a fever is a warning

from the netherhalf
was for awhile, anyway. now it’s its own thing
from brain to skin and back again
take the scars for instance
as a history of rascals
stuttering across the skin
i’m not saying decrepitude, but i’m not not saying it either
preludian splashes and flashes
followed by the particulars:
you can’t umbrella when the sky is falling
will the world end like an egg on skids? i really don’t know
Cat Daddy, this is Pretty Mama, do you copy, do you read
don’t let’s go to the dogs tonight
we’re seeing nine frontiers of fear
they’re a bother but not the bother of a refusal
Team Red Snake bivouacs Mongoose Mountain
of the three desiderata (location, location, location) this hump has them all!
hums cacophonous: Frog Pond Glop
this part (of our relationship) is not worth mapping - it’s all muck and no features
forages for berries and mushrooms, bits of bone
take all you want but want all you take
recalibrating some vague agrarian fantasy
they tore down the old market to build New Market Gardens
there will be swelling followed by periods of doubt
exactly as predicted by Nostradamus
black widows on black windows
not only swell but vibrate
alone in hostile territories but no idea who’s upset or why
the one-trick pony simply gallops, nothing more
the chanticleer is crowing like a rooster
he wants less blame for who he is, more credit for what he does
a gamelan drone and a gong plunk
heralds, according to myth
blades and a wind-cut star we wink back at
respect the gaping of the gape
replace topo and field guide
YOU ARE HERE. and so am i
the moon is slipping two cats in and out of the campsite
all the rocks crawl out of the ground, then just sit there naked and happy
black horses drag a mower through the weeds
at times words make sense all this talking seems necessary it doesn't now
once we breathed water. now air. next comes fire
the danger is "oh how pretty"
a crop circle smiles
unaware that the interpretive dance has been canceled
there are things to adjust yourself to
like being voted most likely to be dragged through town and burnt on a hill
even if your zip line tangles
i would not put it past me
the rescue crow carries coal and wet matches
then bows down in what, hunger?
try the meerkat jerky
and the neo-hennypennyism
compliments of Kill the Messenger
and our benevolent elders and wisers
even if you thunder freak
stick with your bolus
without cease
we'll come back to this point later. trust me
unless you loathe your loins
when using a mirror it's best to start at the bottom and work your way up
do not aspire to wear the girdle of fire. and
sorry i'm late but my life broke down
never fall in love with your stunt double
or pewter sparrows
or your internist
it's bound to end in failure. or success so limited that it amounts to failure
love is made, torn at times, from hospital scrubs
it exists in the relation between dynamite and diamonds
(oh that reminds me, Brandi called. she said thanks for the bungees.)
like a tall white man i went on vacation just because
no one in particular is holding me
so i just pitch right on over
not that there’s anything wrong with that, i’m just saying
measure twice cut once
how many times have you performed this procedure
i don’t want to live forever, just 1/10 of it
don’t be nature’s grommet
and don’t let anyone yuck your yum
“mocked by the nodes his city life has grown”
doesn’t have to be the song playing in the background of your life
everyone and your mother will ask why
you lick your lips as i soak my feet
the multiple answer is always always
depending on what the meaning of is is
you dance on the ants until you stroke out
demiurgent
and hide in the bathroom until the bus has left
(listening to conversations at urinals is one way to keep up with the community)
why, when you’re so outdoorsy
should today be any different?
use a hot tub to barbeque fish
have you gone prefab? you could go prefab
and with a name like Burlap
the joke is on and against him
what the fact?!
there’s a time and place for everything and that’s college
are you still crying
but your skin looks amazing, do you do minerals?
not much. just making some salad dressing. thought i’d give you a call
i tried pragmatism, but it didn’t work
metaphors, puns and the suffix, oh my!
you’re a house and i’m your town
you can eschew me now or spew me later
like a New York-a-like
essence of onion
an empire of dirt
and a cow-like faith in clover
you’re simpler than simple, you’re a simp
you like the toxins because they remind you of you
when you get bawled out
we or i feel sad
you can do moat or maze but not both
when you get a massage
you have to have a nerve or
you don’t feel a thing
though panic is notoriously catchy
penultimate bang
we begin our descent and i cheer and buy everyone a cranapple
proxy crunch time
if someone reads this i want it to be you
you’re a straight fire in a leaning cave
like a river that stepped out for cigarettes and came back a different river
oh man, you’re a dog. i mean, yo dog, you the man
and check out that vowel-to-consonant ratio
gangly but hardly svelteless
not a man, but a cloud in trousers
lean and mean like nothing you’ve ever seen
i’ve been training this whole time
you better hop to it and set up shop
you should put off childish things and become an affidavit
the predicament law states that no one is exempt. you have been served (up)
any fool can get into hell but it takes a devil to get out
a glass of. a toke of. there we go
another county heard from
pink on blue
tennis pools and swimming courts
fake swans on fake lakes
if you can’t make it new, make it renewal
everyone loves a charade
via one orifice or another
a testimony [cough] to the triumph [ahem] of the human spirit [sucks teeth]
sinceritas!
red flag: you’re being called to where they feed
beware the apprentice with a syringe
while the algae aphids are digging in their heels
with deep grooves of habit
everybody’s nose knows your toes
are a powerful testimony of loss and longing
they begin to gag. they don’t but they’re sure they will. here’s the point
there’s a bug leaving at midnight. be on it
pudstrians must push button
i’m lying and i don’t mean down or around
am i disturbing you i hope
i’m not a monster. well, technically i am. so i guess i am
feeling a little pyretic?
(and when i say a little i mean a lot)
between the toes
stigmata? or just a rash?
day two of nothing
but you’re kind of a happy sap with a hackey sack, aren’t you
you’re looking (in the mirror) at the new Barracuda-in-Chief
did you know the barracuda first appeared on Earth about 350 million years ago
doesn’t care for leaves or people. can tolerate stones
today there are 2,100 species worldwide, with 550 species in North America
no snide
when i steal something i get a sense of ownership
morals mirror might
and leave big smashes
just picture your sycophants
getting put to bed with a shovel
clappy clappy
we are now accepting astonishment
swimming in your saccharine
perhaps our feigned sincerity campaign hasn’t been as successful as we hoped
like fried pies
yesterday is a lover i have mixed feelings about
you’re a crystallized glam shot
mere puffery
a ruby-crowned kinglet
an encephalophile
who happens to excel at rodeo and the fine arts
itch and scratch as call and response
advanced seminar in calamity physics
since you’re not me there’s a chance we’ll run into each other
for what is a pastoral but a field of cowbirds looking to ride cows
(thinking about cows i fell asleep standing up)
and road kill ain’t got tired feet so i don’t feel sorry
if i bump your noggin
racing the bees to the wild vine black-eyed pea patch
spoonbills provided endless hilarity to the Bronte girls and it’s easy to see why
thanks to words, we think we see what the witness has seen
the vertiginous remainder that is language
though the mind is the eye’s own blind spot
question marks are useless except by themselves like a brand on a cow
repeat after me silk, silk, silk. what do cows drink? . . . no, water
even a stopped clock is right twice a day
if you’re crazy and you know it and you really want to show it, clap your hands
and . . . welcome back to so you want a sustainable future(s market)
you can see i’m bored, in fact i’ve lost my personality
(turn to pages 38 – 41 to learn more)
birds on a wire. bird. more birds. bird. birdSUNbird. more birds
in need of an organizing principle
i’m gonna go home and think of a joke
a conceit, a trope, and a meme are playing golf
sex is just foreplay for sleep
a hat unravels to reveal an eft wearing a monocle. i really need to wake up
have you seen my bugle and stun gun
said the Duchess
he’s an eye popper, she’s a mind blower
not bad for a couple of shirt-stuffing, postcard-writing, pinch-faced pecuniaries
pride and prejudice i call them
(not their real names)
a drifting failure, an approaching remedy. let’s welcome them home
not as intrepid little adventurers, but as lunch dates
how they make my uniform bulge, like, you know
estheticism
a photograph of everything once’d
like crushed grit
pride and prejudice
repurposed
like lobsters hot, red, and private
a locked door recaptures early loves and wishes
ideas in the underbrush
swallow this said the teacher and don’t worry i’ve already chewed it
slither factor almighty
there are two kinds of men. them that and those who
rise from the dew (of your thighs?)
over Fool’s Hill
not a place but a condition
the living pit
reminds me what Dick said to the skunk
what’s brown and sticky? . . . . . . . . . . . . a stick
don’t touch anything with your hands
we’re in the process of pardoning our progress
one, two, buckle my shoe. something stinks
let me explain ‘something’: first he says something and then i say something
up in the balcony
my surprise has no object. just “hey!” “what?”
are your thoughts thinking for you
didn’t you play Proteus in Proteus of Gumbo Creek
in a deeply bland sort of way
that (crackly) yellow(ish and brown) leaf reminds me of you
do you live in a compost bin?
believe it to be the time of your life?
and feel really warm and floaty?
one last question: do you believe ideas really exert force?
if so you’re dead
no big deal, unless it is a big deal, in which case it’s a really big deal
there’s no alternate ending
no fruit in your soup
you can’t just keep standing there
start stopping to suffer
try lute lessons
using the hopes up method
watch the people traveling from sleep
they have a way of talking without thinking
blissing from bliss to bliss
their eyes are partly inside, partly outside
their ideas are like light bulbs
where it matters is between the facts
that bind / tie / but do not affiliate
like a story has to leave out nearly everything so people can follow it
like birds you never see at night
my clock does a pretty good job of tracking the rotation of the earth on its axis
going window to window whispering the time: “psst, it’s time”
it’s the reason for the pleasing
fingers swoon between
of or pertaining to
doses of roses
born overseas
divide the clouds: salmon, steel, salmon, puffer
this is the 23rd day of almost rain
slough off the deadscales and be tender again
back to first plasm
just like us and our birds, the sky is in a fish phase
to make a pie from scratch you first have to create the universe
so what if it lasts another 3.5 billion years
life is unfair and full of ibuprofen
if you’re awake, dream of building a better tree
a zoo of pleasures
a big thicket item
let the syrup rain down like honey
drink its sap
(headline: *Drunken Fraternity Student Breaks Arm Trying To “Cow Tip” a Volvo*)
get totally freakin’ cabbaged
get grid rigid
then blossom
out of Onlyville
into equal parts underpinning and pathlessness
some people are more than others a product of their stories
like Johnny Appleseed
Kokopelli is a fertilizer
on your mark, get set, meander
where you are depends on how you got there
going out on a limb
Boy-not-afraid
look at the legs shake. “shake, legs!”
incredibobble!
catfish are jumping all over the world
they want circus
out of cold water under a summery sun
who’s up for a clangoring
into muscadine and scuppernong song
*Vinegar made from the finest grapes*
uvulas of the vistas
what i like more than anything is to visit other islands
“One Claw, One Paw, One Path”
Thank you, Mr. Chair. And now it is my privilege to announce
‘Sanitation & Sewage’ has merged with ‘Fish & Game’
the new logo is a crapping crappie
the stage customized for woody creepers like you
is that your new hairline?
may i call you Merryweather Head?
should we keep pretending there are no bad questions?
this hole is for your tongue. or a big white bear
go to view. select the aim tab and click on bang. uncheck keep remains. click ok
(subject to penalties)
what were you, born yesterday?
beyond the feeder creeks
your dour pour sours our four hour tour
as shad bellies refract the sun
Lizzie is a little shorter than Elizabeth
they’re playing the new Patty Cakes
it’s a wootenanny
39 oh wows and a goodness gracious later
that’s what you got? my eyes are gouged out and you say eat carrots?
lips sputter and blubbitz
excuse me, a train just went by. i thought you said
“where would i be if i were a screwdriver”
that’s a big if

*Dear Mud, it’s all good. Love, Sludge*

and if when i sneeze i annoy then you’re the only one i’m thinking of

we are joined at the smells funny

spores lodged in pores

like two peas spooning in a pod

like gerunds and geraniums in an English garden

Yahtzee!

after much debate i struck a deal with the cops wherein we’d all go for a little ride

they have no drunk how idea i am

falling down will be my downfall

back in cartoon school

the dead are alive. actuaries don’t know this but animators do

they be trippin’

standing on a ledge of goose bumps

organic circuit breakers

totalize

the targets under their skin

trick the tricker

set off alarms, make you want them for their bodies

come for the chitty chitty, stay for the bang bang

the anatomicals

née Lubberly

who i met through a fiend of a fiend

we run a newsgroup on badging but we’re trying not to

uglify

as long as the status approximates the quo (pro tem)

as means of by coughing up

nothing is as as as as is

*Muskrat Love Review*

says you’re somewhat unique, almost one-of-a-kind

rates you highly, then snickers

because you couldn’t remember who wrote *Gulliver Swift*

ok, let me go ahead and say this now: there were these pumpkins

living below luck-level

on the tarmacadam

opponents sit facing each other
detailing their bodily troubles
skirmishing
circling their little red wagons to keep the outside out
in doing so they sanction the destruction of their own excellence
i was sorry for them i felt
like letting my jogging suit go out by itself this morning
my nostalgia getting titillated and ransacked for virtue
i wanted to cry whether i saw you or not and i did
eyes all aching, isolation
solemn as Rhadamanthus
we saw the occurred. also the get back. also the toe to toe
there it is again: buncha guys saying “Impact!”
the weak grow sly
as they prep for degrade
like a slingshot afterwards
i’m tired kiss me i’m going to bed what is that actor’s name
escaping the abattoir
trying to “go country”
another animal hugged well beyond the mmmm though no one smelt the flower
in the morphic field
Miss Pelt pulls from her bad of tricks
she excels at boyfriend math: the more unknowns the better
chrysthansumum [sp?] (chris handsome umm) (crust hand summon)
laid is played
in a ’29 Gutter Coupe
she’s the willer he’s the willee
burning rubber like a hindbrain
you as the problem should never be ruled out
chagrin is a verb
you can’t undo what hasn’t been done
CSI wants to know how her fingernail clippings got in your underwear
tickle fight!
on the way to the Sit-N-Munch
my life flashed like a movie before my eyes. it won best comedy and had that line
i couldn’t help but notice you’re carrying a grenade launcher
every actor loves a prop
eager to noun itself
chance is destiny
in slo-mo
thanks to the polypropylene revolution
the rabbit is here, lingering actually, by the bandages
pity about those emotions getting in the way of rational existence
a runny nose and a teethmark’d apple are all that’s left of her daylights
out of redness comes rudeness
she accepts your apology in advance
hadn’t called in weeks? she said months
suggests you join a carrion support group. see how YOU like it
it’s great if you’re into sadistically filthy
with damp lights and that vinegar smell
there’s always some turtle snapping
and click of tooth on spoon
it will all be fine in some soonish soon
a fever is a cold sweat warming
betrayal is in the eye of the beholden
too bad resentment isn’t grief
it’s like paprika, you just can’t get enough
it revives anything
in the beige family
vermiculate
or chitinous
beast of the east, best of the west, mouth of the south, and so forth (of the north)
there’s more to any of us than any of us suspects
all-rubber construction with steel shanks
for instance balls which i’m afraid of except the ones coming straight at me
made famous at the pain museum
i hope they have t-shirts
a picture (of a plunger) is worth a thousand (and 24) words
never activate this plunger until you have walked the circle of safety
that fine line between conscious and crying
fever MacGuffinized
walked by the me, full of myself
the whole thing: just trying to be at home. that’s the plot
you can see the video

*How Living Changed My Life*
may i give you a power strip?
may i give you a Moebius strip?
i like to watch
her harness
down toward the sassy/caustic end of the spectrum
South Dakota kicks North Dakota's ass
the big bugs feed on the little bugs
big poets use my chapbook as a bookmark
so be good and if you can't be good be lucky
like when those two birds got trapped in the Rare Book Room
fortunes for the fortunate
like the fox promoted to henhouse supervisor
you can buy or rent. or steal. preferably steal
the point of a neurosis is to maintain and prolong the struggle
hardening hotted blood
i'm going to snake oil you. and you're going to let me
it's time to invoke the unwritten rule
we (keep trying to) create reality by imposing our will
i am, as always, never better
i'm only pronouns, but i am all of them
they say it's a man's world
raise your hand if you've ever peed while brushing your teeth
this fact illuminates the biology of the shadow
like the beauty of a leaf falling into a fountain on its way to clogging the drain
Sir, yes Sir! We dislodged their insistence, Sir!
though it's become evident we need to do more sprints in practice
it's safe to shop/hunt now
in stock! Mystery the First: the Faction and Mystery the Second: What Probe?
all lost objects can be found in daydreams
the more you're sated the more you want more sate
what you're afraid of, you already have
lawn and order
the need for needing
to weep a deep one
i get it when you touch me a scorched feeling
found a photo: child on my shoulders, arms around my head. oh, i'm the child
i'm a baby beetle being drug into a vespiary
(do those who say drag/drug also go for brag/brug gag/gug lag/lug tag/tug?)
it’s a stinging melody
confusing art with the internal combustion engine
songs are for the singer like radio programs are for the radio
the band was looking for a repercussionist
down by the silt pond, singer/songwriter Gary “Gus” Gustafson smells a hit
he writes new oldies with old nuances
“white sky and a whiter moon”
on the dengue guitar
mosquitoes and mosquitoes and if i kill one dead
it’s all for the greater good (of me)
i’m keeping it real
even while cherry picking
not bad for a Monday
i have to stop the car once in a while to pinch myself
i’m not a fragment, i’m a missing difference
i’ve decided to devote my entire life to washing dishes for the next hour
cue the piccolos
to achieve a higher level of informed confusion
frog the beach
with a velvet hammer
cut the crap
there’s a flag on the play
(if it’s yellow let it mellow, if it’s brown flush it down)
i will. be with you. in a minute
all night snipe hunt
something like i ain’t never seen
man the pines! ready the cones!
stir the ocean with fifty ships each with fifty oars
i always did like the sound of a ricochet
and here’s the shebang
there’s a kiss in every one
“make” believe
like tans echo suns
give me some feedback
ambassadors from the alien ship are here. they want to meet our head farmer
they say they’re having a hard time understanding our meat/air boundary
psychoactively
grunting a work-around
here’s my eye and here’s someone i can’t see waiting for me
hey, i know you. you’re that mediocrity clothed in graft
the pig, the hedonist, high noon on grandma’s quilt
drinking plastic surgery from a bottle
dumpy but regal, elegant but green beans up her nose
author, The Desire of Wings and Lovers to Fly Through the Same Sentence
winner of the 1987 Womanish Prize
hey check me the hell out
i call this piece ‘catbird with fruit’
when i started i had no idea it would become so successful
nekkid is finally fun again
my head asplode!
well ok this time you be Rachmaninoff and i’ll be the doodly-doodly
i’ll need a fuzzy suit or something
as pictured here
feeling my oats
what! just because i’m pregnant i can’t dance?
i could move a mountain if i had a mustard seed and a fulcrum
hoo wah
you may call me Huckster Fitzroy
aka Cherry Yum Yum
clams baked in honey would never taste as strange
on a mossy mat
we humans are the infinite number of monkeys writing everything
this piece is called ‘dog with turd’
if you need to explain your art, don’t
except in Manitoba
you’ll get onion breath
pulchritudinous is beautiful
wait a sec, i think i’m having a thought
ouch!
i can’t not hear the micro-transmitters in everyone i meet
the lake is crashing down to random earth
making ingots of charcoal
it’s maelstrom season
the guts of a piano would make a good example, but of what i’m unsure
i had hoped to point my finger
condense fact from the vapor of nuance
but you’re supposed to be nice
when you enmirror
a pacified polyp
insert “my body” here. anywhere
where fig trees flourish
shoes are not the problem. socks are the problem
polliwogs and millipedes illustrate their silliness
assuming we can rescue them in rewrite
snakes wingspan and hover
and then there it was, licking its fur, already a separate animal
warping and woofing
like birds trying to teach kites how to flap
their buns off
you’re not my real father. my real father has a smell, he does
an activewear ad for the girth challenged
Comfortable-With-Failure Brand
giggling
and treat oriented
like dogs on catwalks
he’s had that surgery to separate his heart from his loins
missing ribs can still fantasize
their weakness appeals to your weakness
how cartographers define a vacuum
the dead and the living each want what the other has
spectra ex illo folium et tantrus bestia
which means based on my perception of reality, your hair is unrealistic or
translated literally: painting one’s rat self, there’s no better view
or: the eye is the sun in its other form. or
once upon a time there were 3 billion bears
in a touchy-feely rut
(not a movie, but a reenactment)
(not a reenactment but a transfiguration)
twisting a leaf (it was a very big leaf)
everyone bothered by worms made a list
they were tingling in advance as they always do
funny how time is running out but space is expanding
behind the unicorn bushes
my Miniature Schnauzer (whom i love) beat up your Honor Student like
the last dodo flying through a snowstorm
(cause he's been, like me, training this whole time)
"Get down!" yelled Barbara
and don't you come glissading through here no more
because i'm the mommy that's why
i do big person things
the party begins at 8 and goes until
your face looks like it's on screen saver
the inevitable claustrophobia of the educated mind
the doctor said he needed to reconnoiter my goiter. he liked saying that
dogs chase their tongues
(funny that it's only male dogs that pack lipstick)
they make good time and get good mileage
out of that ridden-hard-and-put-up-wet look
their feet grow wings
possibility not only includes sudden quakes but a change in bone density
direct descendents of the whiffleball
presumably bringing their own phoenix
you know those pterodactyl kind
like the ones we had when we lived on Dudley Drive
silque-shinned
like those velveteen-looking words lying around in the English language
with talons on the ends
not just ill but sick
brownish grayish birds of unhappiness
they ruin everything. they're everything ruiners
scuff makers
and i love not camping
and salad spinners (i'm writing a book on the history of)
my secret is crackers
shaped like feet
(more precious than a wet rose single on a stem)
but whose feet?
a mocker, a really good one, never says anything
you know those pterodactyl kind
ambushedly
supping on mice and waiting for no one. someday this will be a bus stop
en suite
perfect for picking up snake snacks
and calibrating the antidote
it looks easy but there’s a mile of wire in a screen door
that’s true enough. almost anything is
what i like to call the ironic literal
(fish overboard!)
yeah? well i got your ‘ironic literal’ right here, pal
one red maple on a hill of blue spruce
to whom much is given much is suspected
like wearing a flag
finally, a totally happy line with no qualifiers
like
pink chocolate mint artichoke hearts
or whatever
i think i’m gonna hate ‘em. i can’t wait
to get you a locket with me in it for Valentine’s Day
to whom little is given even more is suspected
i used to find it enigmatic now i find it hard to understand
technology as pencil
banality as hallmark
pet rocks
until your hands are raw
if they’ll let you
misequate money with intelligence
or: to protect is to deceive
a mask is not emotional but an unmasking is
like fur-covered pillows
like a school of cubist fish
like a rake in a temple
the fear and the hum are one
i went deep inside myself but of course it was hard to breathe in there
dark silence has gotten me this far, no use trying to improve upon it
like seatbelts in a canoe
you remind me of the Krebs cycle
you’re a very sexy answer. unfortunately i’m only accepting questions at this time
though your enjambments are driving me crazy
why do you think they call them booby traps
and no, a 3-ring binder is not some kind of sex toy
you’re so dumb you have to think to blink
you’re that nervous type who doesn’t manufacture enough air and hallucinates
for instance doing the dragon won’t hurt that much
(from the drop down select sedation)
if you touch the monster and your finger pushes through
the latex is in flower
shriek freely
between spasms
delight in your dislikes
avoid joy
make it a habit
sometimes you don’t want an ace in your hole
milk the misoneism
we’re out of the salmon tonight, would you like to try the amoeba
budge an inch
but i don’t want to talk to my waitress about breast reduction surgery
contradictory certainties wrong your feelings
(this is going to hurt me more than it’s going to hurt you)
keeping in mind that each cabin has a view of the lake
it’s no sin to shake off your skin and go dancing in your bones
is the answer and here’s the question
were you even aware of it?
the girl next door is neither
this ain’t too half-bad
a closet broken open is still a closet, but now it’s broken
sorry about that. ok, where was i
i used to know a song about ripping through your clothes
with one of those mouths tucked under a moustache
i sing for strangers who i want to keep that way
unrelatedly
how about a tracheotomy for old time’s sake?
then we’ll climb trees with snakes
if you don’t play you can’t lose
my dog went in one ear and my cat came out the other. they’re messing with me
for instance when a fish hook
as a costumed insect
unexpects you
people don’t realize butterfly wrestling is a dangerous (and expensive!) sport
without a parachute
no matter where you are, there you go
a featherless bird
keeping his glee as clinical as possible
into you sings and you sing out to me and i go
if you’re wrong, say so. if i’m wrong, say so what
you don’t have to barcode every tree, just bundle them as forest
the way string is made from smaller string
mother is the necessity of invention
and your reading this line fulfills its purpose
what is abstract? what is it to you when you eat garbanzo soup? oh how weird
the ability to annoy should not be confused with the ability to influence
pull my finger
then back to the party where we’ll be maled and femaled
and think of Captain Kangaroo
all shacked up with Betty Crocker
not the doodad
of life
someone (is) left on your bed
gone fishing/went missing
i mean people love surprises but not the complete unknown
we must spelunk our own hearts, and deal with the bats the best we can
am i right or am i right? or am i right?
noticing is a contextualizing project
the unidentified men i fought with turned out to be me
(or maybe that’s what they want me to think)
trying to write a new and more usable history
here’s a little autobiography i like to call Fighting For My Rats
and i’m sorry, but yes, that’s the main course
when you focus on similarities you see only differences. and the reverse
if by universe you mean the same eyelid blinks an eclipse over all of us
oh, i said, and she burst into flame
we’re in between disasters at the moment
time is such a long time
i died once and later twice
tears breed tears
this is why i stopped feeding the ducks
i fell at the party. i’m still at the party
i’ve been run over and now have two brains
in a sippy cup
they loved the Go button too much
and needed a heavier base
i mean both the ducks and my two brains
trust me. (a little more . . . just a little more . . . )
they’ve turned and now are feeding me
small but proud
peeled and cored
neither fish nor fowl, neither friend nor foe, neither pica nor elite
like a featureless clump
just because
“Dead,” Jed said
appointed time, circle of life, and all that
into the bonfire
throw everything truistic or obvious or too agreeable
(did you know the eye has rods and cones activated only when viewing fire?)
(all kinds of crazy cathecting going on there with that!)
and out comes the moon again
commemorating itself
this thought a night sight: against no wall no tide broke in a dormant harbour
a back yard will, if you let it, fill
the score is day 6, night 7
the results are still resulting
evolution is not having to yell at your food before you eat it
do you believe that genomic art will save us because i don’t
it’s still anybody’s ballgame
due to drink we missed the 9th and the 10th . . . oh, there was an 11th?
seems i can neither let it go nor keep it in a true place
tongues stumble, ears err
my hand feels like it spills
He: [enters carrying pillow]
i fell asleep in public twice today. felt so good
i dreamed i was Orphée “Buddy” Defoe and
my beans
got a small stipend
sprouted translucent sprouties
apparently the whole courtroom already knew my bowels work from code
and what’s happening is that suddenly your view of things sucks
but you’re the only one with a straw
like a dung beetle running to the door when guests arrive
the incoherent is made social by discursive arrangements
90% of
us will celebrate Trash Day this Friday, adorning our curbs with big green cans
time and time again is a recycling myth
every New Year’s i give up
feathers
and rename my pet snakes
such snobs when it comes to furs
how could they go and do something like that. yet they went
glumly
last Halloween i went as Tighty Whitey. unnecessarily that’s what i wore too
pedantic didacts
promised to teach me better
hold me like hairs
while the music quickens the house down to a blur
i can’t get a moment’s rest without sleeping with you
i dreamed i was a tatertot
in a tornado
of involutional melancholia
i see dead books
qua
little flying seeds. little eggs and seeds
what could be more special than soufflé
one can not have too many egg
though a bird on the ground is less of a bird than a bird in the air
progeny held by the calm
you could literally see how well they’d been taught
they speak in blocks as if they’re building something
exactly do they do
piled pine high
it’s just an advertising scheme. but what an advertising scheme!
pleasured by cedar
no one illustrates screws like Mr. Nord’s crew
they’re one of 512 finalists
on my dropdead list
(their favorite poem: Proliferation by Emma Tayshon)
my heart’s a little ragged but it’s all i got
destined to become operatic
i just remember my doctor saying “look, you’re a person”
a long man. and here ‘man’ could mean either ‘a creek’ or ‘a sucking rain’
but it’s difficult to drive past the man who taught you how to dribble
with socks sobbing wet
my illusion doesn’t have a very bright future
another cause for rattles on tappets is the oil feed holes got gunked
hunkered down in their wickiups
they act out
with stiff iffiness
another exciting and inspirational ice-breaker skit
(yawn) the same one as last year
You Gotta Really Really Want It
wetter and warmer
as stated in our Mission Statement
sit still, understate everything, make yourself as small a target as possible
forest heroes and iconic dead logs
argue identitarianism
minus the monody
like airport people, many words look half-familiar to me
delicate pings of sapience
justifiably egglike
(how seamless seemed love) and then came trouble
there, right there, that’s me about to get my first lesson
appearing as cockleburs on a dog’s face
feeling like a wee figure sketched into a rendering
every place was the same because i felt the same
and what about all those thoughts and feelings i had a few months ago
they were identical until they popped
revealing a hillside, barn, cows, a farmer, a garden, and the farmer’s husband
but i can’t really conclude what you might have seent
candelabra-lit manure piles perhaps or
wild horses in stickle briar
exponentially clumping
it happens all the time so they’ve got a word for it
dysadvise, or
contradanse
deciding to fight noncooperation with noncooperation
a stamping, a loose feral thing
a preemptive you-can’t-fire-me
favors two equally desirable plots
(that’s how they used to say win-win)
there is method in the dissembling
if i had a kitchen table i’d put it in my kitchen if i had a kitchen
the same could be said of your head
(not a euphemism this time)
opening and closing, it’s nearly a flower
gone sporgasmic
a flora/fauna standoff
there are problems, but none of them are mine
how convenient
red cap is to hot head as
a Leafy-Faced Skink (Encyclopedia of Appalachian Things, 4th ed.)
is to a Sanguine Newt. which
is here to save you (oh wow! he can really save)
if only you’d shut up for ten consecutive seconds
the park ranger in all of us
ed me he said
with degrees in sleet and teachering
meet me on the back hall in about an hour
needing a shower
and a new cat
featuring nanowash
and a manual showing how
slim children pick pale daffodils
as part of the New Austerity Program - soon to reap major benefits
in this little blister of civilization
i’m afraid of numbers especially you two
Sookie and Mookie are twins
(so many paired things seem odd)
Recto and Verso are two sides of the same koan
they come bearing mud for our pigs
give their address as ‘the river’ or ‘if you ever see an ocelot’
promising to rectify your taste in sweaters
(LOST CAT: spots, no collar, about 30 pounds)
there was nothing for it, but
they say tearing limb from limb aids in digestion
you say “out of control” like it’s a dagnabit thing
they say this mirror only reflects reptiles. well, and once a grub
i say turn the light off and the blanket on
chokeberries in vino veritas
talking about the understandable only weighs down the mind
poems are how people talk in the future
where botes flote under the mune
been that, done there
though it’s hard to distinguish between being there and wanting to be there
in lieu of evidence we’ll focus on lifestyle
surveiled!
confessions of sleeping with peep-toe pumps
(not tonight, i have to wax my toes)
and the glossy-cover you
you, you make me breathe from my last buttonhole
behind man-made polka dots
for his portrait my dog declined to sit
female animals are called grimalkin, squab, sow, bitch, dam. can this be right?
come on folks, this one needs a really strong reveal
the armadillo seems embarrassed even for an armadillo
armadillos have armadillo ways of doing things
she has a friend, gray with sad things. they have a small future together
(ok i’m starting to feel really sad)
she is (or she is eating) a pale, green-dappled, mildewed turnip
while reading *On Onion’s Origin*
she’s watching The Guessing Machine starring language is structured like a mind
ambiguity is her favorite form of certainty
her golden locks pulled back in pigtails
the only French she wants to learn is ‘too bad, so sad’ and ‘you sack of shit’
she reads The Farmers’ Almanac but only for the typos
you can hardly blame a person for being the way they are
she’s blowing out her taper
she’s boiling the salt-free cookbook
while nailing jello to the wall
my contribution to the emergency was to scream
hysteria, puff up, counter-hysteria. lesson learnt
two negatives make a positive but two positives are never negative. (yeah, right)
Phil is not the fire
stop flapping him
you can’t blow out a candle sitting on your nose
though i am impressed with that dialectical turbine technique
there’s nothing more amusing than amusement itself
writing doesn’t lead to anything, it *is* anything
like unplanted plants on the planet Pluto
a spiral can stand on its end
it’s the old greasy rope trick
there never seems to be a surface equal to my needs
it just ain’t gonna happen
the textbooks say you don’t learn by reading, but by doing (?!)
*como se dice* “hand is part of the ball”
but getting up in the middle of the night to change the rules, changes the rules
the edge of the thin is missing
i hope my scar grows back
because mockery is the highest form of irritation
me and my weapons instructor are changing the world – ask me how
i lost my temper and couldn’t find it anywhere
like everything else, it’s somewhere else
my thingk is impaired
and all the roses are gone. The Luvmeister must have jumped the gate again
probably that splash we heard
paper boats floating then tipped over each with its own little captain
the beaver and the plumber glisten with mutual respect
they never saw the jutting rock face and its twin the jutting rock face
it was winked as just another garden accident
i know you know i know
but suddenly the Country Club cares
i’m slightly taller than Narcissus
and so they cancelled my thing but
this poem just keeps going
when you reach the end you’ve gone too far
unassassinated, here i sit
quote unquote
trust the cannot hold and
thank God for atheism
i could never unravel that “i save you by letting you save me” thing
bless this mess
with tincture of saffron
and think of me as the gift you give yourself
boiled down to a bouillon essence
though past the Eat-by date
it was kind of Brandon to choose the smaller ferret
there’s an upper limit on how good bad can be
not always always just most of the time always
i can still curl my tail
and i love wearing tight pants and ice cream!
so i’ll fake it till i make it
see me sneeze at old, own solipsisms
running while posturing
Dear Big Jake, i’m writing to riddle your middle
backwards line this read
ha ha. dude, remember how we used to torture the 7th graders
like a flamingo on one leg
i was not the fastest but i got the award for not looking at the keys
i felt stupid. which i liked at the time
there’s little to distinguish between encompassed and protracted childhood
you have to scrawl before you squawk
lattice (not crosshatch!) had been on the tip of my tongue for weeks. lattice!
i wrote a line a day for 3 years
i write on behalf of the not satisfied
wait a minute. a month. a mile
have i forgotten my memories?
this whole time i thought i was the narrator
are you saying my mind has a mind of its own?
i feel a dream state coming on
maybe it'll be that Canterbury Tale with the Pink Floyd sound track or
another in the *Harriet “The Heart Breaker” Hardacre* series
(i loved that show so they cancelled it)
maybe we should camp here tonight and try again in the morning
hopefully they won’t sever the tent ropes in our sleep again
there are rocks on the passway and the dark is night
i’m afraid of that recurring dream where Carl Sagan turns me into a space heater
i wouldn’t mind sleeping sitting on the fence
your wicket seems wary of my mallet
good fences make good hiding places
and give me a sense of security (as opposed to *actual* security)
is this vineyard terraced or bunkered?
i heard Holderlein will be the final judge
are you worried you’ll misclub and airmail the green?
can i get you anything? a GPS? perhaps a gimlet or some Kant
did you come to the picnic just to shoot our sandwiches?
yes
to hatchet our hatchlings?
yes
is this not an olive root?
no
a dove dug up?
maybe later
quick, commingle the funds
test the sky for birds
and send a message in a bottle reminding to check for messages in bottles
don’t underestimate the value of escapism in standing tall against the real
was that the guy or the i
voices on the phone silly awkward
we are invented by what we let pass through us
better living through osmosis
what who
which why
or is it whomever
and whoever
intertwined, safely entertained
do you still believe you can't host a party without parasites?
a frumpy grump, a grumpy frump
she insists her pedestal is too low
you’re either a complaint or a do something else
you’re either a small shawl or an oily doily
you bore, i’ll snore
tell me everything you think you can think of
girding up the vegetative in me
i’ve ‘bout decided to kick back and whittle a spell
not thinking keeps the mind readers away
from your hard-assed head
i’ve had about enough. . . want more
i better put a lid on it before i flip my lid
truth
doncha know
i’ve been invited to the morning entrails reading
it’s a “sum is greater than the parts” situation
in fact i’ve been asked to insert the o ring
measure the treasure
the florist recommends the buttercups
asap or sooner
or a thousand cans of spray dirt
bottled at the source
downgrading “natural death” to “a little off”
silver linings suck
i’m up to 182 anagrams for success but they’ll never beat the three p's
in the parable of the suitcase, the death warrant, and the three paranoiacs
problem people problematize
on Earth as it is in New Haven
from glass-bottomed jets
you can see
her mulberries
like oceans, land-locked
with roots that feed on light and air
imagine this as lyric poetry
said can’t
i've got questions to beg
maybe you should turn off the boat, we're not moving
from our perspective
the dots were mistaken for ravens
or the mouths of very tiny gift horses
going at it or getting it on
like monster trucks or teenagers
making snow angels in the sand
with all sizes of prizes
Ursi is an award-winning mother. her creations can be found
on heyday
drinking the sky
it’s as if we are the humans (and in a way we are)
boogishly
it’s not important what i say, it’s important that i’m saying it
a birdcatcher walks into a cage
the coffee pot is barking
hello, anybody home
what’s with the screaming? you don’t like my little monkey-monster friend
swinging the stimulus
she plans to explore the role of humans in extraterrestrial humor
from womb to tomb, birth to earth
she doesn’t care and she doesn’t need to care
that must be how the light gets in
if there is a shadow here, though, it is cast by the past
through your erudite whining
two major victories: we didn’t do anything and we adjourned early
from the bottom of the brain
if all your peers understand your work, it's not creative
odium fallow
and refrigerated storage will prevent metamorphosis
it’s a scary familiar what perks
i cried as i tried all day that way
one tiny muscle under my left eye has been pumping double-time for days
(breathe in) . . . i easily create beauty . . . (breathe out) . . . i am in alignment . . .
everything depends on clearing the weeds in the clearing
that’s why the bourgeoisie’s always rising but never risen
if it is to be it is up to me (what does that tell you?)
you laugh, but once while riding my bike i solved for x
it’s really not that hard to save the world
just don’t get up unless your bed’s on fire
decisions are made in motion
and the best time to negotiate is before the negotiations begin
whatever you have that can be used for cutting, sharpen it
and won’t you please stay and help me turn the bed
and let’s get sanctified
in a time capsule
by tonight
so near we could touch if touch were what was wanted
dropping all feathers and pretense
i’m in the pond on the roof
filling the tank for a deep swim
hello. if you’re reading this it means at least one of us is being held hostage
allow the lightening bug to represent the soul
since we can’t improve your looks, we’ll have to invisible you
those that leave can’t be left
but sometimes we need coaxing to act on our own
i’m a slow reader of a thick book on a long walk on a short pier
what’s the French word for voyage
in the South we call it fixin’ to be gone
(subject refuses to sit up in bed. stares blankly. no response to sunbeams)
with my reputation, i’d be lucky to get an invitation to my own funeral
they say if the shoe fits, don’t try to pull his tongue out
i’ll have an Anesthesia – make it a double - with an Amnesia chaser
i’m too cowardly to stop faking bravery
i’ve never wanted so badly to be parallel to the horizon
in fact i want everything that everyone wants
we wish you a very well happy pleasant
at the Mr. Eponymous Pageant
now Bernadette will read and say “or maybe not” after every line
(maybe = 50/50. maybe so = 51/49. maybe not = 49/51)
and by the enough in me i now pronounce you carbon and cobalt
the good and the good-looking
the ugh in thought and laughter
a babbling baby booger bauble
a big family with lots of lore
i thought i told you kids if you’re going to kill each other, go outside
can be shot from any direction
in my metonymical visage
we in them many
not just the cooccurrence of two words
it’s live uncut reality
though it may seem like a parody, this actually keeps happening to me
like an oak leaf falls on an acorn it once knew
my friends are seasonal
i heart nuts
and baby clothes made of camo
try and hide your family tree
and while you’re out can you pick up the toddler across town
under the giant mushroom
content is secondary to structure
parasitic fungi comes from the Latin
11 DOWN: water bird (and author of today’s quote)
“community is physical / community is activity”
but the stakes have grown too abstract to consider
scrotox buttums
(like they talked about in special pregnancy aerobics)
(untranslatable)
but i think it means everything and its opposite
when perspective turns languid
propose a study to teach dogs the meaning of Thursday
promise terrapins airlifts over the expressway
discover a cure for the common cold feet
pretend you’re (in) a smooth flat rock
you are so not the captain of your ship
perhapsing
dry goods became wet badd
and boll weevils kidnap your best cotton blouse
stare in order not to see
safety off, finger on escapism
please stand for the chewing of the tablet
is it your nature to comply with the collective?
wanting someone over you can mean one of two things
learn to love yourself
or learn to love the you in me
(instant other!)
so i’ll see you soon unless i see you first
and all that pisseth
there, i said it
and that’s not all: free lawn and literary analysis
dabbler!
b(u)y the book
content and the winter of its discontent, or
voting with your feet
or: when a severance doesn’t deliver
how to survive in woods, thrive in hoods, and live in should-free moods
be your own pull-out prize
and check your safety deposit box
(password: hibernants)
without spraining your bed
do the math not the mythology
fill me up or use me up
growth is always compromised for the sake of security
like oafs on sofas
the youngest people live in the oldest buildings
in a master/grasshopper relationship
couple or cope
crowbar or no
eyevery morning i wake up in the shape of a quonset hut
life sucks. death exhales. life sucks. death exhales. etc.
think about that for awhile
inspiration is developed through a discipline of attention
“don’t read the quote, BE the quote”
and i made a sheep from wax
science is our ignorance expanded, art our ignorance made lovely
one might begin: lamp, roses, junk drawer
to build a house first build a half-way house
or one might begin not at all
the future that is yet to be can only hope to return to it’s former glory
had you not been born, your photo would have sufficed
the “use” of “technology” is “freeing” as you can see
my life was great up until last year, wrote the toddler
then i realized you’re just words in my head
as if we’re not hands of each other
i wonder what would happen if you boiled a saucepan of gasoline
(children left unattended should have their big person stricken)
(children left unattended will be towed at owner’s expense)
necessary to but not sufficient for
you should head on over
let’s collaborate. i’ll make up a word, you make up the meaning: gnifikabod
means: charged with premeditated apple spackling. or
a cap with earflaps
or a dandy sprat (those purple socks!)
or: the best way to keep from . . .
vignetting
(ok, bad example)
it doesn’t make sense, i know, but it’s still your turn
omphaloskepsis = navel contemplation. or
sneaking a sniff of those obscene-looking loufahs. or
a chain of petting zoos
(not the drive-thru kind)
is only as strong as its weakest lynx
but last night the Lynx defeated the Thunder with Mumford throwing in 14
sudden bursts of silence
as i give in to the requests to “show us your Noble Piece Prize”
but still i hear: “puns for poetry”
cause thralldom
just like you, one of these things belongs together
symptoms include: a hard focus, simplicity, and seeing things all in one plane
there’s my dog, two friends, and just enough mashed potatoes
to keep the developers from subdividing our subdivision
a lull wind, a nevered mind
famine and plague with a Disney overlay
dreams from the local dreamery
the outside in a nutshell
a swamp with oceanic feelings
attempts to nauseate and is quite successful
isn’t that right, Mr. Arroyo?
what is the city from which you are of
one man’s gully is another man’s vale
but a rock is the same thing all the way through
this soot was alive only days ago
send us boats or send us coffins stop
so you should, we all should, join the anti-dilapidation movement
or at least donate your body for ship ballast
in the hollows we save the mules first. they get their own smudge pots
trading sense for sensation
i.e. free drinks with “us” understood
until a certain value fatigue sets in
real men sell cookies
as part of the persecution plan
send me a list what you’ll need under the black sky
but no more blue-green chilies
i’m counting on you to be a “vortex,” a real “for the person of letters” kinda gal
i can’t read but i can write

*to get. to take. to forage for to take*
elide elude infect inflect

yeah, write like that
(if you want to slow the text, press #)
on the order of froth containment
i’m not dead, just inconveniently discorporated
this can’t end here and sure enough it doesn’t
i’m always thinking nor can i stop laughing
the possum empties its pocket and inserts a gnat
(an italicized lie)
while the fever warns you’re melting from the inside out
on an uninhabitable island
an ostrich opens an oyster and slides it down
(an italicized AND BOLDFACE lie)
we’re only on page 36 but this could be the key to the whole thing
not gatekeeper, but gate
while we’re waiting
i speak in order not to hear myself keep silent
i nibble the scab on my lower lip. it disappears
then, suddenly, back at the ranch
Vladimir looks up from his lunch
tilting his head back reduces the chin count to a mere three
howdy thar pardner is this whar we *carpe diem*
he’s taking it one game at a time
he’s eating in his clothes
perhaps it’s protocol where he comes from
(maybe if he’d been held a little more as a child. or a little less.)
he’s a gang of ones
he wants to fly. he wants bubbles in his bones
he’s a little fish and he’s the river
i think it has to do with a calendar of bananas
we were happy to provide him the delusion he so desperately needed
but he will never . . . no wait, years later he actually does
rule with an ironic fist
gradumacate with an edumacation degree
they learned that, except for the phallic-hearted, reality is socially constructed
a story is a nonstop
though a comma is a snag
a house poses as shelter (it’s determined solitude)
a hermetic container
that helps us look away
otiosely
from the pulsing light
we escaped! but returned the next day, bored and tired
velocity at rest
yearning like a paperweight in a confetti storm
the plan is to sit here and watch all the things that will never happen
(this line intentionally left blank)
live shadows in a dead yard
leaning against the scenery
saggy bean plants
reminding me of my childhood
one big outdoor kitchen where the mouth
of an impresario shibboleth-freak
surds
and recently i got a handshake i’m ok with
like the business end of a lizard
these kids today
one of the daughters of one of the presidents
flubbed Golgotha in the puzzle today
eats life-size bread, in bed
i bet she did. i bet she got right up and performed
her did things stayed done
like an anchor on a sinking ship
back from after
i aggravated my condition
the gastrocatastrophy
turns out it is impossible for two objects to occupy the same space
she flies, lights out
she puts the pant in pants
(e)yes (e)yes!
take a glance at my rhyme aslant
gothic as a bat
if your aunt had balls she’d be your uncle
(we’ll call him Lonny)
as a child she made forts by draping blankets across the tombstones
up’n’at’m patterns
pretending to
portend
worst: a case of scenarios
maps of where she’s going without you
that is was difficult to understand
(wait, come back! it was on upside down! i can fix it!)
(and the sun was in my eyes)
an excellent exodus
i’m quite certain that thought never came anywhere near my head
hot air rises (though we feel it shouldn’t have been down there to begin with)
there’s a spittle in the air
don’t say i didn’t warn you
what is, is big. what isn’t, is bigger
i grew up with towers posing as trees
in a bedroom community in the uncanny valley
when i fall
it sets up a reverb
klaxons ah-ooh-gah
wackiness triumphs
goose bump
just thinking about the old twitch and squeeze
uncles tighten their avuncular cannons
we interrupt this nightmare-to-go
live, from your back porch
up from slobbery
i wash my face until there’s nothing left but a slick nothing
then i drink a little sake for sake’s sake
(i’d like more wine. i’d like a cigarette. is there a pool? only here two more days.)
if i have to read one more “inner landscape” poem i may resort to napalm
(if you’re going to get wet you might as well go swimming)
temptation comes in two forms only: the past and the future
voices inside you
cut you a new stump
by which we’re roped, doped, and branded
by The Lanyard Group
arguing how to pronounce T-E-A-R
flinching, a victim of diction
then brushing their teeth in the ocean
so? what’s the bfd? who hasn’t?
100 mathematicians, fractalologists actually
want to be a fellow here
sent me their bios
as abundances of arrogances
former members of Noon Bucket
try out their acoustic brainpan
tree the lake
(if you want birds, plant berry trees. if you don’t want birds, cut them down)
plow a fine line between a garden
he did not because his mother did not. though his father did
some seeds so small no use wasting valuable dirt to cover them
whatever gave you that idea? from looking at yourself?
“this place is a past hole,” says Haywood
then Haywood espied the nightlarks
there must be a real trilobite in this rock
Haywood continued
rearranging the disarrangement
on other days he follows other paths
this passage evokes Emerson and then it evokes suspicion
i am me because my favorite chair holds my impression
i believe in the odd shim, set to heterodox
i promised not to look at her any more than was strictly necessary
by this method Mrs. Pearson is teased out of her nest
i heard you still had some star dust on you. mind if i look
for the host organism
at the very least
has cracked feet
and for some reason doesn’t think very highly of the worms that live inside him
caution: don’t kill him, he’s irritating enough as it is
he’s just dying to be a martyr
as in all markets, a hungry mangy angry
with no lack of incentive to bop you with its bopper
let the games, despite the protests, begin
without naming. better to guess little by little
with groupings of 26 well-known symbols
somewhere in here i have to say something about gooseflesh
to play the poem press play the poem
do you sell banjos or accordions? no? hmm, i guess i’ll have to use a viola
because i want to and because i can
in a minute, i’ll tell her a thing or two, when i’m ready
with an apology and restitution to the baby hawklets
the line that was wrong there i moved to here
i set out to find the center of the universe. . . . . wow, that didn’t take long
but which came first (really wanting to know): kings or cheese?
neurosis is a neurosis is a neurosis
imperfection, i has it
i’ll ride it to the end even if i have to write it
if only i find it funny, that’s enough
my eye tic for your ear tug
obo
a white page in a gilded age
that angel keeps screeching, we must be doing something wrong
it’s like we’re stuck in different traffic together
would someone please tell me how free i am
relieving ourselves with governed pleasures
doesn’t really work for me
and as your friend i must say: your lips chap
you better destoke that fire
(signature wound?)
i love anything that twirls
my britches, like a raft on a dry river
what would i do if i were serious
there are things to contemplate: fish that never learned to crawl
and wouldn’t it be colorful if birds crossbred like dogs
strained purposelessness
it was that same myrtle of turf that told me i’d never make it as a left-hander
everybody made predictions and everybody else ignored them
the act of simultaneously yawning and stretching will be called pandiculation
ho hum affairs
(‘ho’ here is just another labored metaphor)
she said he said have you ever
how could they spare her to be in an ecstasy
a pair of red suspenders seen running down the tracks
oh well, one less thing
understanding isn’t enough? understanding may be plenty
i’m not your resource and you’re not my queen
please let me believe that people aren’t puppets
hey y’all, i’m here to tell y’all what all’s wrong with y’all
immature or stupid either way you’d be right
say what? did you say yewts? did you say
knuckle crackers
when pressed, flatten
like Jasper. going home, he comes home and says nothing. 's why it's home
though the new neighbors keep trying to unstrange him
born as stubs, now fully stubborn
they just don't like the opening lines of his (unpublished) memoir:
mules lumbering along the crowded marinas send me into reverie
they're cuter than a cup full of puppy
they pitch their tents on houseboats
christened with names like Den of Obliquity
snug in their smug
the historical society would not approve a castle for our aquarium
in search of indifference and things-as-they-are
my point?
Jeffrey C. May is a Certified Indoor Air Quality Professional (CIAQP)
clearly the guilty party
bedangled with sponge and onion print
if not for the pistol i wouldn't know who i am in this picture
and stucky hair
like Parson Brown
a big-eyed bird settles on my shoulder, thinks my eyes are windows
she said i could call her Jane Doe-Eyes
together we do a sweet-ass mocker
Exhibit A:
who-cooks-for-you, who-cooks-for-you-all?
what with all that air and water and food, my throat is properly confused
who does your inferential processing and comprehension of idioms
at the shin-kicking contest
living literal vignettes
with a loan-to-own
i got you a birthday present, but i drank it. it was good. maybe i'll buy it again
i have a box of laxatives here but i'm trying to ignore them. we'll see
doubtful i can unuse dinner
only habit can break habit
(you can starve a parasite but it has to starve you first)
only 99 more exceptions and we'll prove the point
everything is flavored wild strawberry
wee, monyafeek!
very very extraordinary
it's odd in a strange way and that's unusual these days
even out by the old Truly place
it smells like mushrooms and everyone looks like they want to hurt me
the swamp was full of cacti in my dream
like a very depressing Lego scene
toy satellites orbit an ant farm
everything boiling over!
i'm just thankful i no longer care
there's a body living underneath my skin
like bobbleheads on a dashboard
you should see all the cool people i hang out with and how much they like me
like bucks rubbing a tree
i must needs be alert
pinpoint the illusion that there is no illusionist
hey, wake up or close your eyes
turns out the stuff we make up is exactly as boring as the truth
(which is more of a comment on me than on truth)
just apocalyptic scooterists
just workable emotional units
caked in their own bodies
ready with readouts
trying to radio the plover over the lake
i stood outside my own body and beheld myself as from a seagull's perspective
dead w/o a caw
do you feel me
via the tuft
of armpit hair
still hoping for consciousness outreach
i was surprised to find that my head has a seam
while you're up there can you raise the center beam?
we need to make room for 146 of those rhyming sonnets (give or take a line)
i'm afraid the previous bird tried to fuse the familiar and the dramatic
breaking the hourglass into sandy seconds
we have tons of static and rubber bands
simulating the pressures of gravity and orbit
we can help you reach your goal: a living stretching mass in tension
we’re the best because none are better! (i.e. we’re all the same)
do you have that woozy quoozy feeling?
don’t think of it as a zoo, think of it as home
try this: close your eyes and jump. . . no, i mean for real. sit me down and try it
the time for refrant is past
i hear you knocking
like a deep-space boojum
but i may have been hearing my own ear
people think i’m a good listener when really i just like to be talked at
do you need a place to sit and unscrew your head?
are you such a doofus?
remain calm, hindsight is on the way
“What did I do in the War, you ask?” he answered
do you know what an evolutionary cavist is?
it’s David Hume peering into his own window, solemnly deciding he isn’t home
(while sabbaticaling i took the Darwin re/creation cruise)
i know what needs to be done now
shrug like us, give up, and quit shaking the nest
then it’s on to the gun show to look for a loophole
y’all ready, already? yes, we’ve been being ready already
thy merit hath my duty strongly knit
we await your dingle
and your name is Skippy. sit down, Skippy
quit running around looking for your head
and never interrupt your analyst
all toes enough stepped on
if there is a problem it’s the confusion. if there’s not a problem it’s the confusion
a tackle box where your heart should be
i want to see you just enough to know you are gone
in truth i’m soaring very low today
i’m a fever of myself
go away and leave me a loan
let me be, let me boil
very nervously indeed
i introduced Nantucket Briar to Honey Soft Wheat
said sorry i’m late but my septic tank exploded and i had to wash my hair
apparently it happens all the time, i just never noticed until today
i’m making this up as i get along
is that you and is that how you hold your horses?
would you like to buy a wax sheep?
you’ll never have to feel less than special again/immediacy and force overcame clarity
and in the sky a great Hugga Nuggum
i thought i was convinced but i was connived
out of my water softener
through a fog of disrememberment
i rose early thinking of all the erasing i had to do
the sea and empty are beautiful places
how we got lost: you followed me, but i was following you
i remember that sky that night
(the smell of wood burning should be in a museum)
i blame it on the storm chasers’ hard-ons
desolate is the hat on which the cat sat
the house got gone and Champ got dead
they’re calling it The Scrapture of 08
thank you very much. good night. complete night.
the tune stopped and so did the room
our summer lying on the ground in fragments
and here’s the epiphanic part
the snow geese are melting
(some birds won’t but some birds will)
lividity suggests death is not the cause
comfort failed! who would have thought that it would fail?
storm drains clog with the dead or dying
don’t cry. don’t shed your little tears. when you do i start to feel something
something moving underneath
depends on who’s tugging
the sunny side of life
every time i get there it’s time to leave
not quite hope just less less
perceive a lack? go blonde!
begging for innuendo
i don’t want to believe you are a pencil but you leave me no choice
the evening stitched together with slug tracks
can nothing improve my negative thinking?
she doesn’t say everything has gone out of me. it has, but she doesn’t say it
on the bright side i’m less constantly farty
how can we arrange everything so that everything is barely noticeable
like monads
under your dress whites
your leak is leaking
every time you smack the lake
with your mangle stick
my temperature does a blindfold pitchfork furnace grippe
who are you in love with? me?
i salivate, self-imaginate
the Jungian tail wagging the Pavlovian dog
(he shoots he scores, nothing but nylon, bottom of the ninth)
you’re a big Fakey McFakerson
the smell of swimming is on your lips
made from watermelon concentrate
not bad, not bad at all
the wind winds and winds
the Great Lakes in general and Loch Ness in particular
where Fiona is a fern frond
because perspective is different from perception
oh wow, your well is really deep
you cure me. like a ham
i’m trying to not let ideas get in my way
did i say that out loud?
my interior surrounds me
sitting smoking on a dock
i do this i do that
suddenly i am veery sleepyg
beyond being such a troubled boundary
the salt is rough and the water is rocky
it’s difficult to breathe, unaccustomed as we are to a lung full of words
and i’m sure i speak for the entire human race when i say it
(is this thing on?)
have you ever seen fish pee?
i thought you’d never ask
[he waits]
it’s quiet. yeah, a little too quiet
hardly a recipe for life expectancy
i feel like we’re swimming behind a whale that’s eating a krill taco
and i’m not just cat and mousing you
i plan my work and work my plan
i think what we need are more ‘haves’
fate is so iterating
dragging us down by our own bootstraps
my body’s things have become ungovernable
the plumbing may not make it through the night
when i zip my door the pressure makes my window fly open
every inlet has at least two outlets
so make it quick, i’m late for my next conspiracy
and the rain is loose
like a permanent tooth pulled from the root
it pounds down. pound! pound! the wound and the sound of it are round
i think Marta’s blasting a new tunnel
but say picnic three times real fast
and think of the catapult as public transportation
sounds like a plan
is a scheme a vision
that was a rhetorical
and doesn’t need a question mark
is there empathy outside of grammar?
are we just a skeleton of vowels fleshted out with consonants?
demand more than people offer
try to touch your eyelids mid-blink
you’re it!
imagine not being attacked by all the shoes in your closet
there, doesn’t that feel better?
do you promise never to bring a gun to group again
if no, shake your or my head
he pulled the answer right out of his question but
too late . . . hornets
one out, one in, one on
and their obnoxious fans
we used to turn the snow machine on them to shut them up
rock stars with tambourines
session for Peter and the Principles
whom i’m no longer afraid to swat team
or nonchalantalize
or talk about with my potty mouth
(i do from time to time forget my manners)
or life-lesson, or lethalize, or even hug
say to others what you want said to you
like a massive buddy system
all of us are at least partly flight attendants
with free pot stickers
providing less than ideal emotional service
while remaining gluten-free
is a laudable sentiment
my contractor is going through another growth spurt
his hair’s pretty funky, but he’s already married
he has always just finished setting out (for the hills? fresh-baked pies on doilies?)
he is the rath! or rather, the rathest!
let’s celebrate with even bigger nuts
with Granny Smith and the other green vegetables
(ex: Texas paw-paws)
oh, this? this is my tail. isn’t that what you wanted?
the reinvention of the wheeeeeeeeeeeeeee phernalia
disburdens
the ladies in admin are gonna be jealous
and with a trophy case potentially full
secreted discreetly
he took one best left untook
where there’s a willfulness there’s a waywardness
he’s expected to offer a full contradiction
making the sleepy sleepier
smooth, courteous lies will set you free
“this vehicle obeys all traffic regulations”
well it seems elephants can’t be shut up
about not forgetting
i take their fervor as a warning
we need to choose weaker enemies
something about mastery or history or something
making the leap to knows too much
ever take the same shower twice?
does the Pope shit in the woods?

oy
do you have that scripted feeling?
and still not sure you washed your hair?
surely you're not saying i've anything to do with what passes through my head

mugwumpery
knows little of affection but much of affectation
these are love-tap warnings
you could take me to lunch. i like lunch
and chuckles
you only have to tell me once. after that it's just reminders
corner is just around the senility
look at your watch when i'm talking to you!
it's night on earth what time is it there?
i saw your knees on the subway but couldn't get a signal to call you
am i keeping you up
in a storm of undecidability
i couldn't sleep but here come a few seconds
i'm too smart by half
and thirds
i haven't seen you in weeks! (my plan is working)
as today's vision begins with a spork
your hobby is hatching in my pocket
they're applying stucco to the Hump-n-Go
(the brick isn't red red, it's more of a brick red)
i'm attacked by bed bugs
send reinforcements. or more women
quoting passages from Freud
i own 16 cups but only use one
the size of Vancouver
just think of the miscellany!
sounds true, looks familiar
but from you i expect better: gossip! or at least philosophy
in the shape of a mask with a speech hole
napkin rings, ostensibly
an exploit scenario
an eligible bachelor goes out hunting and returns with a dear on a leash
he done gone and got hisself a hankering
if he became stout later he’d be sorta impressive which he did and which he was
think: jalopy

lingeaux-des-rues
a carny call
from the Lord of Righteous Carnage
five dead things living, two seriously
kicking all hell else loose
be accused, be amused, whatever
or you can wait for tomorrow to go away
but don’t miss this month’s Family Guide To Porch Talk
when we talk about Dude Baby’s new book
“come home, the eggs are breaking”
it’s going to be the future soon
under the torque wrench of humananity
“i’m not much of a beer drinker” means “i have a still in the basement”
i’ve never felt so much alike
here i am up in the air drinking a bloody mary. i wish nothing mattered all the time
three sheets to the wind, sailing away
on the effect of its effect
i can smell the beach, or at least tilapia frying
i can hear med students on spring break giggling about “St. Peter’s Basilica”
when done right, no can defense
gummy bear or paper cut
somebody call somebody
i’m afraid at any minute one of us will find my behavior ridiculous
all primates have a puberty stage but none as cute as Wayne’s
value added
this could be love
aka can of worms
i could be your secrets’ agent
of all the lovers you take my cake
in my brain your heart is full of me
i don't literally mean literally, obviously
you’re smarter than i thought. or i’m dumber
i’m interested in your take
a union job
a drop in obedience
complete with scabbing ’round the boundaries
a mathematician asserts his specialty: a circle is not a square
two kinds of one or one kind of two. either way
it’s a variety of diversity
under the blue smoke, things are changing
it goes without saying so shut up
something’s humming
somebody’s waiting on a pinot noir. aaaand action!
Honey, have you . . . i’m looking for . . . i thought they . . . seen my bees?
cut! no really, stop
someone’s coming
bad boy from Buffalo
in a muscle shirt
say! that’s me you’re zinging. don’t you see the freckle
like trilliums cross-pollinating with orchids
never take your bedroom eyes into the boardroom
i must warn you, i’m very susceptible to flattery
and sardony
please, not here, everyone will see
how you’ve confused ornamentation with complexity
my rule of thumb is to keep you under it. my rule of finger is to wrap you around it
though i failed the fingernail test
inside me i’m excited
i’ve trained my mind to relieve itself on paper
so this is my poem: dust bunnies, dust bunnies, dance in the night
friends never stop caring what the other is wearing
coffee remains legal
;-)
everything’s gonna be all right
and then there’s me, the exception (my horoscope said i’d be exceptional)
a quivering quail, a quaking quickening
no one drops the ball like me
i woke up from our kiss, i’m sorry
i don’t see how i could feel any stranger
i have a very clear memory of not being there
20 years almost ago
what we don’t know about the mind could fill entire brains
and apropos of nothing
suppose a locomotive
the biggest one i ever saw was dead
just couldn’t take it anymore
not in God’s cards
pulling cars with balls
how was i to know i was a forerunner
it took me years to realize i’m personal
the road to my house is also the road from my house
takes nine months to u-turn
which is not un-dealwithable
once you’re in a leadership roll
you don’t have anything to worry about except stress
(i must have been thinking nuclear waste storage in old Nevada salt mines)
you are the sum of your storage spaces
climb every mountain and yadda yadda your dream
conquer yourself daily
but with a low score
all models are dolls
ash is a crystal
you must study all the carbon variations
youth is fleeting, beauty is fleeting, brain cells are fletting (duh!)
all your old friends are older and marrieder
closing their kissy eyes, slowly leaning their nuzzly heads, getting comfortable
26 days seems like a lifetime to a fruit fly
history too takes a long time (to tell us about the present)
isn’t it romantic?
and this must be that hill from “over the” fame
all i need is a rope, some salt, and a volunteer
Mr. Broccoli, you’re very sweet like an old puppy
who refers himself to his interlocutor
stalk into florets like brain stem into dendrites
come to think of it, i’ve never actually seen a single one of my internal organs
not dumb, just too numb to think
of that word
to flunk: [v.] fracasar. (Yo am almost fracasaring)
upon the lotus throne
we desperately need to establish our . . . what? our what?
by when and by what miracle?
send us your answer and we'll include it in the next newsletter
Orthography is Destiny
flooded with examples cut loose from their points
one could argue Gilligan’s Island over Finnegans Wake
wait, said the pig. none of us have wings and we’re all fat
but this featherless bird has learned to fight
Galapagos is a word that often comes to mind
along with hearth, earth, heart, ear, hear and art
i can’t believe i’m telling you this
i parked my car in the clouds and when the sun came out i couldn’t find it
it could be the chigger’s prickly heat
but as you can see i snapped out of it. thanks much for the Rumi-balm
another word for obsession is focus
turned all arseways
sinking in the hooks
i’m very impressed and a little frightened that you know what annealing means
your thoughts stain and that’s what we want
today is vinegar-poot orange. for those without synasthesia - it’s Wednesday
or arrowheads with springs attached
replacing yesterday’s misconceptions with today’s is not always an advance
hey, my avatar stopped working. what the?
i don’t usually speak ill of the dead but might make an exception in your case
bad taxidermy makes even worse art
the air was getting to me. i realized i was just sitting in it
we’re all victims of who we are
the fresh dirt is a dead giveaway
or, as the tree said to the lake, birds are words
and the ear is the sea in its other form
in the way that penguins “fly” when they swim
i’m considering moving to the future where
wishes are kisses

*ex perturbatio*

to heckfire and back
codgers in lodges
pretending to be mad
i turn all the fit-pitching over to you
up to 1500 lumens
i can’t believe we thought avocado would save us when all along it was arugula
i feed flashlights the night
and though fire is not my favorite element, i’ve grown to appreciate it
that and hairy yellow succulents (*pilose xanthous sedum*)
i’m a denizen and i know my rites
in the big bad *grand mal* scheme of things
both consciousness and the unconscious collect
here’s where the wedge of chance comes in
the luxe of flux
you can’t go back and advise your ancestors who to have sex with
but i’m heading north looking for the source of the chill in my bones
too many rules to have time for irony
he kept saying he didn’t know what to say
tomorrow the sun did still pop up
(atta pepper!)
activating meaning-makers you didn’t know you had
metaphors are puns tied to the train tracks
like toast on a turtle
that wasn’t what i wanted to say, but
speed covers loss
in many ways this is a book about you and what you can tolerate
flying in your face
try to like *something*
craving out a niche
i think my heart broke. serves it right, trying to scare me like that
i was the driver of the other tractor
and a sigher of sighs
the farmer didn’t see but now she says she sees
the spider inside her
and just to confirm the information we have in our records
do you have lima beans the size of kidneys
we’re taking a poll. have you ever used the word “rancor” in a conversation?
where were you on the night Ken stole my dairy diary?
at any time did your face leave your body?
did you get that charming tat when you were in Pucklechurch Prison?
it’s so nice to finally put a name on your face
and not just your breasticles
that is your face, right?
(don’t say what you’re really thinking say anything i can do)
munching minimuffins at the rocking-chair-a-thon?
(top prize was a gravy pouch)
has anything happened since?
i was told the bathroom had to be redone
since you throughput, i mean
do you deny the lie?
(not answering is one of the luxuries)
bubbles only look random
and now, here’s everything we’re leaving out
snakes love curves
you’re my favorite red herring
and you know what? i’ll tell you what
you’re my entire reason for living (weeknights from 8 to 8:30)
you’re the best dog brother a boy could ever have
but whose arms are these?
look, they’re joined at the hands
and what is it about the apparition of these faces?
that flows like a bee between flowers
if you don’t have words, use a costume
consider your apologies accepted and your flattery disregarded
besides, magniloquent logorrhea bloviates
like a battle skimming across combatants
and are you here for the confront or the inflict?
for the drive-thru dentistry or the brownies?
are you like me and sometimes get the oppressors confused
you’re pranged
there is no pain in general, only this blistering on these arms
a fever is a burning tongue
retracting from reaching out to you
if i cry will you feel better?
i keep forgetting
about your dermis
whether it's hypo or hyper. either way
a reckoning provokes
you're not the boss of me and why
there's a horse for every course
i need for you to do me a favor
send your househusband to get us some turnips
it's not enough we're happy, others must be made miserable
"faster," said Cerutty, “it's only pain”
do you have a concept of violently beautiful?
why would you ask that
i saw weeds and thought nothing. i saw an empty shelf - oh beautiful weeds!
there's something to be said for prickers and that's ouch
and prunes? how many of you like prunes?
did you pluck them?
marinated in rain and smoked all summer
what i lack in taste and quality i make up for in ostentation and quantity
gazillion is a real word and each each each arriving on my neck
but i gave holy hell back to them
potent and leggy
dervishes
butt strutting
in a hamster ball
migrating species stop to read the signs
this road is not taking you where you want to go but where you must go
please stay away from the peacefulness please
cda shda wda
ha ha, just sit back, there's nothing you can do
we have split up the hairs and you don't get any
it's raining. it's still raining. did i mention it's raining?
i swear by all that is green in me
meat eaters eat salad eaters
animals can hear the sounds of anything they can eat, or that can eat them
yet and still this bird feels peckish
i want go home
mouthing off
meet me tonight at the cowshed
(teeth allow creatures to eat things bigger than their mouths)
there's a long line at the bird feeder
with no reservation
this is a play for 2048 voices. each character gets one line
but lots of directionality
with wherewithal
Sisyphus and Icarus walk into a bar
havoc wrakers
carried beyond by the stumble
go ahead on