day will be wonderful

(DREAM PANTOMIME)

Stacked high around us while we practice unspeakable vices  
Bones of Senacherib his victims  
O Babylon, dear Babylon all drowned!

The irresponsible waves & fickle winds  
(Great Atlantis!)  
Flying fish & giant cephalopods  
Poison floating dumpling Portuguese man o' war  
(O Camoens!)  
& immoral plotinian nautilus high above the temple courts

Alas dainty Belshazar! Divine Exogamite!  
Perished!

*Folie de grandeur*: horror & degradation is my name

Another damned lie, my name is I  
Which is a habit of dreaming & carelessness  
no nearer the real truth of any matter  
In any direction myself bound & divided by notions

ACT!            MOVE!            SPEAK!

Forgetting last night's moon & paying no attention now  
To the sunlight in these pines

Deer Demon & Yak Demon stir my brains  
Mouth grows tinier, belly  
Huge - I'm a *preta*, starving ghost  
Self-devoured

PARALYZED    AGAIN!

(*O rage, O desespoire, &c.*)

Swinging in the same eccentric orbit from depression  
To mania - imbecility to genius

Unlike Tobit I'm awake but the seagulls mute  
dung as warm as sparrows  
per usual

& I'm tired of being tired of it  
A simple switch from hating to loving  
That's not enough, walking from one end of a teeter-board  
to the other



Go sit under a chestnut tree & contemplate the schoolhouse  
 You won't believe that its thin tall red brick  
 Peaked roof & elegant cupola with bell  
 Narrow high green-trim crumble-sill windows (& this  
     is the NEW side, the 1910 Union St. facade  
     the Court St. front is 1897 its great solid doubledoors  
     Sealed)

& now the tree's cut down

Oh, well

I was never good at throwing rocks to knock down

Pods from it anyway, horsechestnuts

Cold calsumine smell, solid chunks of brown watered-silk inside

To contemplate

or decorate with a pocket knife

NOTE

NOTE

NOTE

Suppose (unbelievably) you were fat & forty for the last 20 years  
 With sporadic fits of low-frequency radiation  
 Lots of side-bands, poor modulation, the oscillator  
 Unstable

NOTE

NOTE

(PLEASE REPLACE YOUR OLD TANK WITH A ((PIEZO-ELECTRIC))  
CRYSTAL! - Yours truly, F.C.C.)

Useless for any practical purpose  
i.e. unemployable for clear transmission

So it was the wrong tree; the school remains

&

There's a library not far away



Also brick but under vines with slick blueblack poison berries  
A mansard roof thanks to Mr Carnegie

Mama said: "You don't HAVE to believe EVERYTHING they tell you  
in school - think for yourself a little bit!"

The library: A house of correction

*There is a boardinghouse  
Far far away  
Where they serve hash & beans  
Every Saturdy*

INTERMEZZO

*O how those boarders yell  
When they hear that dinnerbell  
O how the boarders yell  
Far far away*

Teeter-totter  
Bread & water

Contemplate the schoolhouse  
Look at the library

chestnuts

NOTE

I go home again all the time  
It nearly drives me dotty but I go & will go again

. . .Far away

& it's as real as anything else  
However changed in many particulars - specifically  
The love & hate gone out of it leaving what the Friends call  
"A concern"

(is it properly "compassion"?)

NOTE

I forget how Tobit saw again  
neither school nor library  
not that kind of ignorance

He had to bring some story  
Tell the truth on at least one  
Occasion or subject  
He had to DO

something first & then the Angels  
The Archangel Raphael, I think?  
brought him eye-cups

Telling you I'm paralyzed -  
Inside a thin cast of seagull lime -  
None of that was true for more than a minute (vile hyperbole!)  
You are the ones walking around inside your shells, I soar  
Face down high above the shore & sea

Ho ho, *skreak*, &c.  
Come live on salmon & grow wise!

## *I RETURN TO SAN FRANCISCO*

Scared?

MM says, I just found out what's wrong with me  
is fear & it scares the shit out of me

Jo B., Intellectual comics, they've taken EVERYTHING  
there's nothing left - jokes about Proust, Joyce, Zen  
Buddhism, it's the end of culture, the world. . .

And JW, What are we going to do?

I said, I'm going home & start typing  
I'm tired of nothing happening

\*\*\*\*\*

### CONTINUATION, IN ANOTHER KEY

E N O U G H, I'm tired of sound & silence, the alternation of opposites  
The weak middle sagging between both

#### ALL RHYTHMS

There must be an eruption, a boil, an imposthumation  
Come to a head

Horace Walpole writes to one of his boyfriends, "at least  
write & tell me that you have nothing to write me about"

So I take off down the street with my bed on my back  
easy as not

The time element is the least important:  
Strobe-light photograph shows a one-drop milk-splash

A solid coronet shape, the walls faithfully reflecting the light  
which was faster than the crown-world's history. . .  
How long did it take to build that circular wall of milk  
its pointed towers  
    & each of them transforming into a satellite droplet  
    heading out to make smaller, briefer crowns?

Our notion of time, of history. . . .what's wrong?

Figuring it all out again  
    A, B, C. . .  
    1, 2, 3. . .

We don't really GET what it is, looking at it drives it  
    someplace else (consider the eye in the act of looking;  
    can we see it?)

Only fair-sized lumps make any sense at all -  
    (the idea of "critical mass")

Form patterns that suggest a moral, with fright, sleep, the skin  
    as LIMIT?

\*\*\*\*\*

Too hot this evening, I whistle for a wind  
    hilltop bayview bridgewink Golden Gate  
& breeze from the South green marble apartmenthouse lobby wall

\*\*\*\*\*

CLT,   A lovely day  
    Rain has washed the car all beautifully clean  
    & the battery is completely dead

\*\*\*\*\*

Something on this page about waterlillies  
& how these lines are distant mountain ridges seen

From across the desert, the old *‘horreur du vide’* routine

\*\*\*\*\*

While I wait, a shining beige/brown chevron clothes-moth  
settles on the bedspread  
Eyebrow-hair antennae heavy beads under the lens  
Moves now to the wall

this would happen easier if I got laid oftener  
stayed away from crowds  
worked very hard at it

Long hair from my left eyebrow just fell out  
One inch long  
I hate putting it in the ashtray

or maybe I'm trying to tell about it without looking at it  
remembering it all wrong or some doctored cut version

I saw a butterfly set in clear unbreakable plastic block  
I start out with a rubber balloon & a live bug  
Blow up the balloon & this bug  
flies around outside. . .  
Something entirely different, a failure, a mistake. . .  
What I want you to see is yet another lovely  
& inexplicable thing

\*\*\*\*\*

something complicated going on in the kitchen  
turn off the gas & the stove (cooling)  
exchanges heat for noise & motion

\*\*\*\*\*

RIGHT NOW  
 If I had a pet rabbit right now  
 I'd pinch it & make it squeak  
 NOBODY pays any attention to me & I really need LOTS  
 of loving

\*\*\*\*\*

Since you won't come to me  
 I'll think about mountain cypress trees  
 Something has taken the bark away the wood weathers orange & twisty

\*\*\*\*\*

While I'm looking for sleep  
 Bright shapes of day bedevil my eyes  
     identification with one's own "good" qualities  
     and vice-versa - where does that put you?  
     identification with neither - what you call that?  
     or with both?  
     With ANYTHING ELSE. . .shape, form, quality, mode  
     what then?  
 "What was your original face, before you were conceived?"

\*\*\*\*\*

same routine as above, with respect to our *common*  
 space/time continuum?

\*\*\*\*\*

IDENTIFICATIONS: : : : RESONANCES. . . . .? (*vide* Erwin Schroedinger)

\*\*\*\*\*

while I'm looking for sleep's bright devils the day of the fly the



morning's blank dissociations cannons & waterclocks sunny towered  
fugal castles torrents of malicious corn & fleet shadows of a dear  
remembrance falling by

\*\*\*\*\*

Naturally there's no recollection of your low forehead peculiar  
Cheekbones & curious nose  
    in the silk-paintings from Tun Hwang  
    the rock-sculptures at Ellura

The complications of living with love  
& without it - an absolutely even balance?

Spending more hours asleep than awake, happy than unhappy  
Talking more than listening

Do we breathe in one more time than we breathe out?

Julian Huxley is worried about the population explosion  
If he understood what I'm saying here  
He'd come at me personally, a pair of shears held low

WHAT IS (properly) THE QUESTION?

a false proposition (?): All any of us wants is a simple life;  
A simple mind invents a complicated life.

\*\*\*\*\*

## BIRD WORLD

JM., A bird's head (while it sits on a perch) stays  
    in one place its body  
    moves from side to side, up & down, conditioned  
    (ORIENTED) to operate in 4-dimensional space

## CARNELIAN MARABOU EYE

Something will happen if we let it  
Everything happens no matter what we decide

\*\*\*\*\*

Now dreams are nearer, brighter louder & sleep a progression of paralyses  
difficult pose/gestures (infinitely long-lasting) with waking breaks between  
them recalling summer in lookout as in poem, "conscious even while sleeping"  
- & after waking the dream continues somewhere "underneath" my present "consciousness"?

I keep getting takes on the stone face with live glass eyes - from 1) statue  
at Jo B.'s house, & 2) dream wherein it was a significant figure, 30:III:59

15:IV:59



*ALL ABOUT ART & LIFE*

a compulsion to make  
marks on paper

whatever good or bad

"& as for meaning  
let them alone to mean  
themselves"

or that I'm ill  
out of adjustment  
not relating with real situation in living  
room I just left below  
i.e. two other people, friends of mine  
reading books

a shock out of the eye-corner  
Dome & cornices of Sherith Israel  
blue sky & fog streaks  
(reminiscences of Corot, Piranesi)

to mean themselves  
Adam & Eve & Pinch-Me

walks out of silence, monotony  
many colors dangling & sparkling

(TINKLE?)

there.      You know.      Uh-huh.  
we kill ourselves making it

PICTURE: a wood-engraving by Berwick  
GIANT WOOLY COW

PICTURE: children, their faces concealed  
by their hats which are heads which are flowers

PICTURE: Leonardo: Madonna & Child, with S. Giovanbatista

PICTURE: Ladies in marble palace with fountains located  
high in Canadian Rockies a peacock light the color  
of burning incense

PICTURE: a room, & through the door a hallway with a small  
round or octagonal window

PICTURE: 2 Bedouins praying in sand/ocean a camel with square  
quizzing-glass on head

PICTURE: All of us when we were young before you were born

2 PICTURES: Battle scenes (medieval-type) in high plaster relief  
curved glass not lens, no sound

LARGE PICTURE: C.S. Price: Indian women who might be mountains  
picking huckleberries in mountains that might be In-  
dian women

PICTURE: 5 Persimmons (Chinese)

52 PICTURES: (Mexican provenance) playing-cards, each one  
different, repellent & instructive

PICTURE: 360 degrees: the world is outdoors it is both  
inaccessible & unobtainable  
we belong to it

---

. . . most of your problems will disappear if you sit  
still (privately, i.e. in solitude) 1 hour per day  
without going to sleep (do not speak, hum or whistle  
the while). . .

---

The orders of architecture we are to suppose symbols of the  
human intellect & inspiration (in this case, severe Romano-Judaic)

“a symbol doesn’t MEAN  
anything  
it IS  
something. . . relationship of that kind doesn’t exist  
except in the old philosophy whose vocabulary  
you insist on using. . .”

---

MANIFESTS itself  
whether I write or not  
we call it good, bad, indifferent as  
we feel ourselves exalted or brought down  
it has its own name but never answers  
never at home  
& we want a stage for our scene  
(wow)  
as if Shakespeare  
LIED

---

all of us end up

*Zero for Conduct*

You bet.

---



It pours in & takes one shape only  
Or instantly becomes another flavor  
    raspberry to vanilla  
    strawberry to vanilla  
    orange to vanilla, etc.

Some legendary living ones can take it or leave it alone  
They go on planting potatoes, writing poems, whatever they do  
Without hangups  
Minimum bother to themselves & all the rest of the world  
And anyone observing them a little may  
    turn all the way  
                    ON

Meanwhile, psychologists test us  
    & get a bell shaped curve  
They know something or other I could tell them any time

All this is merely  
                    G R A M M A R

The building I sit in  
A manifestation of desire, hope, fear  
As I in my own person, all the world I see. . .

Water drops from tap to sink  
Naturally the tap's defective or not completely "OFF"  
Naturally I hear: My ears do what they're made for

(a momentary reflection - will my brain  
suffer a certain amount of water erosion  
while I sleep?- - -)

&

OUT

28: VIII: 59



*SINCE YOU ASK ME*  
(*A Press Release, October 1959*)

This poetry is a picture or graph of a mind moving, which is a world body being here and now which is history. . . and you. Or think about the Wilson Cloud-chamber, not ideogram, not poetic beauty: bald-faced didacticism moving as Dr. Johnson commands all poetry should, from the particular to the general. (Not that Johnson was right - nor that I am trying to inherit his mantle as a literary dictator but only the title *Doctor, i.e., teacher* - who is constantly studying). I do not put down the academy but have assumed its function in my own person, and in the strictest sense of the word - *academy* : a walking grove of trees. But I cannot and will not solve any problems or answer any questions.

My life has been spent in the midst of heroic landscapes which never overwhelmed me and yet I live in a single room in the city - the room  
a lens focusing on a sheet of paper. Or the inside of  
your head. How do you like your world?

*Awake a moment*

*Mind dreams again*

*Red roses black-edged petals*





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