

The Authority of the Air Conditioner

Richard P. Gabriel

January 4, 2017

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January 1, 2016

Frost Horizon

a new number
the year starts off cold
it will end cold
in the morning the light will slip through the keyhole
a woman will wake to pee
I will read and write
program and ponder
the year will stretch and with luck
I'll see it to the end
either way
there will be an end

January 2, 2016

My Heart is Breaking

I will walk that road again
from pond to stream
past what was once my family's
even with the yelling / hatred / deaths
I've seen women smile and laugh
as if the day were longer than life

January 3, 2016

Anna And Powell

behind the part of the farm my parents owned
a great granite boulder
behind Sam's barn / next to his pine grove
Billy Sam's son didn't know it so
perhaps Sam neither
a place to be secret
soft bed of pine needles nearby
far from the farms / safe for sounds
rumor / not rumor
treated as fact / deadly

January 4, 2016

Thinking About It

can it be as simple
as the land is large and trees are abundant
that there are places to hide
that coincidences can happen
can it be as simple
as love will find a way
can it be my mother learned that late
and hated her mother for it

January 5, 2016

Under Imitation

hazy smog driving north through the Central Valley
at sunset when the dust blows up and the red sun
is on a down adventure / we drive fast
we haven't eaten today and not much to drink
in theory we're dying
looking East there is a kind of darkness
looking West the future is veiled

January 6, 2016

The Perfect Road

first time up Arastradero
Fleetwood Mac on the radio
back when there only were radio and tape
the gums were huge wide and mega tall
the fields on the upside were dusty and gold
the little gully below was like a wandered-out fence lizard
did I find my way that year
did I make a good chunk for myself
a heartbeat drives you mad
and the stillness has evaporated

January 7, 2016

Helpless

suppose this were the mid '60s
it would be dark now and maybe a mist
over the big field across the road
I'd be planning a phone call to Meredith
as the night went on I'd play the piano
listen to music / stare at her photo in a yearbook
I'd never call her / I never did
I was too much then what I also am now

January 8, 2016

The L Section

I see pix of cute kids
commented in languages
everyone knows these kids are being loved in those comments
not everyone knows what's being written
but we know what part of the dictionary
to lookup the words in
the L section

January 9, 2016

Going Home

we'd sit in the living every month or so
watch movies of us climbing Chocorua
listening to a reel-to-reel of Dvorak's New World
listening for coincidences / remembering the climb
we were some sprite then and color movie film
were we well off / were we blessed
so many secrets before and after / like a train
with engine around one bend and caboose another

January 10, 2016

Mowing

mowing the lawn on tuesdays
highschool summers
a crude rider / it would take hours
hot and muggy / parts of the lawn wet
from an old stream mostly underground
I did all the big stuff
my parents the trims
what I can't recall is awareness of time
how that boring task would end
and everything around me would mist away

January 11, 2016

Death Or Worse / Off Balance

I could ride all the way from my house
to Meredith's with my hands off the handlebars
on a crappy ten speed / even though there were
steep downhills and modest ups
these days I can't ride a foot that way
it's a sign of impending death
or something nearly as bad

January 12, 2016

In Seven Languages

pretty girls cry when the sun falls
too close to the ground
or behind naked branches
this goes for nuns too
maybe nuns even more
walking past a Catholic church by the bay
a squall of tears cranks past

January 13, 2016

I Saw She Was

when she walks away her little sway
is a final wave / goodbye she might say
she doesn't / she is just away
I spoke to her though / we sat near the Bay
and all afternoon the sun broiled the water
the ships / the backs of our necks

January 14, 2016

Federalist

consistency is hard on people
they prefer to jump on ups and downs
as if a flatland
I sometimes argue it out
sometimes I laugh
often I am angered

January 15, 2016

A Wind Does

winds move always
you don't feel them
they swing around you
they cool your brow
they freeze your hands
they make companions lovers

January 16, 2016

Questions Of Her

can you hear her voice
do you sense her heels scraping along the sidewalk
would you like to follow her home
your home
do you understand what her hair does to your soul
flagging as it does

January 17, 2016

Duck Inn, Merrimac

some remember the old places
unpaved roads linking secret groves
to sacred coves / we had different names
for all the things / soon nothing will be left
but old pictures and faded stories
with a narrative invention is possible

January 18, 2016

Ueno

across a wide plaza
the Japanese girl on her way to practice
her blueblack hair sways one way
her violin case swings the other

January 19, 2016

Another

she is unreachable
some would say deceased
instead she is always around
a different corner
I could have loved her
but she had too much

January 20, 2016

Burning for Home

the little stream starting on our farm
makes its way slowly down to the big river
which makes its way quickly down to the immense ocean
some have commented on it
a place of play and reflection
central to the town
it slips under roads and no one notices
it is small and still there

January 21, 2016

Walking Stones

she steps in heels across wet cobbles
the yellow sodium lights are the last we'll see in Paris
her hands are aimed for mine a long way off
today it's cold / I'm cold / in some tomorrow
it will still be wet but we'll be warm

January 22, 2016

In A North

there are lots of ways to cry
like one's self to sleep
or as the nude one curls up in front of you
I've decided to stand at the window
frosting from my breath
below in the yellowed light lovers walk past
I turn to her

January 23, 2016

Some Detroit Area

a call girl on the next corner
is waiting to eat
you you might think
no food and you're the prey
she trades for it

January 24, 2016

Mommy, A Sort of Death

in the end we all call mommy
in the beginning too
what would happen
if we called her always

January 25, 2016

Mound-Over Turf

the rhythm of a song in many forms
loved so much each player makes their own
the bits of it familiar but in different directions
there is room for all of them
the wind begins to howl

January 26, 2016

The Wrong Self

each day that goes by
evidence grows that nothing I've done
has made much difference
you know / I've been saying this now
for years / how long can I take it

January 27, 2016

Found Out About You

what I see in my dreamlife
walking toward Carver's in a foggy damp twilight
past the little pond down that way
and not noticing that the future
was nowhere to be seen or heard

January 28, 2016

Pale Room Locked

in my dreams for dozens of years
there is a particular house
with a rambling downstairs
but an upper room padded like a palace
light blue walls covered in quilted fabric
left locked up for the future
in my dreams I show people that room
or pass through while looking for something else
an empty room / growing stale
a place for expansion
a place I fear
or just fear

January 29, 2016

If You Read This

as people from my hometown
all old now / talk about their memories
I see clearly how unobservant
and self-centered I was
did I / do I
have a sickness

January 30, 2016

Learning by Any Other Name

people survive because of many experiences
a life has time for only a small number
once you get to a certain age
hearing a story is a way to them
telling stories has evolutionary value

January 31, 2016

Unnoticed

I invent my past
because when it was happening
I didn't notice it
something made me
look just inside
nowhere else

February 1, 2016

Dream a Dream of Me

the sun over yellow hills
dark green hard leaves
smell of sweet tar in the air
some things cannot be pushed
to the past

February 2, 2016

Born to Run

you dream of a place
a way to forget yourself
encourage new impressions
being an other to become a self
the place is different
several similar ones would do
you choose one
live there a life
you dream of your home

February 3, 2016

The Sad Facts of Lost Parents

the hot days around Christmas time
middle of Florida
I'd sleep in my mother's room / she'd
sleep in the trailer
God it was cold nights there
I'd stay up reading until 1 / 2am
I'd find all the blankets I could
hounds barking and howling most of the night
down the soft sand road toward the national forest
hunting dogs
the first years my mother and father
then just my mother
the no one
we packed up what we thought of value
everything isolated

February 4, 2016

Fiction Lane

years of wind and a story like hell
farmers who once were giants reduced to slow breathing
still trains pass through town
love is made in this town and towns nearby
the air smells precious
people who could be loved are dead
the memorial is forgotten
the one with the most to lose is losing more
some asked about fairness
but the tumbleweeds just blew on down the elm lined lane
and now the elms are faded
like the story still read as fiction

February 5, 2016

Flush

bathroom bad again
belly in the pipe it seems
lots of flushing was supposed to help
but six months later seems not
I have to stop obsessing
turns out a clog way down line
a hundred feet from the house
obsession for nothing

February 6, 2016

Old Roads

the long myth of the road
we drive like bunnies hopping for their lives
we see women arms raised hanging clothes on lines
clothespins in mouths / the next shirt chin tucked
when we're young we graze for panties
or the big cupped bra
back when roads were small and serpentine
who can imagine the strangeness of the past
even when we once had our skivvies on the line

February 7, 2016

Long Blonde Hair

Eric Clapton on stage / Wonderful Tonight
two sweet chicks singing backup
at the end he sings oh my darling
you were wonderful
tonight
then something happens
he goes into the 1-4 single string picking
with the Strat on its two high pickups
he stands by the mic doing the 1-4
his eyes blink hard once on the 4
he steps back the chords slowly ringing
five steps back / winces on the 4
because this song is real
things happened to create it
even in front of thousands
the player can't help the melancholy of those things
art is a tether to the heart through memory
it's a set of strings strung tight on a Strat

February 8, 2016

She Felt It Drifting Away

she learned of the heat and passion of love
when her father maybe strayed
and then her mother killed him
you could call it the heat of the night
this is why no one in his family took him
why Sam reported it
why everything not explained becomes explained

February 9, 2016

Times Alone

Amelia was lost
landing on a watered strip
no one ever came
her navigator died a month later
then alone she ran out of water
became a skeleton later
washed away in a flood storm
the time my mother let her father die

February 10, 2016

Chasing Something

suppose it's a summer day
people in the park by the river are picnicking
among all those folks are two who one day
will lock their hips together
and something more will be made of it

February 11, 2016

Cottage Grove

we lived in the smallest house possible
when it rained the bottom of our mattress
on the floor was wet
we had to walk on the mattress to get out of the room
kitchen the size of a couple egg crates
living room smaller than two couches
Urbana / the fields were not far away
big yard though / a couple of trees
I wasn't able to notice much
or remember much
the world watched a little at a time

February 12, 2016

A River West

find a place near a river
watch cottonwoods green then blow
leaf wild in high winds
watch so long you start to forget
you start to lose sight
start to lose smell
to lose hearing
lose touch
feeling

February 13, 2016

Finding Outs

understanding is the difficulty
when no signposts are about
we look for a clue
but the clue needs a clue
wander and look
notice and discover

February 14, 2016

Coops

we had coops everywhere
at odd corners of the fields
some large / small / low but never two stories
whitewash and many years after their use
the limey chicken poop was still a smell
one old part of the barn was so broken down
I never went in / I think it was for horses
my mother said she was badly hurt there climbing in the loft
her gait was off and she had pain
make a story of it if you can

February 15, 2016

1960

recreations of 1960 just
don't seem right
too colorful / too alive
I remember it as a cloudy smokey time
but where I lived was not real
the enclave they called it
the farm / I didn't go places
I didn't see right / didn't see much
noticed very little
what a sad boy

February 16, 2016

God On Main

the center of town is bitter
days like this God leans back against the old brick building
and lights his cigar / a token from Heaven
people passing expect him to ask for change
change for a bag gripped on a bottle neck
but He just considers the question of blessing
as if passers by ask Him for change
and perhaps he expects a neck and a bag

February 17, 2016

On Tuesdays

I would drive there after hope
or ride there
not many welcomed me
I was too unseeing / too self-surrounded
fifty years later I have two friends only from then
the same two friends I had then
inability to think things through
see things through
feel the heat and cool
sit still and just listen

February 18, 2016

Noise Noise

building noise
to test filtering it
hard to exhaustively do
it must be smart to obey
English writing
maybe one more day

February 19, 2016

Not Mine Ever Again

I am like the clearing back behind our house
when you have land you can walk it in peace
you can do all you want / no one can watch or complain
the leaves that fall fall always at your feet
the white birches rounding out the white scene are yours
the rocks pushed here by ice are here for you
you sit in the clearing / break dry twigs into the dirt pit
against the rock / light dried needles for a small fire
as the snow puts it all behind you

February 20, 2016

Dumb It Were

she was so disappointed
she saw I was flawed
in ways that mapped out mental problems
she did all my homework for me
she had people never tell me of our family tragedy
because I was feeble minded
what was I
why did she believe this to the end
where did the rifle in the chimney come from

February 21, 2016

First Times

in our large first house together
in Champaign we had a restaurant fridge
with two big doors with cast iron hinges
one side broke and when my father came out once
he fixed the hinges with braces
we lived in the kitchen / the dining room / the bedroom
the house was freezing all Winter because of the oil crisis of 1973
my wife taught me many things that year
like how to show herself off to men
by stripping / how to take it in the end
it was a bitter year and I learned nothing about real writing

February 22, 2016

Hadley Sand Pit

the sand pit was deep
the road down to the bottom rocky and steep
50 feet / 100 feet / it was dug deep
how was it found / how was it made
it's been dug out and leveled out
we used to jump from the top and land halfway down
swallows had nests dug into the hard vertical parts
I used to shovel sand into the pickup as a kid
we had vulgar fun

February 23, 2016

Stuff and More Stuff

behind on writing
difficult code
computer out of date for work
so much to do

February 24, 2016

Decide

I grow more fearful every day
like I want to just lie down and sleep for a long time
too many things to do / too many things go wrong
maybe tomorrow I can decide

February 25, 2016

At The Café

he thought I was angry and would retire in anger
or bitter / sometimes he said bitter
it just feels realistic

February 26, 2016

Kalaupapa

a small county in Molokai
a peninsula isolated
many sick once lived there
now fewer than a hundred
there's a small church at one end
well kept
the sixteen once exiled there and alive
have grown fond of the isolation
it is their seventeenth friend

February 27, 2016

Bad Porn

manic sex in porn
shows the farce of men's thinking
nothing is exciting about fake screams
the true connoisseur wants the buildup
there can be many people in the scene
but someone has to be focusing

February 28, 2016

Old Goats

talking to an old friend
who is losing his memory
reminds me
he said he had to work hard at it
he said I less so
I am reminded of my small place
and I hope my noticing is not self pity

February 29, 2016

I'll Be Sleeping

driving up to South Dakota
Kathy asleep / her brother asleep
I'm listening to Jimmy Webb songs on the radio
hot early June day
cottonwoods by a hidden river
now what does it all mean fifty years later
when none of us are nearby
romance is the radio playing on
the tires ringing on
the cottonwoods fleeing behind us

March 1, 2016

Black Hills Flood

once in Rapid City we saw the work of the flood
houses gone or lifted up onto roads
railroad tracks wrapped around motels
smell of passed away
Kathy's brother-in-law was sent to search for bodies
we were visiting relatives from back home
Patty took us out / it was crazy
family crazy

March 2, 2016

In A Cold Room Every Night

some women have always come for me
not many
I would write them / they me
some have passed away by now
I wonder when they remembered me
I've learned what they saw had a lie to it
they all saw the lie

March 3, 2016

After Helping

she hugs the man she's been talking to all afternoon
then trails her fingers in his hand when he leaves
she loves him but not the way everyone thinks
the right way

March 4, 2016

Know?

who is the girl with Kurkjian
he is wearing his yearbook picture outfit
it's a sock hop / remember
she seems young
I know he danced with her
did I ever know her
will we ever know

March 5, 2016

Wet and Wind

hard rain all day
winds unhappy about something
I question my thinking
in the end it's time to slow

March 6, 2016

Dead Or Alive

I traveled to a land / an island
where cemeteries had tall stone high markers
carved in the shape of the cros Cheilteach
and had myself buried there
graves close together / clever sayings about death
people who wonder try to find me
or the markers reminding of me
among them a quiet woman in faded pink
faded blue eyes / she weeps as she walks past

March 7, 2016

Neuro Love

the surprise comes
when the inner heart
links to the outer
and the too many flutters
reduce to one longing
lingering beat

March 8, 2016

Play Now

when Clapton gets up to play at age 70
he fills the room with notes dripping with past
he is forever sad
women he loved pass by his mind
they make it to his fingers / the strings
he makes mistakes sometimes
they slide by / slide past
his sidemen keep it quiet
they never fail / their chops are in his service
he will weep later

March 9, 2016

Sorry For

I am the person no one ever calls again
I've interviewed for many jobs and only a handful even called me back
after talks no one comes up if there is an alternative
it is me for sure

March 10, 2016

Splinters

when I list all the words that begin
with pl
many things start out plain

March 11, 2016

Farm Woods

I remember the rain in the woods
when the leaves are fresh out
when the birch tops whip side to side
when the brook swells and last year's leaves
toboggan down to the river and out slowly to sea

March 12, 2016

Intrusions

with not many emailing me anymore
maybe it's time to go offline
diminish my presence
become effervescent

March 13, 2016

Forget This Fact

when I would play the room would squirm
move in broken lines
the beautiful and the beastly
the singer would ask one more
I'd bend to my strings / use the wah to slide
into a playing funk
that vibrato I worked on for years
would sway them all
when the feeling is gone

March 14, 2016

Covet

of those I've loved few
loved back / and being afraid
I walked away not toward
of those who loved me
I took them in

March 15, 2016

Empty

I stopped liking the limelight
shadows / I like to watch
I have no passion
little life force
I need fuel to keep up
not sweet / but fuel

March 16, 2016

Ars Poetica

the words come out right here
produced automatic like
but after they are up there
I work them over and over
until they are right pretty

March 17, 2016

Flying Get It?

I have dreams that overwhelm
I hope they don't alarm
whichever woman is in my bed
those moments

March 18, 2016

Pretending To Be My Friend

words piled up then fallen down
Dean Young's heart's been thrown out
another came flying in a punched it away
he yelled at me for writing these poems
poetry is too important to practice
there is no practice / do

March 19, 2016

Bad Bad Day

many changes today for my mail server
some hacker coming at me
might have lost my twitter account
don't care about that
changed a lot of passwords
made lots of notes
automated some things
damn it all

March 20, 2016

Beach Pizza

a friend is cruising my old grounds
looking for reluctant food
he drives a red car / a fast car
he is not young
it's a Mustang
tonight it's snowing there
but yesterday it was warm
it's an up then a down

March 21, 2016

Next Up

I long for many things
I'd like to skip away from obligations
I want the world to shrink
for me to be less of it
so pleasures alone impinge
then the world will be my tiny egg

March 22, 2016

Maybe Two

when they make movies meant to feel real
the buildings and houses are all run down
old and broken / breaking
peeling paint crooked everythings
shingles half off
roof hole filled / good places for hits and zombies
it makes things seem real
and also passé
like a love affair turned into an old marriage

March 23, 2016

Ice and Snow on the Merrimack River

there's a house on stilts on the Merrimack
when it's frozen and snowing the landscape turns monochrome
black with white flecks actually
there must be other colors
but the clouds insist
this house has a turret and a widow's walk
a second floor bedroom
if I could I'd be in that bed
and not alone
as the frozen river celebrates salt

March 24, 2016

It Feels Slow

I am the elevator
once on a high floor
moving now
floor by floor to the basement
or is it the parking
garage

March 25, 2016

Water Street and Father

where we went for haircuts
down the street that followed the river
brick sidewalk and a couple of steps up
men sat waiting for one of the two
or three barbers on Saturday
my father went first then me
near the end the man would lather the back
of my neck and shave close
warm foam / a sharp strop
after we'd drive a few blocks to Fowles
to skim the magazines and buy one or two electronics ones
this with my father now long gone

March 26, 2016

Still Imagine

my sight was so narrow
I saw nothing of where I lived
even now as I drive through
stop and look
I see little
how many dead on our farm
from centuries
could I guess
that blue and red sunset behind black branches
was all I could see

March 27, 2016

Overhead

asleep in a twig teepee
covered in pine boughs
as a bitter snow almost freezing rain
comes down

March 28, 2016

I Was Sad Today

the problem with video from twenty
years ago is that you can see love
then that isn't here now
it shows what you miss

March 29, 2016

Undercut Lip

she unfolds her legs
steps out of the deep chair
and winks at the window curtains
blowing inward like puffed
cheeks / her hair follows suit
you wonder right now what fabulous
observation I have but if you've read
my decades of poems you'll know
nothing will happen before
the end of this poem arrives

March 30, 2016

InkWell Crushes Frost

The American angelica trees are ravishing, colorful, and dark
The falls are wild, last, and great
The forests are colorful, dark, and distant
The forests are comely, black, and large
The parts are true, first, and one
The sets are variable, new, and such
The temperate rain forests are beauteous, unilluminated, and unsounded
The ti trees are just, only, and such
The tropical rain forests are beauteous, etc too
The woods are beautiful, dark, and large
The woods are lovely, dark, and deep

March 31, 2016

Cat's Feet

a trip soon and I'm scared
I travel like crazy
always crazy scared
I love being there
being here
not going
not coming back
just scared

April 1, 2016

Spring Drains

a little stream through a pine woods
dropping down a little slope
not much water but flowing fast
granite stones exposed / water over them
clumps of snow on the north sides of trees
it's spring they say / every stupid thing
that worries me makes no difference here
how do I get there

April 2, 2016

First Home Then Everywhere

if there is a right now
lots of stuff is happening
even if there isn't a right now
lots of stuff

April 3, 2016

Some Tales

turn in off Locust
the cemetery is a blanket up a slight hill
the maples are huge and my mother must have walked under them
she didn't think to bury her father her
close to her high school / just up the street a few minutes
but in Haverhill where few would visit
then her mother
finally her husband and herself
I visit them all

April 4, 2016

Man Joy and Woman

typical man
when you are born a woman attends
she feels stupendous pain and joy
when you die she watches over it
drinks the pity and melancholy
walks past your fresh grave
who are they?
the women

April 5, 2016

Weeping Time

the morning is black and pale red
ducks and birds make sporadic rackets
the lake outside my window is flat and shiny
past a certain time I can't sleep
the sky turns mono to blue

April 6, 2016

Too Much Drift

day with sore throat
afraid I can't do my talk
I eat well and chat well tonight
with an old friend
who has grown cynical in his age
I prepare to bed down and hope
sure that despair will claim
everything I once thought I had

April 7, 2016

Sleep Now

such a day
talk ok but then a collapse from exhaustion
I wonder if something is wrong
sleep

April 8, 2016

Bike Stop

she stopped her bike at the intersection
a cello case on her back
when the way was clear she stepped onto the pedals
the edge of her hip aimed at me
I wondered about that hip

April 9, 2016

Griebnitzsee

cold outside
sunny and Spring
children and birds making noise
water sitting clear and static
I am sitting here writing
hoping the world will forgive me
wondering what is next

April 10, 2016

Oh Well, Ink Well

another time lit
blue in my heart
whites of my hearts

seems like a poem
starts strong
but whites of my hearts
why more than one
heart / why more
than one whites
eyes maybe
eyes as hearts
in the end
not a poem

April 11, 2016

I Shot

instead of talent
I layer passion
persistence
I bend the strings without knowing why
by accident sometimes it's pretty
rhythm is ok
when people don't think
it's music

April 12, 2016

Too Tired

I am so tired
worried about the dentist
I am in the mode
of thinking of every
bad thing

April 13, 2016

Tonight or Else

is it jet lag
or age
I sleep a lot
I can't work well
have to get a new computer for work
temporary crown is not fun

April 14, 2016

All I Deserve

I will make up a world
fill it with no one
but cars will move down roads
park on streets
stores will be open
with no one in them
I will buy burgers and ice cream
but the servers will be pop-ups
into existence to serve
then away
sometimes a beauty will cross my path
she is there for just that
one minute

April 15, 2016

Boatman

let me introduce you
to the woman who will watch
over while you pass away
who will care not one whit for you
but who after will remember the slowing
shallowing breaths and your final
one and then walk out into the warm
light and after a bit forget you
aimlessly

April 16, 2016

Pentucket Halls

I remember prowling the hallways
looking for girls to love
I was silly thinking how I dressed
made me special when it made me only silly
those girls though
almost all are fat now
some have passed
none of them loved me even a tiny fraction
fifty years later they still
prefer to never speak to me
wow just wow

April 17, 2016

Crime Against Lobster

Binion's chicken fried lobster

really?

I mean

really??

April 18, 2016

Why Him?

my father's been forgotten
his life was filled with agony
his father disappeared in death
and my father never looked for him
I was a forgotten son
only me / I wonder still
what I meant to them
if anything
I said goodbye to him at the airport
as I went to North Carolina
to graduate

April 19, 2016

To a Stopping Place

I'll find a road that goes nowhere
a pretty one with trees and stonewalls
it will pass by a river or an interesting pond
in summer it will fire up green and gold
in winter the ice will be packed down
birches will shiver as they shake in the buildup to a storm
when it snows there will be no sounds
one day I'll start down this road
you will never find me

April 20, 2016

Bad Lecture and Questions

better to keep quiet
don't brag or lecture
more better to leave
leave it all behind
then forget it

April 21, 2016

The Question Angered Me

some days make more sense than others
a well-tuned novel is filled with more emotion
than the most earnest teenager
people believe in ordinary people
even when they've heard of the extraordinary

April 22, 2016

Merrimac Nights

I would carry the fear all weekend
parents gone to NH and I spend the days
alone / at night I carry
the largest knife around the house
lock all the doors
leave all lights on
I dream of designing special sensors
and lights to guard the outside
we lived in the country
no houses around
I was afraid
I could hardly sleep

April 23, 2016

InkWell Learning New Things

your off the beaten track Doctor of Fine Arts
your full-fledged haw-haw
your effortless hymn
your ex post facto junk e-mail
your pocket-size OED
your stock-still flash-forward
your bit-by-bit Strategic Arms Limitation Talks
your hand-to-hand bell-shaped curve
your businesslike computer
your knee-deep tete-a-tete
your controlled parenthesis
your carved in stone American Standard Code for Information Interchange
your staring image

April 24, 2016

Ink Well to the Rescue

your first first
your unable commercial
your go-as-you-please air-sleeve
your alive how-do-you-do
your naked as the day you were born cease and desist order
your damn motive
your hundred-and-sixty-fifth square dance
your cold progress report
your mummy-brown promotion
your square-shaped variety show
your eyes-only design
your life-and-death bitch
your purple-veined tra-la-la
your originative product
your dressed to the nines quarter-tone
your blasted holler
your commercial-grade endeavor
your able ex
your commercial-grade paradigm
your hand-to-hand double standard of sexual behavior
your all no

April 25, 2016

Be My Baby

we cooked most nights
watched tv in the cold dining room
reading and studying
no such thing as computers at home
we were not interesting
what we did would make for poor reading
if fictionalized
we were soon married and had a dog
what we learn is that no matter
the size and strength of the storm
it will be sunny soon

April 26, 2016

End Button

you push a button
to make it ok
they don't tell you but you know
if you push it enough
nothing will ever hurt
again / ever

April 27, 2016

What Is Fiction

the enclave they called it
we lived west of the center of town
but it always felt like north
it was so small and pretty then
it would have been a good haven
to return to now but instead
it's gone / to people who call
it paradise / I would do anything
to have it back / to have a week
to quiz my parents / now I write
their answers

April 28, 2016

My Yearly Walk

so I still walk over to it
still look down / sometimes kneel
nothing really different from
when it was a test of their lives
now it's a test of mine

April 29, 2016

I Found Her There

my dreams are my other place
just as real as this here
more interesting things to do
sweeter people sometimes
better situations
as much guilt
if only memory would help more

April 30, 2016

Is She

I have been found
to be no one at all
I never was they soon will say
I respond with this that I have seen
leaves move

May 1, 2016

As Whittier Might Think

many people found the little valley
a wonder / a place to rest and retire
a place to farm and forget
a fresh smelling place still
but quickly overfilling
once a death rattle
then a flourishing clean palace
now too many with too much
too few with too little
it's just a small
river valley

May 2, 2016

A Great There

no doubt Whittier walked
or road or drove down
my road / passed by the barn
I knew and maybe other buildings too
regarded the great green grass
and mowed hay a tribute to a nearby farm
perhaps wondered what other writer
would one day worry himself
silly here

May 3, 2016

What Is It About Amesbury?

never liked Amesbury
too small or too scattered
too few people
like a small town but too big
not a good street plan
doesn't feel like home
too many drinkers and drunks
too many Dunkin Donuts
too little there there there

May 4, 2016

Long Away

I one day will go back
to Merrimac and the river
I will never leave again
only the ones with long memories
will be able to find me

May 5, 2016

Soon But Not Yet

what will happen when I'm near the river again
when I drive past the old places
when I eat wrong things
when I grow sad and nostalgic for the past

May 6, 2016

Not One Grain of Self Pity

group of old dogs
in a sanctuary back yard
doing everything they used to do
run around / bark / roll over
play with toys / have fun
only in slo mo
and their voices are weak

May 7, 2016

Wow I Mean Wow

I opened the door
past midnight
in a heavy snowstorm
she waited inside a minute
naked and eager
soon she ran out and dived into the snowbank
piled up between the door and garage
I let her back in once she was done

May 8, 2016

Goodbye Wife

some other day I'll write the end
of a great story then dream up it's start
for tonight I'll write the quick thought
then dash away for a little cold drink
words won't seem like much for days to go
I'll need to listen to sweet talk
and ambiguous love

May 9, 2016

Fallen Friend

you have to admit
it makes mistakes
maybe it's time to withdraw claims
work it more
I feel discouraged and enraged
by its too often silliness
when can it work better
what can make it work better

May 10, 2016

Crap

the demo is now a big deal
I have five minute of it
full day and half a day are maybe
not enough time to prepare
crap crap crap
at least InkWell just wrote this:
a bluebird,
this dead without winter
infinitely not a bluebird

May 11, 2016

More Work by the Day

worked all day on the demo
found my program works ok
found an el cap bug
in a strange utility
will have to kludge

May 12, 2016

As Everywhere Else

I stood in front of the cold war
era tenement and watched lights go out
all but one
from that room a little laugh
burped out / the light dimmed
from a front passage
then it was the same

May 13, 2016

Never Were

the clear dirty notes
bent slowly and varied slowly
plays a melody familiar
full of longing and melancholy
it will play while they fill
in the hole around me
it will be as if I never were

May 14, 2016

Cosine Distance

the results are strange
literature clumps logically
when comparing language patterns
almost all news stories cluster together
in star patterns
as if they were from another planet

May 15, 2016

Onward

I won't hang with people no more
I spend every night regretting every word
the end of the run is right here
right now / I applaud the loneliness
seeping inward

May 16, 2016

Waiting For Home

I like ideas and fight about them
I talk too much and get into trouble
no one really likes to talk to me
I cherish loneliness
it's a foolish way to ideate
warm air / cut grass / dry hay
salt air / heavy grass / wet hay
we are always ready for something
to open

May 17, 2016

Hacking

making things fast
patience and devotion
trying and guessing
writing things down
tests
hard and not much of a reward

May 18, 2016

Don't Think Twice

there is a road I need
it just loops and loops
it will take me forward
to where I've been
then I will get off

May 19, 2016

Changing Passwords

work to do
still too full from yesterday's big meal
wind whipping up
tiring out
made progress
need to make more

May 20, 2016

Along the Time Ways

the grand days have faded
the beautiful long hair cut away
finally and never to return
love is not possible from now on
finding ways to rest and work
pain is always nearby
all the lovely days are hard to recall
nostalgia is a bore

May 21, 2016

Look Here

experiments come and go
I make only the mildest guesses
then try it in code
most fail / isn't that what's supposed to happen
most take a day of programming
a bunch of variations to see whether I'm in a vicinity
usually not
ain't science grand

May 22, 2016

Born in the USA

funny to be at the end of a grand experiment
our country became insane
filled with people who hate those below
and those below hate themselves too
every ideal has turned on itself
I am so so sad

May 23, 2016

Careless and Sloppy

some reformulation to do
means changes to be made
figure out what's right
always clean up
make it better

May 24, 2016

Dull Haiku

the smallest piece of beauty
can be swallowed by blight
during the shortest night

May 25, 2016

Romantic Daydream

lots of rain near the river
a fog drifting down the river like the water beneath
slower and more romantic
on a bank a couple is spooning
they are growing wet

May 26, 2016

Cold City / Warm Night

the door opened / she walked in
outside the door the hall listened
behind the door we dug in deep
with a door between us and the world
the world was sanded down
when we opened the door food was waiting
far away but we could walk
approaching the door our paintbrush
was wet and ready
you have your door / I have one

May 27, 2016

Citation

I made a fear
tore it into many shards
passed them out
threw them hard
laughed like a '50s jingo
found them later
flocked like starlings
bringing down an old-time jet

May 28, 2016

Chicago or America

top of a tall hotel
in a city with a lake
and flat plains else
night and orange lights
in long lines and rectangles
a black snake line where the lake
resides / either this or a warm
body is why I travel to such
a city in the cold of the year

May 29, 2016

Recursive

the world dreams us
we wonder because the world fills us with wonder
we laugh because the world laughs too
someday it will all stop
when it's discovered there is no bottom
we dream the world

May 30, 2016

Learn Hard

learning isn't so easy
I'll have to learn and hack
but not soon
hard and hard

May 31, 2016

Grass and River

there's a river running right now
it's been doing this for centuries
you'd think it would have sunk lower by now
but no / nothing like it
many have sat its banks
I sleep there

June 1, 2016

Far North and Two

light from a sun low in the low west
mist or fog lifting light off the moors
outside the window they look out of
enough light falls to raise the ridges of the roughhewn tabletop
they sit on picnic-like benches with their tea
telling stories of roadkill and art
it takes a wise and small bird to see
that this is all about healing

June 2, 2016

Way Up

their house is stone made
has been here on this short cliff
hundreds of years / still it decays every day
the man there and the woman there
spend days trying to live
nights trying harder to live
the moor is empty except of short grasses
brown bent / fine bent / hair-grass wavy and creeping
everything abundant and common

June 3, 2016

North of

the roads there are one-lane
rain and mist
on good days you can see Fair Isle
but really you can't see it
many inlets and bays
where it's paved and a town
it's really paved
doesn't snow much
this is a place where the only things are friends

June 4, 2016

Sad Echo

the song is sad
we lift our eyes
sing like puppies
there is an echo
it won't stop

June 5, 2016

A Slow Vibrato

life runs on melancholy
the sadness that forces contemplation
meditation / sitting by water
listening to wind in the leaves
the wind-bent wheat
the cavalcade of words saddened
by life / that enemy of the perfect
the tips of granite spires
let the mist rise up
our tears drop to meet it

June 6, 2016

Burson

a part arrived
I'll need to figure it out
probably will break the device
need to replace the whole thing
I have luck like that

June 7, 2016

Finest

what is the metaphor
computing as thinking
substitution in templates
gathering without care
one word stealing another

June 8, 2016

Looping

counting all the things
I can no longer do
crying's not one of them

June 9, 2016

Every

relying on beauty
keeping it up is paramount
the first / second / third / fourth
things fall away / I hope for better
I stretch to conclusions
will the beautiful writing
hide all others

June 10, 2016

Move

you see it sometimes
look of love they call it
some have told me I've been gazed on that way
I never see it
never saw it
I'm as blind as turtle wax
doesn't make sense
what I mean man

June 11, 2016

Insight

progress / slow
realization comes at a price
like an egg is midair
Where I was and where I will be
differ

June 12, 2016

After the French

outside the snow drops the pine bows low
in a bar nearby a barmaid puts her hand on an old man's back
I lower the shades and pull back layers of quilts
I once held women here
when that snow hits the ground a great rumbling will commence
a communal shedding of tears
sobs and drops

June 13, 2016

Potsdam and Outside

the city's been rebuilt
since the War / since
the Cold War / since
the Wall came down
if it's authentic it's a Disneyish authenticity
too polished sure but detail missing
outlying cities still are broken / defeated
in their near death they're real
go there

June 14, 2016

Slow Bus Coming

the bus is coming
slow up the slightest rise
I sit by the kitchen window with my mother waiting
my hair has been sprayed into place
and smells / I carry a leather briefcase
I am just in seventh grade
or I was

June 15, 2016

I Sit Here Alone

I read all the stories and essays about families
I never had one / not a normal one
I can tell because people prefer to stay away
not re-invite me
they don't say much / I stay to the side
I sit here alone writing I sit here alone
James Wright taught me that

June 16, 2016

Against Weapons

I work through my work pile
I am not behind but it feels so
I love to debate and I am not kind
though I'm weak few outthink me

June 17, 2016

Hoyt Hill

sliding down a hill
toboggan and my father
with good snow we go through the small gap
in stonewall between this field and the next down
sometimes we had to bail
when we headed off course
we made mush blocks for bursting through
he's gone / I always rode behind him

June 18, 2016

Times? Metric Kerning?

why rules over beauty
maybe it's a way to go out gracefully
I won't compromise

June 19, 2016

Riverside

tomorrow / back in the heart
pilgrimage / reforming memories
will it all work
fear grows / desire lags

June 20, 2016

My Ears

the music is soft
it plays quietly in my ears
the music is quiet
it plays softly against my ears
the music plays on

June 21, 2016

At The Wedding Bench

by the river eating beach pizza
hot day turning warm
good winds from the south
I thought I got too little
but it was too much
too sweet / boats went upriver
I was sitting at the bench right
where we got married
birds called to each other
I called too
I bowed and dreamt
how a day

June 22, 2016

At Thai

tonight at the Thai Newburyport restaurant
the mid-aged dark-haired woman at the next table
voice like an actor / she mentioned her fans
she was captured by her dinner mate
but scanned outside toward the river often
I couldn't stop watching her
everything she said was trivial

June 23, 2016

Math Marriage

a man engaged to a pretty woman
sweet and smiling / one could say innocent
you wish them well
wish her well
you hope for a life with small standard deviations

June 24, 2016

Today Warm Day

up on the second floor
over Hampton Beach
eating fried clams and talking
Dave starts choking from an esophagus problem
we watch gathering napkins
we spoke of many things
like Mrs Costain's funeral
and the poem I read there
one I wrote here / I still cry
Dave recovered and we laughed

June 25, 2016

Frozen Wireless

the path is frozen
feet passing hurt and buzz
the river is ahead and how
will people cross / the wind
is not your friend no matter
how many times you've made it right
we will cross waist deep and seem to die
instead we're only frozen

June 26, 2016

Mink

three mink in a 60 acre
beaver pond / three small guys
on the shore / on logs / under brush
staring at me / knowing nothing would happen
downstream from the farm

June 27, 2016

Cobbler Brook Trail

the walk was short
my toenail was jammed in
so I quit soon
not to repeat the last bad hike
cautious in my age
don't want bad news again

June 28, 2016

After Home

I left and the river cried
I drove one / two last times around
to the farm / it was warm and very so
as always it was hard to travel back
still not over it
where though where

June 29, 2016

Parrot Love

two birds at last together
we see them as us
we cry as they groom each other
when they pluck themselves bald
are they pining for love

June 30, 2016

All To End

the last of time
a deviant walk through a city
above the art deco spires conspire
to make of the place a duende of fortitude
a wild Emersonian cry for a shout
I walked down an alley and found a man
under piles of rags on a cardboard mat
he was waiting for it all to be over

July 1, 2016

By the Buoy

I could sit there for hours
watching water flowing upriver
boats coming down / under the bridge
slowing then speeding
the light growing pink
later blue / I knew a woman watched
from her window across the road
she wondered what I was looking at
what I saw / she cannot know

July 2, 2016

In Front Of School

the past in stark white
against deep black
the kids sit / stand before their
school / after really
their lives are dry now or not at all
all my falling apart seems a part of them too
I see some of the faces planted
behind ones I still know or knew
what a cruel sadness

July 3, 2016

Repair / Retire

I fixed the pond today
debugged and repaired
probably some better patches to add next time
I read a lot too
I will go where the words are

July 4, 2016

I Made It!

I would prefer to hear
how great our country is
from people who never made it
near the top / who stayed low

July 5, 2016

Ugly Coincidence

the beautiful sunset is farther north
than I remember it in summer
if I draw a line down Hadley Road
to the south
it intersects Linwood Cemetery

July 6, 2016

Watching

I wish I were less afraid
foolish times and a brandy or port
my pain will increase and I'll stop
short of an achievement
stop I say

July 7, 2016

Dallas

tonight they had had enough
fought back
now what

July 8, 2016

Main Field With Wind

out in the field
a rock that looks shallow
a small branchy bush beside it
a woodchuck den with two exits near it
but decades later I saw the rock
was a mass / one big enough
for two or three popes

July 9, 2016

Now the Wind

out in the field
a rock that looks shallow
a small branchy bush beside it
before a storm a wind heads up
along the rim and stonewalls
oak trees and apple trees wave
their leaves and drops hit my arms
face / the top of my head
I hear my mother calling
but I'm behind the rock
the woodchuck waits

July 10, 2016

In A Town

a tree at the north end of a stonewall
harmonica music changing timbre to signal feeling
a change of heart / a new plan
based on dreams or a sudden jerk
in the heart of the mind
he discards his hat / jumps
on a bus to big water

July 11, 2016

North End

what happens when an old man sits under the oak
at the north end of a stonewall in Maine
what happens when a young girl sits there later
one might guess
the events cancel and it's as if
just an oak sits at the north end of a stonewall in Maine

July 12, 2016

Pairs

so she walks the edges of the fields
stonewalls with trees and bushes growing each side
she doesn't know that if she lifts a stone
from the wall an ancient odor will arise
she doesn't know animals live in the centers of the fields
she stays away from the path gaps in the middles of the walls
crosses only at the corners
she doesn't realize the trees she just passed are pears

July 13, 2016

Calories in Potsdam

tonight I ate a pig leg
just a thin cut through the thigh
with bone and skin / when I pulled
off the skin a layer of meat
rested below / it tasted great
with sauerkraut / then the blueberry too
much

July 14, 2016

Penny?

cool and a big wind
over the lake my hotel room
looks out over
tomorrow Rome / as if barbarians
were plundering the great city
instead a small group of hackers
heading for workshops
how Big Bang Theory

July 15, 2016

Forum Pix

hot and tired
no wifi here
expensive hotel
too much food for supper

July 16, 2016

Hotel Forum

Forum today and Colosseum
selfie sticks / I photograph them
not hot but a lot of walking
ok food / sleep a difficulty

July 17, 2016

Narrow Alleys

maybe she is just around the next corner
she is wearing her best summer skirt
her hair is so dark the sky bleeds
a northern green
we will lie in damp sheets and pray for a breeze
maybe she isn't

July 18, 2016

Waking to the Hotel

the house that starts as part
of an arch has windows already dark
I scan up and see the woman looking down
but I'm walking away / she scans me sad too
a doorway / stairs / a couch / a bed

July 19, 2016

Ugh

exhausted / sweating / sore
in pain / unhappy
I will not play the pack mule
tomorrow / I want to sleep for days

July 20, 2016

Hot Long

ready for a long sleep
feet swollen and sore
the night is longing for friends

July 21, 2016

What Do We Know?

chunky old woman
laughing with her man
she catches no eyes but his
she sees no one but him
their world has just two in it
and we outside it call her fat
call her old
call her ugly

July 22, 2016

She Is Not Mine

what would she be now
a little worn but still vibrant
a deep scar under one eye
she moves like a big cat
when I walk by she never
looks my way

July 23, 2016

On The See

water laps on the rough shore
a wind down the lake is all that's needed
motor boats and sculls / a kayak / canoe
floaters / below my window young women in bikinis
dream of things none of which is me

July 24, 2016

On The Fly

the long trip
I hate it forever
I fear it
once home I'll rest for days
I will sleep restlessly

July 25, 2016

Every Step

trip over and a regret for leaving
I could take it to live like a transient
not understanding the lives around me
finding a way to elongate the living trust
no one has when I walk past them toward
the next best looking woman

July 26, 2016

Sad Girl

a dusky voice getting
quiet at dusk as you might say
is it an invitation
did I hear the word bed
well it's a long walk we make
from a place to the same place
I was asleep and will be again

July 27, 2016

Nose Blow

so sick today and last night
something bad in Potsdam got to me
now I'm sweating and congested
hard to sleep
will I ever get better is a question I ask

July 28, 2016

My Mother

she was afraid but strong
she died alone as she wished
she suffered I think and I wept for that
nothing was easy or pleasant for her
why wouldn't we run from her

July 29, 2016

Sitting Up All Night

still sick
these things stick around for me
sleep is hard
congestion bad
coughing fits and a feeling to vomit
haven't had one of these for a long time
makes me wish

July 30, 2016

Dead-like III

still ill
felling better during the day
but congestion explodes at times
had I not been on an airplane for
twelve hours I would not have been
still ill

July 31, 2016

Looking For

I am feeling trapped
to make trip I need not do
aside from providing visibility
to my group at work
I could extend it to a vacation
but that won't work and that's
why I feel trapped
I kind of hate them for that

August 1, 2016

Legends

the deep beautiful scene of background mountains
the sun almost in your eyes / a line of trees
closer in and a rider approaching
right there though is a bed
of mud and manure and trampled grass
the beauty has a chaos / is made of mud and manure
crushed bugs and worms / there are odors and wrongs
added up they make right

August 2, 2016

Bad Temper

some things I did I've worked
hard to forget / mostly I have
but they are below the surface
and like rocks in a river low water
shows the tops slicing through
creating an edged wake
a wakefulness

August 3, 2016

A Family

a pond filled with hornpout
skimming the surface
a mud cat
boys jumping in getting pricked
I didn't like the pout
I didn't like the boys

August 4, 2016

Road Fear

right now someone on a road
is scared because something has happened to their car
others rarely pass
I'm thinking of that road across the southern coast of Australia
no gas stations
few places to stay or eat
it is dry / it's a desert
right now someone has just started to cry
would you help her?

August 5, 2016

Brazil

poor Brazil
low budget for Olympics opening
they had to rely on creativity
and talent not money
and extravagant technology

August 6, 2016

Mineko

she didn't answer the phone
not for hours
the neighbors weren't home
we called / we called
then we drove there
we panicked in our own ways the whole 90 minute drive
I planned all the alternatives in my head
she was watching a movie about lava spiders
her phones had no dial tone
I broke down

August 7, 2016

Seems We Meet

tonight the cool air draws
its last breath before darkness
grabs hold of it
I am sure there is no type
to describe it
any description made this way
would be hollow

August 8, 2016

Arranged To Fail

sometimes we rest
when there is road to gain
sometimes we sing
when the wish shushes through wheat
sometimes we write long poems
when the pencil is just a stub

August 9, 2016

Flint

watching the old Star Trek series
all the women whom a lusted about
now old women / they are finally in my league
I once dreamt of owning all these episodes on film
and watching them every night
how art changes

August 10, 2016

One More

a fire was lit one morning
in a dark wood
it started small / just some twigs and small flames
by noon it was roaring
even though the day was hot
it was as if dried logs were heaped on it
by sunset it was fading
embers for many hours
by deep dark in the night it was cold and black
white ashes underneath
the fire / it was the fire

August 11, 2016

I Freaked

my dreams are bitter and crazy
they are like love
but under bad covers
it made no sense
but I was warm and alive
I cried when it was done
when I was done
when all was done

August 12, 2016

River Watch

will I go another time
this summer
to enjoy my past and rest
or stay home and wither
I want to sit all day by the river
and watch it

August 13, 2016

Failing

bad evening for love
hard time
bad results
need motivation

August 14, 2016

A Farm

we shopped for stale bulkies
at the A&P
we mixed them with rotting vegetables
and warm water as feed for hogs
some called it slop
later in the evening I'd walk the border of the big field
maybe grab a couple grapes for a snack
or a grape leaf
it was a farm

August 15, 2016

Once More

I one day
will return to see myself
walking quickly into the barn
where I will collapse in wonder
on the stacked bed of dried hay
and smell the past grow fresh

August 16, 2016

From Me

we sat / she and I
on a bench by the Bay
by the Bay Bridge
a tough June day
sun hard on us
we had had coffee
we had talked
now I sat and watched her
watched the container ships head toward berths
near Oakland
we sat silently / I watched her slide close to sleep
after a long wait
silence
she stood and never looking back
walked away

August 17, 2016

And Underground

the woods are tangled
small trees make for cramping
low branches / bushes
a path worn by cows and deer lead
to a old granite boulder
good for small climbs
something big and patient
rolled it here
it cracked as it settled

August 18, 2016

Waterless

the drought
which years
all the 60s
our wells ran dry
our septic tank tanked
we flushed rarely
crops went nowhere
I remember some of it

August 19, 2016

Larry Foley

the past pops up
like a hummingbird rising to deck level
this was never possible before
slow and far was normal
now anyone can find you
and you can find them

August 20, 2016

So Red

in a distant western town
I spied a German girl
walking in a warm coat
around the town's plaza
her hair
her hair
her hair
so red
orange almost

August 21, 2016

No Place We Can

logs on a small fire
just coals mostly
in the room we look
at each other
at the fire
outside snow drops onto branches
onto leaves
in the morning we will have
no
place to go

August 22, 2016

I Heard Crying

I walked past the room
the lights in the corridor were high and bright
the colors were a white and a yellow
I was walking out to the parking lot
after visiting a man I knew who was ill
and recovering but slowly

in the room a small family
on the bed a woman they loved
had just left
I pray she left
I pray there is a parking lot
she's heading toward
then home

August 23, 2016

As Clear as Hyaline

these two tests differ in only one respect
she began to recover from her numb unresponsiveness after the accident
an army lying in wait in the forest
the morning is as clear as diamond or as hyaline
put your books on top of the desk
he is in the care of a bodyguard
the article about the artist inspired the exhibition of his recent work

August 24, 2016

Not You

I took her picture
made her wonderful
she exploded with joy
her grandchildren will say
that's not you mee-maw

August 25, 2016

Afternoons

sitting on a porch
facing west I think
fewer clouds would help decide
later she would come out
I didn't know how to approach her
so I just sat
has anyone been this shy

August 26, 2016

Bulked Up

woman on a bridge
walking across
bundled skinless
just her eyes
the bridge is covered with frost
lacework parapet / all frost
river thick frozen
snow on it
snow on the deck
she might look at me as I work my camera
or she might not be real

August 27, 2016

Learn Baby Learn

I can't learn the lesson
everything about love is over
notice the l
notice the r
love is over

August 28, 2016

Voice From The Past

someone remembers me better
my memory doesn't care
I parry with grace so he thinks I do
from him I learn what to parrot back
par for the course

August 29, 2016

Lonely Lonely Nights

something has been wrong for decades
I am no one's favorite
I do things alone
when confronted with facing new things alone
though
I panic / I break down
my mother knew it
she did what she could then gave up
they all do

August 30, 2016

Art as Mistake

what makes a poem art
is when you make a mistake
with words and the mistake
is better than your thought

August 31, 2016

The Place and Me

the pond and skating on it
frogs in summer
the worn path from the road to it
made by neighbors and strangers
short and straight through a small field
up the hill my nana's house
I thought
and all the history of it and
poor photos with hardly details
could this whole constellation of place
be what broke me into myself
my inscape / your instress

September 1, 2016

True Random

what is new
who makes it
because we see people making things
we believe things are made
because we see people think
we believe in thought
we are fooled by artificial randomness
but the real thing makes everything

September 2, 2016

Last Year's Perfume

HoJos / Howard Johnson

I went there not often

but I did go

reliable but boring

none left

not many of me left soon

enough

September 3, 2016

At Night

many lost
they smiled at me in pictures
I was important then
now all have left
I type in words
tiring and tired

September 4, 2016

Blizzard or Such

snow piled up to the roofline
even without film it looks blue
the roads were one car narrow
maybe it will snow again
the bridge was too hard to get to
the last part was down a steepness
and the river / what was it thinking
as chunks wended down
the ocean was as green as the first time

September 5, 2016

Joe Walsh

when I learned to write
I listened to sad music
so that's how I write
though I wonder how much I learned
how sad I was

September 6, 2016

Flat Bound and Clouds

when I drive the plains
the sky is almost everywhere
I drive toward it
away from it
I sometimes am it
clouds / I see them
they gather / turn black
turn tight circles
turn green / they worry me
I drive even faster
toward a slim shining horizon

September 7, 2016

More More

I found a book to read
and I read it over and over
no one said there were more
but that book / read differently
each time because reading it
the $(n + 1)^{\text{st}}$ time is in the context
of having read it n times
the onion thing goes here
with two books / there are more more books

September 8, 2016

HiDef

Star Trek fifty years ago
the first night
the first show
I watched but don't remember watching
it made a difference
I thought one day I would own it on film
watch it every night with a projector
I thought that for ten or twenty years

September 9, 2016

Order Wrong

the great green emeralds
lay on dark velvet
I considered writing
the green great emeralds
but it felt wrong and I couldn't say why
adjectives in the wrong order
no one taught me that
but I and we all know it

September 10, 2016

Of New England

the beauty of the storm
heavy snow / heavy sea
clouds and fog low
sea foam up
I stand by the bluff and watch with glass
for ships not well / not safe
they want me here
the dead don't care

September 11, 2016

Will or Might

we sit on the hyphen
that separates one death from another
that joins one death to the other
both deaths are my deaths
the first seemed to pass quickly
the other?

September 12, 2016

Timelessness

right now the river flows
right now a car is on the bridge
soon the day will end
soon I will reflect on it all
later a woman will walk into a new apartment
later a life will begin or end

September 13, 2016

Bad Poem

a simple bug but I can't find it
when fixed things will work beautifully
tomorrow I will spend all day on it
the bug is for performance
it's important

September 14, 2016

Code Not Poems

did I find the bug?
not really / I fixed it
or worked around i
it all works ok now
but I need to fold it back into the main program
I will listen to sweet music
and type slowly

September 15, 2016

Limitations

figuring out / figuring slowly
words are hard
code is hard

September 16, 2016

Hate the Man

what a miserable day
maybe my time is limited
I hate being made a fool

September 17, 2016

More and More

misery
I don't like slapsdowns
it stops me from writing
from working well
other problems in the house

September 18, 2016

Fear of Them

I fear and dislike
why am I like this
I await tomorrow with anger and dislodgment
I will go into a zen state to survive

September 19, 2016

Now Wait

so good so far
no red flags but there might be with lab work
I am not as terrified
several positive points
now wait

September 20, 2016

No Wait

yes bad news
not fatal
but not good
I guess my pessimism
still works great

September 21, 2016

No Way

I will work until there is no more work
I was raised to be lazy
no one had hopes
I liked to lie in bed and dream
awake or asleep
they all planned for a sad fate
Summer would pass by and twilight
would ring the land
the red behind the leafless tress
signaled a direction
I hated to lose
but it's all I do

September 22, 2016

Before

I function through the depression
crawling a little faster now
it would be nice
to have the time to finish
I could never imagine
thinking that
before

September 23, 2016

Away Away O

let me be in a forgotten place
no one knows me or where I am
I want to be unknowable
I want only some words to escape
I want my friends to drive by my window
never look in
never know I'm there

September 24, 2016

The Everything of It

the world buzzes in every corner
so many things are happening at one time
we think linearly
we work hard to mimic what's real
so real things can work real good

September 25, 2016

Bad Notice

I am so clueless
places I didn't know exist
are common to friends
makes we wonder
how much I can see
how I notice

September 26, 2016

White Down

there are big flakes
coming down on the fields
in the woods
they are forming a blanket
on my past and every past in the area
one beneath which we will all sleep
like lambs covered in our own wool

September 27, 2016

Winter Slough

the long days are gone
it was a bad Summer
travel sure but not to home enough
not enough writing
too sick sometimes
now the crawl through Winter

September 28, 2016

Bugs Who Cares?

wherever I look there is a little bug
doesn't change things
it's funny that way
too distracted
not that smart
care only about the big picture

September 29, 2016

Joys of Winter

I will wait until the cold and dark
descend on the roads and the trees are blank scratches
before I ride them and watch them sway in the cold
Montréal Express and hear the ice crack when the late
morning sun hits it / I will eat beach pizza

September 30, 2016

Fear the Reaper

a year and some
after he died and they were alone caring for the farm
the hurricane hit and knocked down important trees
some fell on coops and outbuildings
the roads were blocked and milk for sale curdled instead
one thing on top of another thing
chickens were lost in the winds
cows and horses broke bones and became meat
windows blew in and the house was soaked
electricity stopped for many days
and their farm was a last one restored
bad luck pitched its ruinous tent

October 1, 2016

Don't Dream

I dream of my old home
I rarely think of Champaign
I rarely dream of California
it is my only home
my mind is wandering
always toward it

October 2, 2016

Helpless

you know I think I don't have long
I must start writing soon
or it will never get done
I remember when I thought I'd be
the youngest person to write a novel

October 3, 2016

Hard Art

a man who carves stone
died today
his hammers / his chisels left by a roughed piece
his rasps in a rack near his bench
he will be buried nearby his studio
in an old stand of trees
who will carve his stone

October 4, 2016

Half of My Heart

that darkness
it knows I wait to return
short days
early dark
late dark
all reasons to wonder what
that deep darkness requires

October 5, 2016

S4

I was born so long ago
photos of that time are faded
things / cars barns cows / look like they
never could exist
my mother
I can tell by her look she wanted something else
something to make her meaningless life
worthy of crossing that bridge
tremendous across that river
her face shining as if for smile

October 6, 2016

Sincerely

in that photo
of her
she's signed it
sincerely
Helen 34
which means she was 19
but signed it to whom
it was in her house
something given back
too soon to be to my father
to her mother
her father
everything about her
is a maze

October 7, 2016

How We Go

decay creeps in
breaking is commo
the end is peaceful
via gradualness
like when tears
dry up

October 8, 2016

Google A Lot

I want to find a way to find
edges in 1-d data
I don't know how to ask
my computer to find it
I will google a lot
tomorrow

October 9, 2016

Accord

the cold out of the north
beavers building dams
leaves stuck to the road
then blowing with poor aim down it
I watch from my window
holding a book
like the ones I wanted to write

October 10, 2016

I Ran Across It

abandoned railroad tracks
through woods
covered over in brush
rotten ties
rusted rails
someone would make it a bike trail
a hiking trail
instead it just goes nowhere
once it went everywhere

October 11, 2016

Is That Right?

I saw a beautiful woman walking
on the other side of the street
I thought to myself
she is a beautiful woman
then I stopped
I was showing too much micro aggression

October 12, 2016

Transparent

there is a hopeless way to do things
I read my words from days and worry
the journey was just a detour
bumps in the road
jostles / bumpers
now nothing
nothing more

October 13, 2016

Every Vow

the wood siding on the barn was grey in the light
dark in the rain
when I sat on the slab by the handpump near the barn
I'd worry about how my future would relax itself out
all the great things
instead I became a hateful man
whom many despised
now though
it all makes sense

October 14, 2016

Beautiful

the past is a glacier driven stone
large as a house
sitting under a shawl of leaves
surrounded by despondent pines
and swayable maples
sometimes you hear flutes

October 15, 2016

Reformation

when he had invented
he was so in December
that he is equal to 95
other things moronic

October 16, 2016

Twilight Times

it will be a hard day
for traveling along the banks
scratchy branches not hiding much
of the dark water looking still
but flowing fast
the twilight days are like this
the water's faster than you see

October 17, 2016

Errors

a cold day
today / years ago
it takes some practice to recognize mistakes
maybe you never do
lots of ways to do it
recognize / mistake

October 18, 2016

Worst

the end of the river
islands splitting it
the sand pushed in and pushed out
they say it makes a loud sound
twice a year
or was it three times
and each time it was the sound
of a turn for the worse

October 19, 2016

Fall Palette

there were colors all fall
most years growing up
I don't remember them much
the late dark green
the brown falling and on the ground
how we raked them into piles
and burned them on the road
how we burned corn stubble in the field
this is how life is made

October 20, 2016

Dog Wiener

why are some bugs
so weird
like how could I ever have imagined it worked
and I spend hours find / fix ing them
what gives
sleeplessness
dizziness
jeepers creepers

October 21, 2016

Did Happen

and sometimes you think you've fixed them but
you haven't and you revisit the code over
and over / you've been careful
written down your steps but
but when you go back the next day
it's broken as if nothing you did
happened

October 22, 2016

Centros Illinois

back tomorrow to the place
I started to grow up in
learned how to be in the world
how to be with people
I think I didn't get very far
I will return and continue

October 23, 2016

Allerton

dull colors in mid fall
stubble in the fields
warm days and difficult discussions
my goal to lay low and say little
the air is full of burning

October 24, 2016

Loss

some bad ideas creep in
I fix them and all is well
maybe / I work slowly to dispel
the facts of matters
I am what they call a slow time loser

October 25, 2016

In a Forest

an honor but
talk dispersed it
I wish I could savor
nothing is as it seems
outside the leaves turn
in the cold languid air

October 26, 2016

Centroi Illinois

down the long trail to the forest
past gardens / past musician statues
into the sunken arena
leaves coming down and turning
squirrels working it
autumn is like this

October 27, 2016

1001

woman of stories
keeping alive
hair black thick and parted
to one side
when calm she shines
when not is ordinary

October 28, 2016

100

yesterday her birthday
I was driving all day
then flying into the night
there were many reasons to forget
she would be 100

October 29, 2016

Tranströmer Number 1

falls and the finding
sun for wrongful findings
the hand-wronging finding

hazel and that nature
light and small natures
my tail-downing nature

orange but the deep
wind or sleeping places
the right-watching sea

October 30, 2016

Tranströmer Number 2

the head cans
ends are standing past
the sound is standing

the snow-on-the-mountain clears
goods are heading past
this head is sure

the grass perfects
surfaces are working past
all red is illegal

October 31, 2016

Thoughts Are Actions

our thoughts are actions
soon thought is all
that rain that fell that night
is everywhere things can matter
no matter
if I thought of the year I graduated
high school / thought of someone
born the turn of the century
thought would be all

November 1, 2016

River Ij

food is bad here
I tremble with distaste
the streets are slippery
women have dark black hair
men aren't noticed
I want to finally fix the last problem
why is it so hard

November 2, 2016

On Such A Winter's Day

the wind blew horizontal
rain and flags going that way too
snow chime in and snapping pix was out
I didn't sleep under feather covers
but wish I had

November 3, 2016

Oudezijds Voorburgwal

out there the clouds and hard gray
the sky tinged slightly blue
canals ringed everywhere like a limited Venice
what you smell is the sweet tar of weed
coffee shops closed as mellow knocks
wired for a loop / yes
you know what I mean
a city where women where black tights
under their short wool skirts

November 4, 2016

Slowly

lousy day
talk went poorly
no respect I think
I want to forget
quickly

November 5, 2016

Retiring

I hope to be home soon
start to let this be past
I think I want to hide away
just write or something
when I get to New England
I will decide future things

November 6, 2016

Lost and Losing

don't I wish for better
the arctic-friendship twists
out of chill's harsh bleakness
my relationship to the cold snap

November 7, 2016

Grab Words

I am sensing a change
the pleasure is waning
I wish for a curious admiration
amazing rattling
awes of tremendous marvel
wildness lives here

November 8, 2016

On Coldness

the arctic-friendship twists
out of chill's harsh bleakness
our relationship is a cold snap

November 9, 2016

WTF

the early wake-robin goes forth
flip-flops are riding herd past
their lower mantle is god-fearing

the purple milk vetch sits tight
mise en scenes are shooing away past
a terra firma is bare-knuckle

November 10, 2016

Calmnesses

there is a hole somewhere
holding a path to a better life
or a worse one
I want to slip into a slow book
and become a piece of calm

November 11, 2016

It Came To This

to think my last days
will coincide with the last days
of my country

November 12, 2016

Cry Baby

despite the insane
the river still flows
in and out
each day with the moon in charge
cold and dark water
strong current one way or the other
I plan to sit by it
until the break of night

November 13, 2016

Faulty

someone said it and I thought it false
I recall it and think it true
one gets what one deserves

November 14, 2016

Writing Don't Work

I hope to have eaten fish today
it is not today yet
when will I be able to write again?

November 15, 2016

Near Newburyport

rain heavy / horizontal
pushing fast through gaps
between buildings
the sea helps
there is a grayness in the air
like a welcome mat for death
the leaves wish you a skidding slide
into a ditch / the wind blows

November 16, 2016

In A Harbor Town

cold / rainy / big wind
the windows cricking from hard rain pellets
I ate a hot meal and lingered
the table in front of me
two women facing and eating slow
they are not beautiful
but they linger nearby
later I exit and the hard wind and the hard rain
boggle me / I avoid dips and holes
headlights sparkle in front of me
though I work hard I get home slow

November 17, 2016

ReVerB

who would you love
if the strings were all cut
not attachments
but constraints
like the strings attached to anything good
the downsides
the drifting river currents
who would you love
if love were all there were

November 18, 2016

Yuck

how can I avoid
news for years
how can I just tend
my small patch

November 19, 2016

Rocks Village

the river's been filled up
reckoning of a close moon
the ladies want me to think them
like to show off
I walk slowly behind them

November 20, 2016

Night Of

after the storm a deep clear
leaves too gone for great pix
every now and then a bright yellow
bright red one
a man walking through the cemetery
reminds me of an old movie
I watched until he left

November 21, 2016

My Old Friend

now I'm back
the toll is high
I can almost read newspapers
there were too many sadnesses on the trip
now I cower

November 22, 2016

I Wonder

today we mourn
a bad day
I took out my bb gun
drew a shooter on a piece of cardboard
leaned it against the base of our fireplace
and shot it all evening
who was most crazy

November 23, 2016

Discover the Deep-Fat-Fried Sky

today my software wrote two short poems
the same software
thinking divergently
which do you prefer

avant-garde Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art
setting on fire
the half-deep-fat-fried ship-towed long-range acoustic detection system

any part of grey—
vivid discoveries
on the morning sky

November 24, 2016

Before or After a Storm

the spiritual is beneath a thin surface
fullblown like an overwhite sky
after too stormy a night
I've walked slowly toward an oak
with deep red leaves remaining
I am as always outwardly alone
what I recall is the wind
the rain
the bridge of haunting dreams

November 25, 2016

Smalls

there is a pretty river
near a dark forest
I would walk from one to the other
I am not productive
I embrace leisure

November 26, 2016

No One Dares

making a story out her experience
making it more extreme
more real
more exciting
how can tell if it works
fiction is like that

November 27, 2016

Out of Here

you know even when
it's cold the river can be calm
floods / hurricanes / blizzards
killing heat waves
all these and life and death
visited along the river

November 28, 2016

Closely Follow

trees and headstones against a hard blue
winter sky viewed from the bottom of a small hill
a place like one we all will inhabit
stark beauty
stark truth

November 29, 2016

Bright Spot

I like to write
but can I make it erotic
situations I imagine are horny
but to readers
is the pace too slow
the language too clinical
sex scenes
do I make them into objects
not people

November 30, 2016

Hacked

another mystery
when was Nana's house built
early 1940s or 1949
perhaps one is the first remodel
or completion date
or just one more thing

December 1, 2016

Masterpiece

the rooms in 1961 were pastel
or walnut or mahogany veneer
clocks were shaped like lens flare
chairs were vinyl and couches faux leather
life was complex only behind the scenes
back then I had no ambitions or plans
no future to visualize
same as now
I guess

December 2, 2016

Dumb Writer's Trick

snow piled up overnight
in the morning we could almost not
open the door
we shoveled out the driveway
to get our car out
we shopped for food
brought it back
the pot belly stove kept us warm
once the wood was in and dry
the pump worked
the electricity worked
the toilet and shower worked
the sink worked
we made it
it was love

December 3, 2016

I Keep My Visions to Myself

when I first arrived
one song played over and over
I drove to the Lab each day
programmed but I was bad at it
careless and sloppy
that road had prehistoric eucalyptus
tarweed sweet all Summer
I was the best I would ever be

December 4, 2016

Amen

I live in a country falling apart
what I thought was sane and proper
is considered by most as crazy and immoral
I live in fear
I will do so the rest of my life
freedom is not the free market

December 5, 2016

All One Can Do

in a town in the desert right now
a pair of dogs explores the backs of restaurants and bars
seeking good tastes / leftover morsels
the I've sought out discarded women
and not the fresh

December 6, 2016

Similar Objects

town on the river
at the edge of the sea
the wind off of it
the spray and salt air
the one of great beauty there waiting
for someone like me
to leave

December 7, 2016

Meredith etc

sun dropped down behind the pines
across the field
across the road
across the yard
behind the window
I'm sitting on the fireplace hearth
working up the courage
(that I never find)
to call her

December 8, 2016

Hey Baby

no markings on the road
in the heavy rain past midnight
I can't see the way forward
the car keeps me warm
the wipers keep as much visible as they can
the river is to the right
after the bridge to the left
it could all end here

December 9, 2016

Ago

our spot in the woods
on an island
joined to shore by a levy
the island ringed by bushes
tall pines in the middle
she and I
we played there all day

December 10, 2016

Back Back Field

we had a field
in back of the back field
which was overgrowing with new birches
it was a sandy field
someone had abandoned it
the stories were once there
now only the made up thrive

December 11, 2016

Mourn for Us

I watch the rock performances
recorded in the UK and I wonder
is the warmth of the players
and their camaraderie because that country
is unexceptional / inward thinking becomes possible
humanity means more than money
freedom is not just / not only / not merely
the free market

December 12, 2016

Heart of Gold

find me a way to slide downstream
stream past the banks eroding into the wash
trees bent over weeping into the river
yellow / gold / bridge of green
let it all fade away past me

December 13, 2016

Dizzy

one day I won't be able to walk well
poor balance
need to keep walking now
maybe it will work

December 14, 2016

The Ice

it is a cold time
clear and sunny
when the slides are developed
the snow will be blue and white
the sky blue and white
many things to long for
one day is too many

December 15, 2016

Down

can't stand when things are broken
not a good trait
my backup works though
now for the cold and snow
to blow my way

December 16, 2016

And Weep More

we weep for our former selves
freedom is not free markets
now we must long for the small
things that make individual lives
and the lives of close friends
worth a ride
otherwise all
we can do is weep

December 17, 2016

Guckles Says

cold like a night
before a losing day
dark like a night
before a cold day
funny like a night
that never happened

December 18, 2016

Newburyport in Heavy Winter

even the plainest people find love
they and it
are common sights
the power of loneliness
is not to be diminished
even I

December 19, 2016

Guide to Postness

near the river's crest
a bridge and a road
and a building / the old days are welcoming
a new night / we flag down cars
then laugh at the babies
my advice
be hilarious
be vulgar
be immensely thought provoking

December 20, 2016

A Chance for X

long time ago
far away
unfamiliar
gone for good
passed away
down the drain
lost loves

December 21, 2016

Under

many years of my life
writing short things
putting pretty words to lamentable feeling
when one of us departs
the writing stops as the heart beats more slowly
until the tears have been forced out
and the work resumes

December 22, 2016

Kurkjian

Kurkjian retired today
married 43 years ago today
I married 43 years ago tomorrow
coincidence
I didn't last
he did
what fate for me after all this
for all this
with all this
what a sadness over all

December 23, 2016

I Think

too bad my country is gone
I live among the insane
I watch them closely
walking near them
I don't speak
my eyes scan the ground in front of me
the crazy people want to kill

December 24, 2016

Eve

going to bed but
not sleep
thinking I'd hear who put the presents out
downstairs under the tree not on display
but in our living room
some years many most
years few / we were poor
I know now and my parents
appreciated cheap not quality
I was wrong about everything

December 25, 2016

Wishes

we wish for snow
to cover pine boughs
to soften footfalls
to blanket our feelings
to paint it new
paint it innocent
what if it's just a wind

December 26, 2016

Nothing Can

our lives are slow
Kurkjian always says
I like it slow
but it means
nothing happens
and finally
nothing happens

December 27, 2016

Middle Ages Again

we enter an age of darkness
bad people have hijacked our way of life
I will retreat into small work
I won't be here long
any ways

December 28, 2016

Frag

end of the year
darkness upon
trees in front of sky are scritch
I can't fix things beyond this house
and small things
better to chill
winter thing

December 29, 2016

Why Go

successful
not me
famous a little
smart
not me
clever in avoiding direct checks
hard work to produce the best in a small circle
I remember sights and smells
I listen obsessively

December 30, 2016

Surrender

my clever idea isn't working
too well
maybe time to retire before the shame sets in
or work on it more

December 31, 2016

At Long Last

years have a way of dying
the beavers and groundhogs pay them no mind
in their dens / in their dug holes they await the warmth
we count the years
we number them as if numbering were naming
insults / lies
no animal paused to assign numbers