TOWARD A TERMINAL ZONE

by

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ABSTRACT

Now I have the opportunity to write the grand preface, I find I have too much to say, and so, again, it's easier to want to say nothing. The poems here want to give some pleasure, to anyone who cares to take it from them. The poems to come, the terminal zone itself, what I have been moving toward and into, in both poetry and painting, will not give pleasure. But here, for the moment, are some of the notes recorded on the way. They have involved that kind of feeling-in-sleep one experiences when one must rehearse old voices, surrounding voices, unheard voices, in order to find from the many sounds around us that one strong enough to sing.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

BLEW OINTMENT
CANADIAN FORUM
DELTA
EL CORNO EMPLUMADO
PRISM INTERNATIONAL
TO EVERY THING THERE IS A SEASON

LE CONSEIL DES ARTS DE QUEBEC
THE CANADA COUNCIL
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these trees let
no light through: you
within, looking,
cast the shadow I
walk through, no
surprise in your
eyes
CONSPIRACY

we use my fear of losing you
to legislate the loss:

if the bed is naked & the killing
done

no kisses for the corpse
whichever one
THE JAPANESE GARDENS

the garden

the architect knew the weather would
tips touching
edges
their colors echo
scales of delight the wind derives
in the sky, also
of the pond the waterfall ringing
place where peace is!
il faut savoir que tout rime
& they never learned to steer
praised the devils of death & dragons
such as
papillon hirondelle amour

2

the garden

laced with leaves winter placed
has,
overlapping this
the earth & rocks
the center of the search for
soul, the branches & boughs that are
the scales of the fish, the waves
unimagined weightlessness . . .

sd wols from his beach at cassis
the asiatics are warring people
scorned water
unsuitable questions
or the butterfly me?
the garden

on the ground with a care
one near one so:
brown to gold

drives from
on the scales of the rock
where each to each the spaces ring:
not peace
their boats, they knew powder & fire
& often asked
was it I
dreamed the butterfly?

the great winds rage

to the hollow caves
of earth
THE REVELATION

on the screen fly the trees of fish/
their shadows drift
into light
& form the feet of those

who would not miss them:
a slide, a drift
into lights & darks that are
flight
fish
the woman kneeling

before her mirror:
these
no less than
anna blume/for she blooms
relentlessly
as the dada voice intones
another dimension
of things which are
infinity
cosmos
light.

there is a season
unlike a photograph
or a slide
that glides
before the eyes of the country awaiting
its own damnation.

o let the shadows move into the light:
the sky shall bleed no longer/for
the things we see
are the things we are.

o let the true trees bloom: the sky
is a science of eyes.
AN ESKIMO LINE

I could not sleep
for the sea lay so smooth
near at hand

as she, beside me in the yellow bed,
turned to the sea in her dream
with a motion to up/set me
who only wanted sleep
without dreams filled with fish
  swimming
  beneath boats
  filled with fishermen
  harpoons & anchors)

  can it be
the hunter only dreamt he killed
the walrus, the blood on the sea
surface, the angry flippers & hunting
float?

can it be her dream, lit like the lascaux
caves or the sea on a clear day, contained
like the float, a guardian amulet (secret
of transparencies?)

(a friend who lived with the eskimo
was on the ice one day & found
his lamp & heater faulty; far
from any dwelling & without complaint
he kept to his journey. as the clear
ice surrounded him
he cast
no shadow)
AN ALLEGORY OF LOVE

let me disguise you. in my fingers there is the power of the lie. the ballerina relies on the power in my hands, the politician, the dry-cleaner, the registrar. the war in vietnam is also a result of the paint flowing from my fingers, when i walked into the jeweller's & asked if he needed a first-rate embellisher, he sd sure, step in back boy, & let's see what you can do. he handed me a turnip. i made it into a communist star, a nose-ring for sniffing flowers. make me a bracelet, boy, he ordered, while smiling & sniffing the air. i took a thumb tack, stuck it in his eye, walked out & didn't look back.
THE PRISONER DEVoured BY Lice:

who was
once in the ranks of the figures
(to prevent the penetrations of stones)
& missing that sight of you
as the street stopped
I saw

the prisoner of the camp
you were before
the child dwarfed
  the image
  the man became.

you couldn't see
the eyes of the image
that made you
in my eyes become
  what you never
  were.


2

uncertain the reason you
should appear/at this
the moment the child
wakes

not the noise of the fugue
not the noise
alone in a dark room
the child remembers not
the name

but the figure
of the prisoner devoured
by lice;
Auschwitz (awakens no
memory)
but the figure, there
somewhere he cannot see
him, stands still
within
the frame of the photograph.

the reason when abandoned
the toy becomes
the image of the killer.

he must be here
there
if you know
where I don't
know
the place
of which I speak.

still.
he cannot be in the half-awake
cry of the child
nor in the stillness
of the cobblestones.

various voices contend
one of which you
or the child
is.

3/expectations

the beasts arrive
through doors the fortune's
ear, attended
attending/the stones must
turn, for love or
fire.

"eye & ears of the great
king waiting"
accident the sign for the racing sirens
cut are the red lights blink in the blaze of the air
faces turn, the figure descends
the circular stairs.

"or the shape, then, of color & restlessness"

"cet oubli du reve apres le sommeil
this dream of love I awake in
n'est pas plus extraordinaire que
being at all times present
ce qui a lieu dans l'etat de veille
can enter at any point
ou l'on ne se rappelle pas a la fin
the language making
de la journee la centieme partie des pensees
the real reference)
qui s'y sont produites" /les reves,
hervey de saint
denys

yr figure framed in the window of the store
delivers the corpse
covered by thinnest snow
to the stones turning
in the tides on the shore

& the child crying
from the roof of the room
to the toys aligned by the farthest wall
encounters the prisoner
devoured by lice

as the beasts attend
at the door
faces raised
police lights piercing.
(a statement: inevitable surrender of the intellect becomes the invisible connective, measure of things to come. for we walked away then, unaware that a year later the memory of you could ever be a source of confusion. the 3 voices by which I hoped to reach you: all false)
FOR ESTHER

the probes a portfolio of prisons necessary to renew the pain that gives direction. it's true, there's no outer & inner, of space or form: a peace, not beyond, or within, but consuming. the tree is not on space but in space. there is something larger & still no distance from it or to it to be travelled. so her face against the wall is not yet hers, gives way to faces too large & familiar for us to notice the pale form balancing on the edge of space, its direction subject to the whims of a madman's breath. (a moon must harvest & hunt.)

the hospital itself is like a disease, proud enough to be contagious. she had seen its tower in films, in the eyes of poets & petty officials, on the walls of the forgotten city. the walls are mirrors revealing films. they play in slow motion to the speed of our eyes, silent. the day she asked him, if you don't believe me, who will, he turned to the wall where her mirror seemed to be, & the tower beyond it began to topple,
the many forms of the movie to melt. we tried to dress her in white, make her into the bed, but she jumped from the window. the doctor's smile had flowers in it that spoke greek. the nurse knew nothing yet.

2 someone told her never to bow to nature. the dog understood everyone. the car was stolen, the flag lowered from the totem, the dog pissed on the grass. a yellow streak appeared in the blue sea below the cliff. when a boundary changes its shapes both sides move together. the totem began to reveal its forms.

two motorcycles, both black, side by side on the partly yellow prairie, both covered by the same transparent plastic. they were going to south america via new york & mexico, they said. the moon rose as if from blood & the northern lights played phoenix.

3 as the stone is circled with white the night is. we are
permitted disguises & blessed for being fools. the paradox is real. the skill of the undivided stems from this: there is nothing to be established.

the night she came with her dog & her pregnancy, all of us dazed with sleep or the lack of it: our dreams interchanged, the highways crossed & fused, the landscape around us new & unexpected. the high beams made shadows larger than ourselves. like her we became hitch-hikers, moved into the bewildering maze of freeways & exits, lights flashing on & off the demanding signs that led into the cities across the continent. america europe north africa all the dreams they expected to live they had already lived: dreams in which each word exploded viciously: the dum-dum bullet tearing flesh finds cells & glands invisible to the scalpel that follows, compounding damage. at death their dreams are studded with shrapnel & knives: the hospital donates them to victory square & the lonely drifters.
the desperate dancing: pale image of the rose decaying
in harsh overhead night light at dawn. all things emerge/
in the terror of changes. the contour at last defining
the impossible monument, the unbearable contact. pitiless
walls betraying their builders: sad architect, sage
architect, tenants confused at the end of the month.
insatiable mystics pursuing stones. newsie helpless in
his lack of cunning to account for the missing dimes.
the professor saying you can't change the world. the
radio accounts for the missing killers. they left a note
saying the world can't change the professor. he's in
the bathroom with the radio looking for the dial. this
useless & pointless knowledge: there's nothing to steal
that doesn't belong to you, nothing to give that is yours.
the totem is a motorcycle twisted in the tree.

to protect themselves from the enormous drain of energy)
the radio cannot rape everyone but rapes all it can.
eventually the softness of the machine may find us,
murmur over & over into our ears the latest scores as we squirm. the mouth consuming the skull to form enormous words, lips large as twin jelly fish, the words blurred with a speed of intention the lips cannot match. a naked electric throat threatening (the victims sacrifice one another in advance

5 a dark presence shadows them, limned with fire: a dark cushion of comfort. a certain strength is taken from that empty space to make it a changing shape. do they realize where their integrity lies. they seem to have made a journey through the city of night. perhaps they stand at the outskirts, behind them the holocaust of lights, & face the vague surreal plain seeming to end at the horizon, the space between them a liquid shape with all of the colors of the city in it. somehow they do not know where they are, as if the dancing horizon ends in their fingers, & the sensation of holding everything they have ever had makes them uncomfortable. a telescope could place them, a pincer of light, perhaps even one of the search beams that continuously circle the city at night; but the light never descends far enough to show their bodies are knit by the dancing shape between them.
TO WILL IS TO STIR UP PARADOX

1 the bridge

to be a craftsman
even on this bridge
which if I walk in one direction
moves in the other
is the naked
skill of suicide.

the boats, tethered to the water
barely move with the waves
whereas the masts
sway in the wind
& slowly
the tide moves in.

the birds are floating
below the bridge
on air, on water
the darkness makes
them one.

the sun
a neon sign
is the new
hieroglyph/the one
sacred, hard
to understand;
at night it burns
naked & red, as around it
turn
the galaxies of
the dead.
2 circles

the whole naked & vast
flower
of the tree stands still
as my eyes
move.

beyond the rim the fortress speaks
to the bird of night from whose wings
fall the seeds of the flower.
    (as one will / as one can)

winters in their turn
are the nights of seasons
lit with the signs
of linear streets

(reading Maximus
    from Dogtown
    I am at a loss

lost too

in other excavations
I can only see
the streetlights curving
above the chasms.

action grows
between memory & desire
    between the root
    & the branch
the living
fire.

the bridges in the city are the lines
& the lines the echoes of fictional feet
are feet, the cat's paw gliding
the breath
returning.
there is an order:
over the sea, whether east
or west
over the land, north
or south
the 1st command, the 1st city
calls me / to obey.

carver of argilite
to the hands of yr body
argus-eyed
hunt in the forest
the stone totem
hunt in the tree stone
the black of the forest
the black of the night.

the camera turns
to the grandfather waiting
the boy's return from the coastal shore.

naum gabo wrote: I do not experience
any of the fear
of the dark forces in
nature
primitive man
saw & experienced.

/the tide revealed
the block of wood
aerated by worms,
where their bodies formed
the cells of their city
their locus in
the sequence of line/

sculptors of darkness the city fears
the lights of the city in my belly are
smashed/fire
in the water is
splintered, les nenuphars
dark in closing are
broken on
altars in the night
in the silence.
the birth that beauty brings to grief:
strange city, strange time, pride
in the strangeness, uncertain
understandings:

every baby born a bastard
in the metro.

personal history the strangeness I carry
or the stranger who harbours me,
carried through
the silent unmoving tunnels.

where in the metro did I see you falling?
on the steps that spiralled out of sight.

/the monarchs sailing in the air are true
& the birds in the darkness flying/
somewhere in the metro climbing
the stairs, heavily,
as if you had
a rock in yr belly
you fell
sat.

people walked around you without looking
or looking quickly looked away, a woman
with a dog & some flowers came to you,
smiled faintly.
perhaps she thought you were dying
une femme enceinte
I should have kissed you.

the order of blood in the light of
the lamp:
you gave birth, then,
it was written
on the mesh of the cages
of the birds in the dream (the dream
yet to be dreamed
"dogs of blood — flower empty"
all this the north of the eastern land
(no syntax in the trees)
let now the angels of the ailing land
call forth the demons of the sea.

confess the swiftness of the turning earth
with fingers numb before the day
with pain
& words that lie:
neither glorify
nor reduce the glory of.

precision:
open to the darkness of the stars
to the ocean where
the three-legged king
stands in the tide-water
above the floating hair
of the woman.

incision:
in the rocks & the stones
of the cove
forms of the king carved by waves
tombs, fingers,
skeletons from heaven.

decision:
to know the stones & the rocks
cannot deny
the blood of the stars floating
in the rock pool.

rock pool.

moon
island
song
the terror of changes

stone cut/stone cutter/what shall it be
birds or graves?
o cut stone/cutter of stone
that choice is not yours to make
even though
black is the beauty of the brightest day
even as

susan/where art thou?
not somewhere but here, the wind
in the cedars;
o ruth, not here but somewhere
the rain a silver gauze against the grey
hills & valleys

were you not there
the long night waiting, the long
night raining
cythera

put away the notes you have stored/they serve
no longer; put away
those hatreds & jealousies/you
who must believe/must
also love

the birds of night & day white
or black/chickens & pigeons/must
mix
& reverse
colors

within
within the cage of the 4 locations
given me
woven & the one
metamorphosis
of worm to bird/bright orange/a fire
of darkness/its eyes
the boat arrives, only its lights
signify
the luxurious beast
it is (how
many times has it come & gone
how long its movements in
the channel between
the islands/moving further
up the coast
the channel, the deft
weaving
the difficult
passage, the grey mist confuses
the morning with the night, bewilders
the islands
invisible
shadow-islands emerge
paaawwwmmm paaawmmm paaawwwmmm
the waters break, the bones
having worked in the weeks before

take now
this heat/take
now this light

(the soul emerges from the waters as if all dead
red striations, monster
monstrous form

about its neck the ring of day
IMAGE OF CHOICE

(moon island song

distance between the eyes
flesh inside flesh the dream
of the figures they were, the mesh
of cages a grid of light in winter
in night
a chain of caves, o jardin
sous la neige

garden
beneath the snow
nightmare america
eagles feathers painted
white with blood
borders of neon flash
a letter home
home where I was

caged no longer by islands of night
islands of light
moon wind dazzling the ancient eyes

captain vancouver
meets mack the knife
is heroed

is herod
is king

is eater of flesh
is liquid city sucking souls
is killer
of america
indian hunter for sport
lines up targets
against the wall

is black maria believing god
in jello
A SUBJECT IS ANY

a subject is any
thing
a garden green

the wife you know
is a big black bird
some unfamiliar word
like octareen
you'll never know
the meaning of
like whisker (or love

a subject is a big black place
wide enough for the human race
& all the women you want to screw
an umbrella that lets in rain
a pleasure
without a pain

a subject then is anything
beautiful enough
to be impossible
or true enough
to be both

a subject is a big black garden
where the spiders conspire a queen
whose pleasures seem forbidden
but for those who dream

of roses in the garden, of frogs, & bank accounts
of apples, teapots, rabbits
or shadows white & green
or a silver riding horse
beneath a silver moon

or anything else you'd care to see
in the cobwebs of your room
"AND MANY ARE THE DEAD MEN

too silent to be real"
& large is the silence that surrounds
the bleached column of skulls
that marks unseen the living
untongued by desire for death
skull upon skull
eyeless tongueless noseless earless
hollowed of flesh by the preying birds
starved by napalm in montreal streets
they wait for your desire to confess;
many are the dead men silenced by love
building a city with their bones in the earth
knuckles to nucleus spines into spires
their marrow commands a city's belief/
FOR MARC, WHO

damn near died,
you think of that
afterwards
whereas at first
seeing the red mark around his neck
your body freezes
with exploded thought, the mind
with exploded blood

& after the first
impulse to kill
is over

questions no one
can answer, not even
facts or details or motives

beyond those
the imagination
supplies too easily

seeing your son
strung from the rope
as a monumental sign
in a poem you wrote
long ago —

a sign the suffering is everywhere
even in the mind of the child
who forgot
he put a rope
around the neck
of your son
RAINBOW FLAME

the gazoline soul in arcs of flame!
the pool of fire! the sky of blood!
the old man burning! the city lit
with the smell of flesh! the city raw
with mud & glass! feathers & shit!
miracles & madness in the rising fire!
LUNAR SEQUENCE 1

da vinci has it
in a drawing the man extended
feet & fingers to the edge
at times like teeth in an open mouth.

that man is trapped
circles himself
a small child shaping angels
in snow

what passes through his navel is the compass point
what moves him is the knowledge
he must move

his wings:
carved out from snow
lying on his back
or face down
trace dimensions one side of him
will never know

da vinci smiles
his man looks back at him from eyes
just drawn & somewhat
defiant confused/facing god
knows what
doing cartwheels like that
any minute
he might ex­
plode & expire
a firecracker spinning
over the bay

what moves him
muscles in arms & legs
he discovers he has many
he moves & they measure
da vinci smiles again
a circle
each one thinking
he did it
by himself.
LUNAR SEQUENCE 2

these places are marked/fixed with seals
carved, burned, poured, spoken, screwed,
faceless & divine/beware the man who bears no sign.
LUNAR SEQUENCE 3

"Let us look closely
at this shadow
by doing so
we shall divine.
the attitude
of the body
which projects it."
- Henri Bergson

auvers sur oise / toward the birds & worms
the graves of the good brothers
surrounded by regrets
& faded photographs

cohen cawing his mind
also maddened
crow memories

passed by the impossible gates
"with a taste for storms
& none for shelter"

the crows picked out in the sky
the black peaks of a black river

shiny
luminous with rot
condemned to fly
WHAT IT IS

stars
screaming as they fall
the clouded moon making
winks at night
& galaxies playing
an astronomical hide & seek

change nothing/do not
make cars, jets, rockets
or even money / they
"are as they are"

& yet the stars are targets &
the whole cosmos

a

praying finger

that forgets
continously

what it
is
it is a cloak. & of many colors
i am wary / "of Angells
who understand
without discourse"

-Louis Richeome,
The Pilgrime of Loreto,
trans. "E.W." (Paris, 1629)

who is she/she who is
behind me
like a wave, a stone.
a lonesome child.

the lights of the diver
smile from the water
smile from the music
& later i decide

to go outside
to find
the friends over
the bridges as far
as they
go:

the city is a cloak
the color of smoke
the city cannot be
as clear as the sea
orpheus/captive of the shell
she is rising from the sea
i think she will capture me

orpheus/captain of the cargo
she sleeps between us now
while the organ-grinder plays
section forty-three

her formal hands are folding
the bedsheets back for us
a crimson shell is floating
but the music seems enough

if you see her eyes are tempting
our visions back again
tell her we are sailing
to our visions of her then
BOTTICELLI'S BIRDS & FLOWERS

botticelli's birds & flowers
birth & dance
attend her as she passes
hidden in a trance

her black hair spreads behind her
like a black rainbow fan
as yellow birds & flowers
are born from her hands

never ask her lovers
why the silver winds must blow
never ask the river
why her footprints show

like the fossils of a seashell
in silver ice & snow
like answers to a question
no one can know
AN ACCIDENT IS LIKE A DREAM COME TRUE

funny
i could see the glass flying
like water spun
from a girl's hair
as she rises
from the ocean

if only she were there
instead
the old man slumped
as if dead

perhaps he heard
the national anthem sung
by mermaids
with military drums —
a final roll
of batons & bodies

there was no firing squad
only two smashed cars
& two men rising
for air
concerned not only with umpires & holes in space

but also with lilacs budding & other magical fornications

& still more with the abstract principle of manufacturing hair

the encyclopaedic barber / his voice a lather on your ears

tells of incest & the evil machinations of a brother whose dreams he slit with a razor gleaming in the moon light
CABLEVISION

the tv makes a noise of monkeys
i cannot think or even want
the flesh of you in my hands
when noise, pictures
crowd our bodies
into grained pieces
of light

& revolution is a dream
stanley says so
hates levertov
& scorns ideas
beyond pastrami
money & land
& hates the love that makes
a poem

though he doesn't say so —
the poet's propaganda
for poetry

is propoganda
( american style )
& dogma back
wards
doesn't say
he's god
though he says so

& again
aesthetic action
is denied
by those
"who protest too much"

stanley, don't forget
we pray for yr father
his feet
echoing ours
in subways.

& even yours.
STILL WATER & FISH

mouth full of snow, where
as with gauguin, will you go
to see again this woman offered
on the half shell as in botticelli

or see the circle traced
on still water by fish
transparent in the snow covered wood
by dante, the first circle of hell
without beatrice —

the bait is well hidden, beneath,
but the fish rises

in rising raises
in diving leaves

strange still circle
inviting dreams:
orpheus beckons
williams beckons
the descent beckons
the ascent beckons
they both become you
LEONARD'S SECRET

I know your secret
is buried in montreal
on murray hill
below the trees

I know your secret
won't travel
though it wants to sit
on all the stone steps
of montreal banks

I know your secret
isn't mine
yours survives
in a transparent shrine
knees worn
from climbing

I know your secret
is the shame of the city
the elders tremble
when they pass it by

I know your secret
is sometimes seen at night
on stanley
& ste catherine streets

but the elders tremble
they make more parking lots
& pour more salt
on the snow
EPITHALAMIUM

& at this time (as
apples are green &
oranges
orange at the nucleus only;
love is, my
love
a 1 x 1

& now the sun) white
with glowing, numbers not our
numbers growing

& to the rainbow points (my
flowing angel from the sun)

love is yet
a
1 x 1
BALLAD OF THE DEPARTING HUSBAND

well i have sung the old songs too
sung for me, sung for you
the question is what
will i do?

what can i do when it is you
have kicked me out
with one good shoe?
where will i go

who do i know
who cares for me as i for you?
fuck off you shit you sd to me —
well should i drown

in the cold blue sea?
or wait until you've had yr fill
of other men from this damn town?
or fuck around as you seem still

to think i want to?
why not you say
you've knocked me up
fucked off, fucked up, & had yr fun

with just about anyone
with a big bum, two tits, or even one.
it's my turn now you little screw
& i will fuck who i want to.

o wife o wife it cannot be
but if it's so —
more moment than mouth
there is something waiting
to be forgotten
but now all is reversed
& the gift we make
of the past
jumps like jack
from the box
to terrify
again
we are children thinking
we are growing up
forgetting we are
already giants
of memory, movement
a thousand years old
we must grow down
no myth or alchemy
or dream of love
can operate
alone
& even
when you leave me
you open gifts
no mouth can close
FOR SUSAN, FOR POETRY

but that love is
the place we make
our own mistakes
you. i.
like water from stones
a landscape of ripples
vast
yr body broken
by joyous lakes
where the wings
of each bird
are anointed

the old ones
could never say
what we must
the old ones
unmelted beards
serpent eyes set in cliffs
to see the comings the goings
"the terrors of the abyss"

whose children we are
white father of wind
in whose beginnings seeds
of new defiance
breed like cones, slowly,
the oldest trees

where they move / my love
in yr mind & body
as word, finger, tongue, cock
are stopped
& move again
vast garden of lakes
where flowers are fish
delicate embrace
you receive me with

& always to confess
the single curse
madness makes
us bless.
AND ALL THESE THINGS ARE TRUE

and all these things are true
I love you

I am afraid to move or make a noise
nothing should disturb you
perfect as you are
neither small nor large
but everything
is an image or a sound
you refuse to put limits to

but what limits are
your strange lungs breathing
a beautiful guitar
what sounds you let me hear

the stories you've told
all things past have
their limits, they have
no hold
on you

I wanted to say
I know what's happening everywhere
in the world, down
the street

don't tell me the news
let me remember
whatever I've known
through you

you are almost asleep
and still you tell me
what to say, how far
the limits are
the limbs of you
there they were: 3 of them
all blonde. my wife's away
i thought
so i crossed the street
& followed them down the block
down by the park
in the dark
& called my dog
put him on the scent
& we went where they went.

what a conspiracy
what a lark
should i murder them in the park?
or on the beach
where the fog & the waters roll?
or rape them one by one, or
two by two
or three by three
down there by the sea?
ALPHA —

the thing conceived in the darkness of the well.
three drunk men emerge from the shack hidden by the billboard.
the four star hotel, the room of dreams, lit by red bulbs.
there is no sound connecting the streets. they wander.
we wonder where we are, use the phone, forget.

it wasn't easy, it took, it was the light of the sky
we were afraid of somehow, though the light & the voices
were simple.

the ghosts assemble on the hills
their music is the level line of lights
we are in awe of them
they move toward us
APT. 4B

dead masks all over the damn place. someone's crooked hand
gives you a glass of wine: long fingernails, twitching eyes.
black & white beardsley prints, posters for black light,
someone screaming over & over fuck fuck fuck fuck. death
masks of beethoven, baudelaire, beardsley, pound, botticelli,
olson, dudek, bellow. hundreds of them. aimless violence
hovering in the air like lightning waiting for someone with­
out his rubbers. no trees to hide under. thank god. don't
mention it, some psychic guy out of his tree whispers from
across the room, the smoke drifting out of his nostrils like
exhaust from the twin pipes of a jaguar, eyes orange as
amber turn signals. someone revving: the engine of an old
bmw in the corner, neon scarabs flash from the ceiling, the
old bike bellows like a wounded minotaur without a labyrinth
& nowhere else to go
THE IMAGE
(a preliminary note)

they hung him from the ceiling by his head a little metal skull cap from a light fixture chain screwed into his cranium with an octopus of wire radiating from the skull cap they twined around his shoulders arms torso legs so he hung in the middle of the room with his arms stretched out crucified in space between ceiling & floor all his weight depending from the metal skull cap & screw they told him he would live through it all to the end feel the whole of it know with precision each stage level layer & worse understand it & share his pain with the audience watching it on cablevision the cameras in the corners ready to give four simultaneous views of his body hanging as if weightless/ he felt the weight /& spinning so that the room seemed to turn on the axis of his body in the narrow circle marked by the microphones ready to sound to carry his voice screams to the audience watching channel eight its screen split into fragments when the electrodes covering his body like little black spiders burst with bolts of electrical energy his skin pain shivers through them & more one wall was covered with a bank of monitors he saw himself he saw them once
twice three times four times over & over he could see himself see them the movements everywhere carried in the blue silver tv light his body their faces the walls the screens the instruments the dials the gauges the knives the scissors the wires the tapes shadows floating in blue silver cold flame light eyes lenses concentric opening closing until the light steadies to pulse blue/silver/blue/silver/blue/silver/silver/blue/silver & then the blue silver light like glass shimmering in waves told him he would have to relive the whole cycle arrest trial sentence execution in this they were immaculate
such images: insane
words cannot follow
the beatings of the wings

you don't know where/who
you are
but you imagine
your shadows
passing behind
before
around your body

& yourself within those wings
as they caress the contours
of the hidden city

& you imagine.
no one sees or hears
only you are aware
of how they connect with your body as you move
down the street & how the wings pass over whatever
you pass before
there is no telling the madness of these wings
seeds put in the ground are picked by birds before they blossom
there is no telling
the furrows in the earth
they too have wings
invisible
to all
but those who fly
by them
invasions of light:
occaisions for the criss
cross
of shadow, sorrow/all things
inlight but with
the black moon stained
bits of bright glass
the jeweled cave love
makes now:
  ruby butterfly
  incense wings;

i should have explained, then,
long ago
but "we, too,
collapse beneath
'the weight of things
done & said,' of the lies
we have accepted"

& all such illusions
of interruptions
& the one great one
of paradox.

though some indulge
in disorder
all must come
to rest

margined in solitude
the words deny
not meaning, but their love for
opposite
(the children
in the safe warm bath
float & stand
as if their bodies make
an ocean:
"astonishment is the beginning!"

the silver circle
returns to energy
blesst are eyes
that see

the garden fills with snow
crystal flowers / white trees
melt in yr hair, yr mouth

to make invisible snow tracks
on yr tongue
inside the silver circle
inside the silver rain

bird tracks / dog tracks
the animal's tail dragging in the drifts
nose into it / ears up

the trees listen for once
for many pass
their shoulders so softened with snow
their bodies begin to etch
invisibly
into the soft breath/snow air!

but the car
tires spinning
refused to go
up the hill / the driver
refused to go
down

the snow does not end
so simply with desire
for the sun
or peace
you may only bring
your solitude to the snow

but the snow-woman waits
like a white monument
sleeping, surrounded by
little ones
she waits for that ocean, the sun
to make of her an ocean

/in the garden the pond is frozen.
snow sits in the garden chairs.
cat prints surround the edge.
the pond, the chairs, the prints
overflow./

"the border exists only in the mind"
or so I thought
until I saw
that cold garden's meditation:

"there is nothing but music or love.
for that I would kill"

that is what
the snow-woman knows
her breath lifted in the air like a curling smoke
signals the dawn:

"let music & thunder
be one"
ancient aching break over impatient evening,
set forth yr numbers 1 2 3; be unaware
beware the siquoia, cypress, pine,
elm maple yew

branches notes
shine hear

what is most clear
what riddles night
silence
flight

whose turn to solo in the big machine
if it comes to this, what matters, what matter is

offshore isolatos forgot
maggots are not what matters
the dream is to be
discarded
from the bomb bay
of the bird/machine

stones at the temple
to go alone, afóot
to the jewel (hidden
the flesh scraped open
by fingernails

pain in the wound of skulls
the brain hurts
finger in the open womb
radar turns the circle in a single sweep
what matter now that dance
pass that dream in trance or sleep —

'Je te salue de la Foret Petrifiee'
'I hunt among stones'
'0u plus rien n'est debout'
water colors hearts & flowers
rome / paris / venice / munich
strange transplants / pollen floats through wave
patterns in trees & stones to hypnotize
eyes, ears
to sew shut oceans' desire:

the visual situation is an
anti-aesthetic determinant

the heart flowers with kisses to show
a kisscoated antiperspirant sinks beneath
his wisdom
like
a stone
sewn inside the flesh
neat stitching of the moth
white & black of the waves blown back
butts turned up
in the water
bottles

the double image of the moth
wrought in silk
a drop of diamond rot from the edge
lovers lean from the window ledge
smoke drifting from their eyes
ss smoke rings for their lies

in the circus ring
the bone is dancing

the skeleton dance each bone stamped
with stars & hearts & flowers & skulls

a poem is a reading list
of patterns someone missed

o hear the bones are kissing as they cross:

.

.
3/ IN SOME DARK & SECRET DAY

in some dark & secret day
what is un
expected is
a refusal to obey

when they cross
sun & moon
the beads break out
the sky sweats
angels of new disorder
flesh / wood / stone
in majestic sign
of their crossing

soleil noir de joie

the black
sun of joy arrives
to annoy
those who thrive
on the fearfulness
of the people

the beads of light break out
the crown of creation breaks out
& out of the black nest
of the sun
comes desire —

though we have marathons for money
we refuse
suicide or murder
& here, where the weakness of the will comes in,
we must begin:

there is only one word for what we want
revolution
to make us lovers of the world

lovers of the world unite!

or expect to die
if what we dream of love
is lie
to you the reed of orpheus must be  
the engagement of possibility  
to refuse the flesh as crucifix  
"from the depths of the millenary pact  
which in anguish  
has for object  
to maintain  
the integrity  
of the word"  

& the laughter of the children as a sign  

there is no mystery worth waiting for  
in the strata of the brain reived out like rock  
explored  
dynamite for fire  
water & ice  

these are necessities  
food air water fire  
what men know themselves in  
vs the simple made devious  
in complex machines  
the military pact  
the pentagon  
the resourceful abuse  
of resources  

re: the source  
of all we are / to re  
discover  
in the reeds at the river's edge  
food to eat  
air to breathe  
water to drink  
fire to love  
seeds of the flower in which we breed  
defiance of the planners plan for death  

which is to live in nothing  
but the foul mysteries of money  

\[\]
VANCOUVER VORTEX  
(FIRST MOVEMENT)  

15 mountain shadows spin into the room  
the edge of the rain forest moves forward  
the tall pines know their branches are being murdered  
they listen with care as the trucks drag them off  
to be tortured into poems  
"to contain anger  
in works of art"  

& everyone knows when they hear the word  
the forest is falling  
the earth suffering  
her beauty into vortex  
into green  
revenge