

Jurisdictions: Poems & More 2018-2022

by Dawson Gage

Prelude: 10 February 2018

the landline telephone
lets you leave voicemails
that are 3 minutes long
and so I leave testimonials
in little three minute pieces
in the voicemailboxes of the county
I leave them for Rachel as I beg her
not to privatize the radio
I leave one for Rae to ask her why the voting machines
why the voting machines why
 they are so obscure,
 expensive too
 why do I worry about
the journalists' opinions
if they hold them sincerely
then where are they now
and why so quiet on almost
every single important question

7 April 2019

can't you turn me
 inside-out so
I would never need
to confess the symmetry

ever since they cut
 my phone line
I have wondered
who I was intending
 to call
touch the perfect
 feeling of your accent
 distorted to be
 more beautiful
across the chasms of
 these years we've been
 apart

all my old ambitions
have shown a gleam
of something almost
plausibly as if my path
 could flower in all
 directions

no one makes me
shiver like you do
it's getting late
and I swear upon my body
that this might be the
key to proving everybody
 wrong

7 April 2019 B

nobody

took their time the day

I was taken

in the night but where

the darkness

wrapped about me some

of the others

had flags hovering

beneath their prideful sadness

every avenue was covered in death
and the different sections were
silent unto one another, the
nurses would leer at us at midnight
and the chances of freedom were
constantly smothered by rules but
if I were asked to name the
remedy I wouldn't think but
a moment before I told you
that the government must fall down

7 April 2019 C

nocturnal man

confronts his own fibers
of being, a cognition made
from the differential splendor
which only arrives when it
gets to the point where
the broken echoes sliding
in your psyche start to have
a shade of the foreordained
cadence, a split-minute
thunder has told you my theory
do it with purpose that after
we fabricate new baskets of

our own design I will crawl
into each of your bedrooms
but leave on my own two feet

7 April 2019 D

I don't want to face the day
without having the strange
communion I hallucinate a
spasm of florid variations
on your primal theme and
do I know

where the modal flash
consumes your sense
of taste but that's
your thing it's just those
pulsing glands that need
my voices while the notes
collapse beyond thy sketch in
someone else's journal
by and by the season needs
to know that our reunion
straight ahead just make
a wish to be repeated as
you drive southeast at night
brimming with a glee
that ripples the pines

7 April 2019 E

still, still, still

I agonize as to why
you said you did not
want to see me

oh how it hurt

but that was yours to
say, mine to read with
all its sting, do not wish

to know your disappointment
nor to see you blink with
incredulity might this take
a little longer if you don't
even know the way they
tamed you precious frightened
creature held to the wall
of the platinum cave where
close to the people
who also made their choice
to take the offer chase the
banners follow the schedule
make no secret save for what
you dare not publish where
you live the world is not on
fire but the smoke is getting
thicker so you might have
not a day to spare, oh my
quit the system and come here
 bring ink, wine, and tears

7 April 2019 F

confrontation
 check it out
need-to-know basis
 is what they said
if I could
 decode the woven
sheets of birdsong
might have to shut
 the windows down
on the morning
 sometimes music
is too much to handle
 when you know what
 it all must

mean

7 April 2019 G

a letter from social services
says they arrived at me
doing something aberrant
something lowly, not normal,
"self-neglect" is how they
put it, but my how the
faculties breathe a recollection
of the day they came to
inspect my bloodstained drive-
-way, my dirty towels, the
porch was falling apart beneath
my rocking chair and just as the
woman from the county came cagily
close to hail me a man from
the city showed up to peek into
the house where I play music to
the ghosts and where the pipes
burst every winter so there they
were, Venus and Mars, mind or body,
what could I do, they both were
asking questions at the same time
so I tossed the coins and asked their
opinions, told the lady I was perfectly
sane and the dude that the house
would be fixed when the sun comes
out tomorrow, I rocked myself
with nerves on red alert until each
inquisitor, social services planning
department, council melds with
board of commissioners, extra extra
read all about it, consolidation's
back in style, Dawson and his house

are self-neglecting fruits on the tree
of life

10 April 2019

the houses on the other
side
of the creek
the movements of people
strolling the morning
break the day surely
stay where you sit
and grope
for perspective
scenery holds
together
the collapsing universe
so smile for the camera

21 May 2019 C

blithely in the tidal
sway of the dock the breeze
contracting all those towers
lurking in the secret master class
action firm sector contacted
indirect romantic poems
in public send a message
to strange, too strong for
the court, it's all up and down
to the blending of our
sorrow to be followed
by the cascade remembers
of the contamination
a plume of the flattery
synthetic wonder by night
partaking in this fallen

segment, stolen as
three southern planets
ripped out of order
servility told me that
I would be a mandarin,
but the rest of me
shook off the picture-finish-slip
confessed her name game
just to placate
the magistrate
found you beside the
peeps I don't know what
to think so I'll think
of you

26-27 May 2019: midnight thematics

in the heat of late May
while little rain recently having
fallen, sigh, the magnolia leaves
are drooping, some have gone brown
but the lonely light by which I write
don't quite reach to the wetlands
there lies and lays the line and limit
and border that cuts between us and
the neighbors, these people, it's
another dutiful day in the dissident
life style and charisma confidence-game
contest when someone called 911, again,
so I was totally ready to speak when
the cops showed up, and the teens of times
the police have come found me, place me and
bring to the threshold of my firewalls the
silent sting of surveillance triumphant,
don't you know, truly, I'll speak to those
who I can trust with memory, curiosity,

confidentiality is a positive right
the silent have no material claim on
the words of others, but the
talkative among us sometimes persist
with wording, noting, commentary,
column-inches add up eventually to
miles, and yet counting the world by
an indexical quantification scheme so
the technologist can taste the freshest
produce possible uncertain where the
baby will be learning how to make a new
language, torn from place as such, after
what we've gone through, the several cities
traveled in triads, the riots
conflated with the backward hierarchical
relation-"ships at a distance have every
man's wish on board", no doubt, wishes
are the basis of my ya-ya radicality,
they can't be left for the solemn sophists
to smother another with fancy, bury
in surplus, frequently we glaze and press
the fractal drama, the diligent outcome,
once more I turn to the wetlands, the
property line, the magnolias whose flowers
wilted off, whose limbs are no good for
climbing, nor do they very much cover
this home from the neighbors, the
locus of another frightened soul clinging
to a superpower telephone, totem and tactic,
strategical slippage and friction abide on
the other side of town, surely in the bustling
sensual traffic jam sun shine body show
grand opening tourist season choreography
metropolitan see-saw flag-wave-why-don't-you
flick of the wrist on the gear shift who
can accomplish the maximum ensemble of

errands, where do you go to succeed in Wilmington
how about Creekwood to the
Courthouse?

31 May 2019 (@316 Princess Street, Clerk's Office)

courthouse buzzing
lazily approaching
the stroke of noon
on this Friday, behold
the chasms
beginning to yawn
as if the edifice
were full of its own
type of desire, like
a dream of orchids, given
by me, they are bursting, laughing
behind the desks
could it be
that it all depends
upon what you do?
the ankle-monitor
vibrates, my skin
looks funny, I could get
used to this
coming here
to see and be seen
but I'd rather not
feel like an imposter, then
again, it does distract
from my work
as a spy
for the public

31 August [2019] Blues

follow the lady
follow the bottles
 of sacred glass and
when your motions all
carry and the deadlocks
 unravel there remains
a fraction of transient trouble
that I used to feel bad about
 but that recently I tend
to embrace the resemblance
if it goes, goes, goes

worship the lady
thought function behind
every twist of the YIN sailed
 crossing streams blindly
 while your dwindling communions
flow perpendicular out whence
nobody saw ya on the flood-plains
 doing the backward rain dance

pressure the lady
though peril awaits you
ensuing bizarrely
and they won't even say
what they feel, don't
oh please I'm here from
 a journey to meet you
in the thickness of your
sentiments, I am craving
a hint of your soul

8 September 2019 ~4am
when I woke up
fourteen hours ago
the windows had yawned

open for days so the whole
apartment breathing of
the damp trade winds that flush
the wailing blocks of this
strangest of places, the hex
of the ages reverberates now
and the dawn of realization
it's been a long time arriving
plus the connections
have altered my promise
that I would give in to the diagnostic
bargain in the shadow outside
the violent radius flexing
perpetual danger-games, I keep
assaulting the letterhead people
with waves of municipal radiance
throw celebrations even though
there's a war on at the moment
for the catalog bonanzas and
every secret trove of the paper-trails
pointing back to the past
I'm as tired as the summer
and my syntax begins to beat
the case before we even reach
the new destination date of woe
to the demon-devils in the high-flight
land of the easy, say what you
like no poem cuts down thine
enemies better than the one (the poem)
that washes off the trauma
which by the way was my point

23 December 2019
the wreckage is plainly
 visible
the portents of urban salvation

can be seen, also,
hovering low
with the brisk transposition
of the rain clouds in
the balmy dark of my precinct
prayerflags fluttering slightly
in the faint winter drizzle
porch light shines cold white
ambiance, pressing shadows
contrariwise set the perspectives
in fine sacred curves from
the rocking chair's recline to
the bend of the arm of the
street lamp, oh mercy,
oh mild and watery winter
you are my consolation
in this moment of solitary drama

27 December 2019

when I take up my spot
in the "big house"
and bask all about in the
empty flux of great and open
rooms so you should see the bounties
of this adverse abstraction of an
ashram, this temple of an older
time where the fault lines swing nearby
while the sirens wail to catch the sound
of panic movements curving through the
diamond district where windows
beat the light back towards the war-games
coursing through street after street, balance
of anger contained in a contract, marvelous
gestures flung into view, my point divides
your diary and twirls along the edges of
the river in search of the seam of authority

combing for a pocket outside the law where
a boat could be anchored to break it, make it,
no ticket nor voucher, stranded along in the
draft of the cargo ships a current lost in the
dirty commotion of corruption and blamed on the
foreign agents pouring onshore in the night

27 December 2019 B

long stretch emergent sights and
sounds of the blazing scandal
it fills your yard with pamphlets
and covers the sidewalk with slogans
and signs calling the count of sway in
the urban puzzle of a day oncoming, seen
to have passed through the barrier brazenly
not quite the measure, no adequate blessing,
fixing and itching as wild as your illness of furniture
strange in the fashion you model when out
of the box

30 December 2019

lately my armor
is a cynical tendency
hard to discard
and the turn of the calendar
rings in the forum
while no one inquires
but I'll be there, still

30 December 2019 B

nonsense only your
nonsense and only
that what calling
and wheeling along
in the night, in the night

where a touch of your nerve
is the price and the shibboleth
don't be insane
 you'll see it through yet

30 December 2019 C

fixation: no doubt
can't do without
the secret is out
that's what I'm about!

27 December 2019 C (N. Front Street, noon)

nerves keep bouncing my knees
I sit upon bench upon bench in the park across
from the radio station and glide into fumes of
danger and contrast, sparks of division and
fear, these were the years when the whole game
went sour and ugly, these are the days where
the crowds began bleeding foam and acrimony,
this was an omen that scratched out our eyes and
placed our garments in the locker, all through
the dark and out with the light, capture the flag
in Wilmington, right?

30 December 2019 D

blame is in our headlights
passion in our veins
nothing in our dream-world
feelings in your body

capture of your heart-strings
balance of betrayal
notice me on the war path
waving streams of light
this was always partial

carelessness and cruelty
ever-present catastrophe

31 December 2019

just one bulb alight
in the great room, here I sit
the house is empty of furniture
but full of my smoke and charisma
for what is the rate of the formula
in a city with taxes on meaning
there is no sense in waiting
when the present is oh so hot

31 December 2019 B

the district gets noise
from the airport, handful
of railroad whistles colliding
with the celebration flame
after sundown, the neighborhood
flickers and gyrates along
a favorite type of pattern
sewing itself into the ragged
blanket of deep down town
territorial contestation passion
plus persecution leads to insight
vibration of resistance
tears apart the city block

3 January 2020 B

for once let's lay siege
 to the shadows, and
something will emerge behind
our watery eyes, I think
the occasional lapse in the batteries

of power is an opening and
my function is to cover the patterns
who people the cloudy day
so trouble is likely a virtue
when nothing seems to clear away
the demolition zone just grows and grows
following the dotted line
and clinging to my insights
praying for proof of the
broken promise stolen
from my underground identity
caught in the crosswinds
of warrior showcases
pressed to the limit
back to the middle
 of a shadow
 under
 siege

3 January 2020 C

I hold onto your words
from a sense of awe
and in these latter days
the style of an open eye
conviction brought to your threshold
and desperate for your voice
I'm keeping up with madness
as long as my lot is lonely
I can provide you with a
number and I can shade you
in some day, it's all a force
for confusion, but why is
 there no one
 in charge?

3 January 2020 D

easy now darling
classified love
take me on board
for a big time
journey, I want to
see you at the train
station, I need to imagine
how you look when
traveling, isn't that
how we may resolve
this confrontation daydream,
shouldn't you double
your dare, at least?
yes easy now darling
nobody can stop you today

3 January 2020 E

all the frequencies are still
on fire, all the decisions
are going to be made
where does this leave us
with the game we are playing
the war that prevails
 in your attitude
 doesn't deter me
 but I'm on my tiptoes, anyway

3 January 2020 F

it drags our fictions into the light
and that contains a cypher
a hash of neuron and notebook
a place with no name

3 January 2020 G

be my patience

to listen as the news begins
to arrive through the wire machine
and events collide with whimsy
as we watch the times unfold

deposition passion
in the chambers of your smile
several ways of life all
mixed with the ugly quota
of ignomy, the necessary haze
that grips the picture
proves decisive
where dignity slips
from your faltering hands
mercy and mischief
proving-ground spectacle
show case of hear break
measure of blunted personality
cover me always and
never exhausted why
please won't you spare
me when you shout!?

11 January 2020 C

figure this puzzle where
every word is made of tears
and no one catches the gist
of love in the voice on the page,
even on screens there are messages
from others and clear as the
blistering daylight, warm as
the lamp in the solitary night

previous layers of narrative

contained the vital freshness
but they never could rise
and never were able to fight

the figment of your prophecy
will splash across the theater
beyond the vortex across the
contract and outside the pocket
of nicety: some fine wave
in the firmament rolls to the
edge while the story becomes
impossible and the game
is "truth or dare"

11 January 2020 D

don't despise your conscience
ratchet up the sound
so the signal drowns away
the evil that appears in the
costumes of your enemies
proud of their doings
 flaunting
 bleeding
 cursing
 but giving
 another
 chance

15 January 2020

gift of another day
at the edge of the mean
sacrifices your questions
and see the world afresh

I'm only so flexible
the conditions besiege me

but mine is the path
of unlimited defiance
set up your outpost
and crawl toward the sun
renegade diplomat
is my true calling
I have come a long way
from those glory days
when the house was full
of computers and drugs
for the rules have shifted
and the law hath no mercy
telephone baptisms
upset the choreography
staging our lives
in the landscape of the county
where the flux of gangs
and the spark of the pawn shops
is the font of geometry
and the spigot of form

so much for that
relegated down to the
floor of the scheme I
nevertheless aimed for the
very ceiling, that is why my
mission whispers and signs
of the total storybook
hip to the informant
and clued to the pattern
take it away from me
don't touch the noise
dear, it will give you
allergies, hives from
the depth of space in
the big house at night

fit to be a temple
of the non-violent trip

14 January 2020 (~530 am)

should we salute
in the face of dawn
does that the rain
ask
for our permission?
causal recollections
of my homestead odyssey
from rocking-chair
I encompass the street block

who stands tall in the
epoch of overload
not in the slightest
compelled to talk small
promise of deliverance
in the drizzle and
the cryptic of fog, faint
intimations of revolution
passed in a fit of joy
rage in the morning
transmuted to optimism
this is the opening
here I practice the art
of vanquishing
with beauty what otherwise
erupts like a cargo-cult
someone could line
you into a scheme
where you'd never escape
that was my worry
that's why trouble finds me
but maybe not, I specified

you, striking the coordinates of your heart

14 January 2020 B (545 am)

going in the empty street
returning echoes and the thick
haze of quiet and water
as the hidden sun approaches
and the challenge of another
day “in the net of the law”
with time contracting and the
rarified blocks toward the river
are a place we’ll intrude
to smile and to conquer
the houses and yards
the soft symphony of urban
strategy blind to the deeper
condition, surely, covered
and stolen from fate
not to stand still
with a daybreak ambition
I keep up the fight, the blessing
that mingles with danger collides
with a passive-aggressive situation
that’s when you know
you’re ascending the blueprint
that is also how
wishes come true

14 January 2020 C

I can’t say much
about the dread and the
discipline which imbue my vision
as the mild morning chimes
and hums, the sounds of transit
in the wet rock and glass theater
sprawling beyond the limit of

technical images meant for
consecutive sight unseen
take up a cause
for the sake of a
poem, spell of you
& your former secrets, wave
of militant quotidian
glee

14 January 2020 D

ah, such an exquisite
angle upon the fragrant vicinity
can only be discovered
by the wise and desperate

this is the structure
that organizes it all
token in the game-play
monumental spread

refuge in the grid
at the seam of 5th ave
and Orange I dwell
in the shadows of fusion
luminaries and take up
the cross of the defendant
filling the precinct
with the measure of my choices
to hang with the misty light

14 January 2020 E

fatigue-me-not, oh twisted
body! Yield to my urges follow
the tack of the stranger
as it blushes
and as the she shifts

the stance of her passion
crashing into clovers

14 January 2020 J

collection subscription
to facts before fiction
I'm ill from the friction
of this lyric depiction
bring it all to fruition
that's my disposition

my own frame of vision
is a prism's incision
in tree of decision
with perfect precision
the daily illusion
and the echoes of fusion
with vocal creations
I stage dispensations
of poetic translations
and rude vibrations
something else in store
can you ask for more?

the permanent stripe
and the transient shadow
the stereotype
and the path that you follow
your story rings hollow
so take off that halo
and you can say hello
but don't be shallow
(MC's all get roasted)
just like marshmallows

18 January 2020

I sit by the river
where the memorial bridge
looms high and bright
its blinking towers
and shimmers of crossing traffic

I sit by the river
where the flags streaming
from the lamps of the boardwalk
channel the cold winds
that blow from the water

I sit by the river
and summarize the scenery
and all within my sight
(not much, after all)
bends beneath my prism

28 January 2020

lonelieness pushes me upward and out
ambition, my pressure, this burden, that
once I had blinked and waved at the others
they never would let me set down, duty and
fate in tandem fury, welcome with worry at
the threshold of enemy headquarters, polish and
deceitful staging, dwelling inside the deep
choreography, nobody knew that the maps had
been altered, no one could see the cellophane
walls, near and advancing the cause of human
motion, far and in vain we are juggling the time-seeds
and still, here I am cross-legged on the floor
of my empty house, the municipal flame and whisper
rolls in from all sides, every so often I shift
my position as the moon crosses the sky of Wilmington

with mind to the borders of the shadow, and the
quality of tiny signals, impressions of
the battlefield social, seduction day looms
so real in the not-so-distant spring

9 April 2020

secret rites of spring performed
in this space of the rebel homestead
nothing at stake but dignity
no one to check your pulse
flashes of noise in your voicemail
crazy advances

3 May 2020

needles of sound
emit from the flock
of blackbirds and I
can't help but wonder
how such creatures
find their mates
by clashing together
in the low evening sky
is it chance
 or is it destiny?
for that matter
how can I make
my ferns multiply
what's the algorithm
in other words
 for raw and novel life?

3 May 2020 B

passers-by puzzle
over the cryptography
on the sidewalk

and when they cross
the shadow of the
“big house” they must
pause, however slightly
for my string of flags
drapes from a hook
at the top of the porch
to the tree

 by the curb
ordinary beauty
flows through the neighborhood
it's better than gossip
like a victory lap
around the setting sun

8 May 2020

a chill floods my skin
from the planks of the
 rocking chair and I
am beginning to notice
a quality that you keep
buried way down deep
beneath where the soul
is lurking, oh why do they
mob the vicinity in the springtime

18 May 2020 C

don't you want a baby?
 we'll sing to the baby
that's about
 all I've got
at this point
 since my person
has been whisked like
 a dandelion's bounty

of somersaults told you
it's vaguely
our custom
to show the fractions
all over themselves again
once that topic caught your
celestial place-mat
on the table cloth of
what ever I expect
you'll do, but I was
thinking, that is
what I've been meaning
to say
that I'm thinking
about you
as I had a choice
instead of just
a
chance

21 May 2020

in the aftershock
of the darker passages
nobody could tell
me what to say
now such a voice as
commands me,
honestly, that's what I want

21 May 2020 B

lost my vowels this morning
got caught in the formatting
basic language

leads the onslaught
of tip-off insight
straining at the dotted
lines that flay and thrash
the offices among the vacuums
in the nerve center, for
down town below ground
the phones breed with the
locks on the gates of
the dungeons, this is not
a metaphorical image, it's
five days a week stepping
down from paddy-wagon
into tunnels up elevator shaft
to holding cell, just lemme
get half a song, judge,
gimme back the old time,
pieces that frolic in the
deficit tantrum as if
she had met the color of the bridge

20 June 2020 (@ the top of the parking deck in Carrboro)

back when we lacked
definition
the pilgrimage that
landed us here
began so charmed
and all was bliss
the excitements of
the curriculum, fanning
away and all was
bliss at the dining hall
in the mornings
biscuits and grits
with salsa and cheese
Chinese homework

and *The New York Times*
and all was bliss
the passion of learning
to follow the scent
of the impulse
and thereby
break every
single rule,
but gracefully,
not for the golden
fleece not for the silver
spoon but copper
credits, one three four
we count our way
to legitimacy
that's where I
went wrong at last
but it's going
to turn out
just right.

21 June 2020

the high panorama
of the County of Orange
in every direction
red lights blink
against the depths
of nighttime darkness
beacons of the hidden
Piedmont structure the
rolling landscape, a
blanket of value
crashing down
upon the hapless
denizens of

Triangle City
thus from the
parking deck
do I swallow
this vision
without being sure
of eternity, maybe
every so often
we realize
exactly
our
intentions

21 June 2020 B

do me a favor
and never say anything
about what I've told you
so far it was enough
for me just to put it
into language, I never
thought you'd read me
out loud in the moments
you'd have to steal from
the overseer, the reaper
of the your lush field,
no, of course you'll
say something muted
and derisive about the
way I flail and scream,
but always completely
I kick, and pace,
and that's your
only opening

the rhythm where
I let down
my
guard

21 June 2020 C

all I think about
is women
all I want to see
is women
there is every day
a parade
or else a trickle
else a crowd
else a traffic jam
else the send of
energy that
women
imbue to
the clouds
and several
theories say that
no one knows
the truth
of women
all I want to see
is women
to sharpen my nature
and balance the
power and dream

21 June 2020 D

the handcuffs
were pinching my
veins shut
they asked if it hurt

I said yes
they asked how
much
I couldn't quite say
the cruiser roared
up the highway
and I forgot
where we were
I demanded to know
our destination
from Carolina Inn
to the Hillsborough Hilton
now one year later
I'm fixing to
burn my way
back
to the origin
so look at me
while summer
breaks open

21 June 2020 E

delight
I snatch my little
beats of insight from
the thicket of noise
that hums
as if the machinery
of the township
changes hands
when the stores stay
open all night again
you'll know
that it's worth
the trouble only
if the lesson takes

hold

5 October 2020 (midnight)

oh sleepy body
it's getting harder
to maintain the tension
in the lines we strung
between the home and
the workplace, maybe
you can tighten it up
for just a moment
it's nothing but ease
unless you have one
of those, a different path

11 October 2020 (1AM)

maybe if I were
 to close these eyes
the separation
 would not stand
but then again
 I can feel
 my head flooding
 with imminent sleep
 that will compose
 my navigation
 chart by which
 I sail to the end
 of the stage

13 October 2020 (4am)

tendencies alive inside
the bedroom, smother
the urge to give up
and so, quickly, taking

a long and periodical
look at why we say our
prayers before we leap
no doubt, if I stop this
trend, I may not land
in the hot zone still
with a sudden game plan
to erupt and settle
the score, straight line,
swept from the stage and
all you can do is bleed
outside, not to be known
upset at the sight of flags
blown, ripple on over
how can we make this fly?

27 October 2020

won't you just fall
into my arms again
everything we said
like showers of fireworks
against the broken sky

happens every minute
and it breaks through all
premonitions barely
common as the weekday
that would be why we sprawl

substitution gameshow
among the strangers' paths
there remains a faint mark
where the bad things grow
suffering deeply today

27 October 2020 B

all of your goals
just seemed to go awry
the forecast unravels
as everyone turned away
from me, it was a screaming
phase in my hapless plan
not much left over in the land
with no governor, fragile
bureaucracy dramas
a rush to conclusions
encompasses all types
so beyond a dark rumor
you can't quite see
patience, actually here
lies the target, ever gone
out for a date with that (?)

25 October 2020

in the arena
we follow the thread
of this bid for attention
a flash of the meter
quite simply perplexed
seen at the dawn of some
limit for a disclaimer
which trips the alarm
no preternatural spree
what derives from your beam
of shadows cast by clouds
among the ranks of the damned
belong to the face of the spy
so inducing a day-room
type of a scenario
neither of the last two

choices we made derived
this exit arrangement
casually speak
of a fantasy bubble
I talk with my dotted
outline and act in
the interest of a hive
unbounded in virtue
which emits from the fog
without that heavy demand
it rings the changes
spreading the greeting
every last molecule
added to the jar for a count

All Saints' Day 2020

hip-hop pops out
of the speakers in the next
yard over it's Halloween's
logical consequence, it's the
persistence of witches and ghosts
in our epoch of disbelief
surrounding all saints
with a phalanx of sounds
brought my origins along
for the journey colliding
about this chain of islands
going our separate ways

6 November 2020

the omens are here
which direction awaits
the ultimate claim
upon your schedule
it drives my very head

taken from the middle
of the street in morning
a devious Wednesday
maneuver of renegade
sentinels embedded in
federal property always
belonging to national
existence which now
is breaking open to the point
of heavy rebellion never
expose the form of a rumor
without consulting the subject
of its storybook, what goes down
in your record, what comes
up on the computer-screens
of Washington when my
name's plugged in to place
where nobody knows what's
happening, really, somehow
our visceral instinct
triggers the planet's alarm

7 November 2020

today I chased some paper
and tumbled into the telephone
the headlines say little
the paradoxes grow more
numerous only whispered
passwords and rebel
memoirs hold the line
within the cries of scandal
an emergent possibility
that I pondered as I
stood outside the bike
shop, then crossed street
to a circular bench

in a modest polygon
of park space, that
is why I buried my nose
in my notebook and the
pigeons kept creeping
close I'd shake them way,
but they slowly build back
cross unspoken along
the arrowhead road
at night, driving
blindly through the
district, the world
reduced to a tiny
square where the
census penetrates
the public mind,
a fatal leap in
what you're dreaming
like pop music life

8 November 2020 (unknown park)

in the proximate streets
the drivers were honking
their horns, passengers climbing
out the windows, mamas with
strollers cheer, but only so
emphatically, not at the top
of their lungs, and here
in the district the *nomenklatura*
are nervously checking
their compasses, actually lacking
the slightest idea of the Way
chaos is relative but the Dao
is certainly not there goes
the chance of atomic peace
goodbye diplomacy, here comes

the armchair warrior on top
of the world in some sense
but in another takes a
tumble down a bottomless pit!

7 November 2020 B

there she flew
all of our banners
were waving and now
was the time of the paranoid
method because of the digital
heresy this is the content
of my conscience and the
scheme of profane
knowledges strictly
inflicted on the helpless poet
skewered by the “demon devils”
it’s an unlimited vision
of a red letter shot at
“democracy” after the fall
of the elite unto their
knees while the enemy
cries out for next-to-last
moment of out-bound
permanent count of a
tic-toc-talley of
the gang war system
of validation as a
fatal departure

17 November 2020 (@ the Russell Senate Office Building)

one thing about Washington
is that senators
from time to time
they cry in alarm

at the only mechanism
by which we’ll be set free
I’m talking the highest
art which is video games
from one player to two
to three but the word
for the 50 states is “faith”
which comes before “credit”
and the federal shadow
diminishes the contrast
between strangers and lovers
it summons a flood
of our sexual folly
the species of lust which
thrums unspoken through
the loins of the teenage
girl however much we lie
to her she doesn’t accept
her mother’s version nor
resign from the search
for that strange sensation
lo and behold a woman
will conquer this city and
trumpets shall cross between
the dissolving continents
as we should have learned by now
one thing about Washington
is that senators
from time to time
they cry in alarm

20 November 2020

stick with random turns
keep it casual even as
you strut
say what?

it's formal choreographies like these
modest but somehow flush
 with untapped veins
 of emptiness
which align just shy
of the way which
takes me to my
23-days of autumn
asylum: play it,
make it count

24 November 2020

apparition
 faint but
distinctive and while
I was trapped
 in the third consecutive
summer on lock
 down
suddenly to lose track
of where once I was
every shade of azure
at issue, fault of this life
all broken and lively
rolling through embassies
and taking no prisoners
whisper the honor roll
patiently drawing
 the line

26 November 2020

when the water flows
 in the backyard
and the bracelets shimmer
in the beam of sun
which crosses this seat

through the curve

26 November 2020 B

every so often the words
escape from the thick of the net
I sit in equipoise basking
in the landmark waves of sunlight
and who is to say that this day
won't grow to a towering height
and who is to say that love has gone
from the forum to the bottomless pit
I think that's it! and some people
have to trace numbers to signal
the pulse of our settlement!

11 March 2022 (@513 Orange Street)

with everything that's happened
it's more than a little difficult
to believe in the future's attraction
to imbue this broken universe with meaning
for once you've had a glimpse of the very hells
at the bottom point of the firmament
there's no returning to normal
thus I resign myself to endurance
in the face of the many demons
and begin a tightrope walk across the void

the yearning for comfort and ease
does not disappear when trauma departs
though even words have the taste of nothing
and nothing ain't what it used to be

12 March 2022

a storm came Saturday morning
and toppled the mailbox down

the moss clung to the tree branches
but the palm fronds lay on the ground
but by the arrival of noonday
the sun had emerged from the clouds
the breathing life of the neighborhood
did slowly return to its pulse
on Saturday people go walking
to manage the stress of their days
the church bell peals through the ether
it is oh so sweet to be home

12 March 2022 B

bathroom light flickering
mysteriously as if my peculiar
dream about the failing electrical
system had come true and happily
I sit cross-legged on the bed
while windstorm continues whistling
beyond the windows such darkness
filling the landscape though somehow
I string together bits of experience
the difficulties breed reservation
mainly I struggle with my own
foolishness never to be certain
that I'm not sabotaging the realm
of holy and beautiful light that climbs
across the field of vision perfectly
all through the night-time spaces

18 March 2022

ah how I wish
that someone or something
would come along
to preoccupy me
in the midst of these dismal features

when there is no outlet
for the soul's expression
the organs of vision
tighten and retreat
away from the remainder of light

my words have grown strange
and rigid, and I often
scribble to no end whatsoever
addressing all the wrong people
with a counterfeit intimacy

the dream of deeper truth
has been greatly diminished
but I still sometimes feel
that I can claim a special insight
which, alas, I cannot begin to speak

18 March 2022 B

I wonder if I will ever cease
to be haunted by the dungeons
for even when I can taste
the imminent coming of springtime
flashbacks of darkness flicker
across my bleeding mind's eye
and it's like I were back
on lock-down again oh mercy
what trauma could be greater
still I claw my way across
the realm of the apparently living
I drive across the city without
crashing my truck into traffic
I prepare my meals and eat them
and every so often I might read
a fragment of a book but my
focus has been dissolved as if

meaning had drained away from
reality and I do yes I do
wonder whether anyone I know
has seen this vivid vision of pain
it never disappears but only fades

18 March 2022 C

a sleepless night left me
 red-eyed and weak of speech
so today I had to just drift
about in frantic fashion
burning away each drop
of momentum in the process
of my life and death as if
to take my condition seriously
but not by smothering me
while you inhale the open air
but what really contains a puzzle
is the lock box inside your basement
I am trembling inside and out
not violently but rather softly
the treasures of the earth
are gathering themselves
in my kitchen and my mailbox
and this is why they do not
want me in my apartment
I'm afraid I'm descending
into nonsense and it hurts

18 March 2022 D

the voices
 seem to have returned
through the bathroom fan
but if I divert my attention to
the voices
once spoken

they cannot

retract

 their qualities

and as computers swallow our prosody

and as you're going to need to know

 the voices

 which are the stuff

by which a garment of many

colors entered into the world

and the voices

 don't mistake

this business any way at all

be candid resorting to desperate

measures ah ah

what's going on I can sense

the warlike nature within us

we could unlock and use it

oh well; then again, alternatives

to success and prestige life

and starving-art which didn't

used to be just === I concentrate

my ramble is about to hit limit

and it might be time to slee-ee-eep

 the voices

18 March 2022 E

the temperatures of the bodies

we share trade places in the system

in accord with our very best friend

the torrent of psychoses I sprayed

across the entire human landscape

had method and purpose inside

the presidents and ministers climb

into their cockpits Lord have mercy

I'm watching the letters on this page

absorbing the electricity

of my weird little neighborhood but
one cannot really go on with one's
life when the forces of change meet
the changings of force

18 March 2022 F

achy from the strains
I place upon this skin of mine
the carceral machine makes marks
on our bodies which are subtle

18 March 2022 G

every time I convince myself
 (which isn't that hard)
that I'm penning and scribbling
my way to happiness and greatness
it comes as a shock
when the letters don't get finished
or don't read at all the same
as they were written my interpretive
batteries are drained and the world
is naked, alien, and frightening
although there have been moments since
I emerged from the belly of the state
where the presence of God-in-nature
reveals itself to me these sensations
of grace last only a few moments
so the rest of my day is defined
by the physical experience of pain
and the spiritual experience of life
devoid of significance and honestly
my paranoid method is to flood
the land with meaning, to impart
well-nigh sacred meaning to
a building or a charm necklace,
to imbue meaning into the most

contingent images and the most
fragmentary events yes my task
is to restore the balance and scope
of meaning so you and I both
can get back to being human again

18 March 2022 H

diesel engine softly rumbling
in the driveway signals
that my father has returned
from the store, and as the clock
nears 10pm we're all in for the night
here at the Gage residence which
is a house made just for them
because this has been the setting
of our most unusual lives
for a quarter of a century
and I reflect upon this beloved
home of ours because without
it I would be nothing and even
today it serves an indispensable
purpose to keep me safe and
sane while counting the days
'til the government cuts me loose
but tonight is a stressful occasion
because I barely lay my head
down last night, exhaustion
of a strange sort, my muscles
aren't overworked, just awkwardly
stretched a little here, a little there
please don't judge me too harshly
if one of us collapses on the scene

18 March 2022 I

is it evil spirits?
 or brain damage?

can I really say

what's wrong
with me?

the conditions around me are without
question psychotic, but I wonder how
much really *is* "brain chemistry"?

19 March 2022 | Prelude: Midnight & Gratitude|

cross-legged on the bed
just prior to midnight
and I've been seated in
this exact position for an
indefinite period of space-time
my mattress is luxuriant as remembered
the sheets made of softest cotton
and pillows thick and fluffy

...and yet...

I'm still not under the covers
one has to wait for total exhaustion
to arrive, for when sharing a residence
with my parents I have to draw
a fine and clear line, but of
course I already HAVE experienced
their severe dominion, though in their
case they do provide me with
an extremely comfortable home
so I do not wish to repeat the mistakes
I've made because even here in the in anciently
crooked county of New Hanover the officers
are trying to bring *everybody*
down.

19 March 2022

with the windows thrown open
the apartment filled by the
breeze

I sit in the armchair

retracing the steps of scholarship
one never completely abandons
the mad projects of youth
when the books would unlock
the secret features of mind
and total awareness flooded
the nerves behind my eyes
that feeling of knowledge was sweet
and here, now, just for a moment
the shape of infinity is mine again

19 March 2022 B

back at Orange Street
the struggle resumes
and the deepest images
of truth and life and history
return within my sight
such knowledge overwhelms
any effort to enunciate
but merely to taste
the fabric of reality
places the very sense of life
in context and proportion
the sun bears down from heaven
the firetruck wails nearby
the wind-chime ringing softly
anticipating the imminent spring

19 March 2022 C

my solitary journey
has
begun to sadden
in the sense
that I can't imagine
how I'll recruit

(or do I mean “seduce”?)
(or is it “to court”?)

(do I year for a wife
or a disciple?)
(a comrade
or a lover?)

another soul
to join these
quixotic spasms
of dreaming
and to write it all down
and to affirm the dignity
of creation, as if the
earth had a chance
in hell as if the future
will fulfill the wagers of
the prophets as if it were
safe to fall asleep at night
because tomorrow
we will simply continue

19 March 2022 D (on the dock)

at mid-tide

seated cross-legged
dock-side

as the seagulls

squawk to the west
in their motley flock
beneath the sinking sun
of the cool evening
fish leap across
the surface of the creek
which ripples in the breeze
as the daylight spends itself
slowly away toward sunset

in the distance voices
of the neighbors faintly
chatting above the rush
of the wind and the cries
of the birds in arcs
swooping above the salt marsh
these are the scenes I was missing
it is good to know they
were waiting for me to return

19 March 2022 E

another chance

to feel the charm
and the glory
of springtime
by the creek
tomorrow the shifting
of seasons
takes place
and the mystery
in my head
is the face of the woman
with whom I’ll join
to endure the passing
of months and years
for truly it is hard
to mark the movement
of heavy, heavy time
while all alone, though I
have done just that
throughout the days
of my long and lonely vigil
which gives me a deeper sense
of what I’m missing
in my solitary condition
still, grateful for even

a partial breath of freedom
I inhale, I exhale, and taste
the salton taste of the air
which buffets my poetic soul

19 March 2022 F

it's always an enigma
how nature's powers
meet one another
in a dance of contradictions
the movement of hot and cold
determines the shape of the wind
and the push of the shaking airs
plays across the surface of the creek
so the wind blows one way
the tides pull another
and the swirling patterns
which result contrive shapes
that elude the vision of man

20 March 2022

no clear path forward
and the illness weighs
 so heavy on me
but it's harder to confront
when you're all alone
and I am barely treading water
and my weaknesses expand?
and my faculties decline?
does my body give out
in the face of the onslaught?
nothing certain at all
and life is barely possible
when so many ends are open
but much of that is only in
my head, in fact the doors

have been shut and the path
to the future is painfully narrow

20 March 2022 B

I doubt that anyone
 takes an interest in such as me
 in the point of deepest crisis
it would seem that they all
have made their decision
to sacrifice me at the altar
of normalcy and decorum
but of course everything I see
is pure hallucination
how can they ask me to come
back to reality when for me
there is no such thing and
why would I want to recover
in order to spend my time
with strangers what is the point
I am begging for a way
to escape this trap I will fight
to my final breath to defend
my own vision of beauty before
I exit the theater I intend to be
known for my gentleness and
brightness and not for my worst
nightmares, alas, today my only
conceivable method is to "write
my lines" in the most dignified
fashion and pray to be rescued
by someone who knows how to read

20 March 2022 C

I'm afraid to go to sleep
because I think I might die
from sheer heartbreak

shattered expectations
bubbles burst
ego deflated
optimism inverted
yes it is quite bleak
but perhaps this image of doom
is a trick of the light
or could it be that we all
are hurtling into oblivion
in terms of our connection
to our fellows: some of us
have organic associations
but I see only frayed and
withering links to disinterested
third parties who seek to minimize
conflict by filtering out my
deranged pleas for compassion
it is hard to imagine anyone
paying attention to the goodness
in my heart which I assumed
would be noticed but nobody
believes in that kind of thing
anymore and besides, mercy me,
I shouldn't let go of my basic
dream but I feel it slipping away

20 March 2022 D

I sure could go for a snack
but my eating disorder says
to abstain, or is that just
common sense? I am at a loss
when it comes to the most trivial
decisions

it's not just the distortion, jail has

made me permanently psychotic
and I do not want to numb this
condition with anti-psychotic drugs
I would rather endure it and suffer
authentically as long as I mind my
own business that ought to be my right
that is to embrace the supposedly
untouchable aspects of my consciousness
and learn to touch nirvana in the cloud
of fragments which is all that remains of my
mind I shouldn't accept this
diagnostic death sentence but what
choice do I have and besides, by now
the psychosis has lived up to the wildest
predictions has it not but what oh what
is the cause for I ought to be able
to grasp what has happened, how can
it be so forbidding and cold
the next step, I do not see it

20 March 2022 E

what shall I do with my broken mind?
does it matter if I write rambling
missives to various more-or-less
hostile acquaintances begging for a chance
to atone when it isn't even theirs
to forgive me the horror of this game
is that the other players do not believe
in forgiveness anymore that's not what
they have in mind for me, instead
they lay down the violent law and
taunt me to defy them that's the hidden
message but I will not take the bait
I have an infinitesimal grain of joy
still kept inside my hollow body

why should I give up when I might
just stick to my story even if it means
more pain, well, it depends, pain
is something I can take but jail
is something I cannot survive I
must stay out of jail I cannot go back
Lord God almighty keep my body
out of jail and hold my mind
together so they—body & mind
so they can look after my soul

20 March 2022 F

the evil chain of rubber and plastic
begins to dig into my flesh
because I cannot stop my pacing
already I walk with a limp
how do I make it to July?
I need to see someone special
before I lose my fucking mind
but I'm too afraid to ask again
so I can only pray for Caroline
oh dear this notion will destroy me
but she is such an angelic figure
that is how she seems to me
of course I'm completely out of touch
with the kind of well-adjusted life
that she has known for all these years
and I can't really offer her much
I wish it were otherwise but my life
is simply coming apart at the seams
I pray for Caroline to come sew me
back together why can't she see
that I need her to live, to live,
to live and to breath and to love
and to read and to eat and to sleep
I really do need Caroline that is my

folly, to think that she will show up,
I know she will not visit she
will not call nor write we never
again will say hello and we sure
didn't say goodbye because that
is how fair-weather friends take leave

20 March 2022 G

I must not yield to panic
nor give way to despair
the universe is vast
and time so very precious
I just cannot fathom
the purpose of this cruelty
it will never be enough
for my enemies are addicted to fear
and are driven to negate me
as completely as can be
I'm not even allowed to resent
the violence they do to my spirit
so sadistic silent patient empty
nothingness thrown full force
into the open wound in my heart

20 March 2022 H

I supplicate my desperate being
before the shadow of thou oh woman
I dare not name I cry for your
talents, I call for your touch,
I pine for your brightness, I thirst
for your kiss my solitary alarm
does ring for your ears oh would
that you knew what you are in my
sight I have no illusions left that
our futures connect there is no common
denominator there never was a hint

of romance ah but do you believe
that for a second oh woman who
I dare not address outside the mad
arena of this notepad I do not
expect to see the graceful figure
of thy sweet little body I will
not hear your voice again while we
are living and this is my mortality
blindly and mutely I do not care which
way leads to you oh woman who
has no worries just go on about
your business of healing the sick
and sharing your singular intelligence
with all the luminous company you
keep wherever you are oh do not
pay heed to my tragic fate oh angel
of my foolish daydreams I invest
your echoes with total significance
and have no doubt that in the land
of dreams you will visit me whether
you choose to admit it or not and
even your phantom substitution
in my lurid vision by night is a reason > to live

20 March 2022 I

for some reason

I turned off the lights
and slipped into bed
when I heard my mother cough
from downstairs, perhaps it's
a good thing that I still act
like a child when I stay up late
against the wishes of my worried
parents and sneak downstairs
to grab something to eat then
quickly back to the bedroom

before I get caught snacking
when I'm supposed to be watching
my weight as I said there
is something comforting about
my childlike condition it permits
me to write my strange poems
for the sake of pure imagination
and it even seems to preserve
a twinkle of youthful light in my
eyes which would otherwise be
empty from the trouble I've seen
I have grown-up ambitions and
full-sized problems but my true
personality is innocent, unfinished
acutely attuned to my inner child

20 March 2022 J

I somehow knew it would come to this
inhaling fairy dust to borrow magic
and conjure as many poems as
the day can bear to inspire, who
else does this sort of thing?
I do not assume that my strings
of written letters will be acknowledged
as "literature", I'm a fountain of
semantic elements no doubt but
they exhibit signs of confusion for those
who do not already adhere to the church
of political word-games so I'm not
surprised by the mess I'm in for
I've always anticipated my destruction
at the hands of the guardians still
the bathroom light gives just enough
to see the notepad, my weary body
has maybe a tad bit more juice in it
and I will use it up with strokes of

the pen

20 March 2022 K

how odd

a rash of acne
on my forehead
the bumps go deep
below the surface
 of my skin
they were already there
when I was still in jail
but they only swelled up
after a day of healthy sweat
 from cleaning
 and dancing
 with my guitar
so my mother sees
 that my face
 is breaking out
 like an adolescent flashback
so she buys me
 four different
 facial cleansers
the chemical mud
the astringent pads
and I found myself
at the bathroom sink
renewing teenage ritual
in the middle of the night
scrubbing all thoroughly
cleansing my image
until the blood began
 to trickle out:
a sensation of great relief

20 March 2022 L

during my incarceration
but also before and afterward
I try to be a student
of my body

 as it changes
and I wonder how long it takes
for the food I eat to reach
my lipid areas, this was what
I thought about as I stood
alone before the mirror
 in my jail cell gazing
at my features as the minutes
would crawl on by to contemplate
my body-weight without having
a scale to measure I just
stared at myself, my aging
self, my cookie-gobbling self,
and tried to see my reflection
as being handsome enough to
one day woo some unknown lady
if I could only live through
the dietary difficulties of jail
bloody jail that is how bleak
it got, standing close to the
mirror and guessing how much I
had gained from gorging myself
on canteen or how much I had
lost from chugging coffee until
I could feel the flesh reluctantly
melt of my wretched bones

20 March 2022 M

how did I become so disorganized
or is the dread and the doom
just another symptom of illness
 within my personality, the breakdown

of self-image in the wake
of my collapse into nonsense?
should I pretend to be sunny
while I suffer and decompose?
is there any hope that I might
be improving in spite of my feelings
to the contrary? no one can say
what to do here, my condition causes
people to confront the emptiness
and they don't like that at all

20 March 2022 N

the strings of language I spin forth
have a shade of clever form
but the content is almost psychotic,
isn't it all? psychotic, that is?
let's concede that psychosis reigns supreme:
how did I get this way, and was it my
own fault that my mind became so harsh
and fretful, so narrow and tense?

the friends who turned into enemies
what ever do they think about the man
they have marked off as deviant and
toxic? do their judgments tell me
something true about myself, or are
they just haters, or is social life
just a matter of taste, all relative?
should I be sad or glad to be despised
by these people, how long should I hang
my head low feeling black and blue
about these rejections? Is there a
contagion that will spread without limit?
how bad is this, anyway? How do I
find out whether the poison has left me
or not? I am in the chamber of woes

20 March 2022 O

my ideal semi-fictional pictures
of people were meant to be generous
in imagining that my associates were
a special and meaningful gang
who would somehow change the world
and seize the reigns of leadership
from here I see that the scheme made
no sense, that's not who these folks
really are, they do altogether different
sorts of things, they have a plan and
a scene already so they don't see
the need for some wild new game
I have failed so completely to grasp
the minds of others, they are simply
different from me, different from how
I dreamed, different as can be

20 March 2022 P

and now I'm breaking out
in hives (!)
who knows why
perhaps my skin reflects
the conflicts in my soul
(if that is what they are)
but it could just be a brain disease
afflicting me, a deterioration of
the cognitive faculties, a decrease
in the function of thought, one
cannot rule that out but I sense something
stranger at work, it's a deficit
of morale and a failure of pleasure
and while there are chemical pathways
to the colors and shapes of the mind
there is also metaphysical action

what I need to know is how and
why my heart got so fucking broken
that it made me lose my head

20 March 2022 Q

might the madness result
from having glimpsed something
too profound, too real?
perhaps the visions of total
awareness were authentic, maybe
for an instant I knew the score
perfectly, I once could feel like
I knew something worth knowing,
say something worth hearing,
but now every fact is pointless
in light of the absurdity and
barbarism which govern my world
most of all I perceive confusion
an absence of standards, a want
of comprehension among the pieces
I confront my own sickness and
hopelessness by scratching these
words in a series, it ain't even
close to a daisy-chain I need
to hear a voice which has something
good to say, it has been too long

20 March 2022 R

it might not be much longer
before exhaustion sets in
and the peace of day's end
arrives to deliver me
from the nausea and the terror
I pray for a cure
or an escape
I pray for healing

for rehabilitation

20 March 2022 S

it only *seems* futile
but it really isn't
I have no choice but to believe
but presently I boil with panic
because there is nowhere to turn
I want to write but I'm afraid
of writing, they have done something
to me which I cannot describe
I see no way to recover, what
would that mean, I have no audience
anymore, the ones who try to care
have no concept of what goes
through my afflicted mind, it has
gotten worse and worse and I still
have not seen the end of it, the
ankle monitor remains and it is
driving me completely psychotic
because there is no future when
you perceive the threat to take you
back to jail I pray for wisdom
and I plead for mercy while
I wait for the body to reach
a state of rest, at last, oh save me

20 March 2022 T

the truth of "schizophrenia"
is ever-so-elusive
one thing to say is that
psychosis occurs in circumstances
which seem hopeless and closed
off from possibilities for growth
and improvement, only someone
who sees no way out manifests

the pathologies which we say
are “schizophrenic”, the need
for “delusions” stems from defects
in “reality”, the drift into fantasy
is natural when the present has
no future and when toil is devoid
of joy, the theories of this “illness”
do not account for the violent
power which forces us to submit
to this morbid category I don’t
want to accept it but the momentum
of the label overwhelms me I’m
getting more and more “psychotic”
as the “delusions” crumble and
I’m left with nothing left to believe
in I need a new daydream I need
another hallucinated promised-land
so I have reason to go to sleep

22 March 2022

with every day I pull myself
closer to the point of balance
but I’m not just chasing euphoria
no, I’m still trying to conquer
institutions to overthrow the structures
which suffocate our hearts and prevent
us from doing anything truly beautiful
it’s a whole new level and an uncharted
space, it is radical and natural,
it is purposeful and deliberate
but no less intuitive, no less
inspired by the muses we’ve neglected
for so long we forgot what art
was meant to be and to do, today
I continue to race neck-and-neck
with the nimbus of the cynical demons

who silently mock me in my effort
to achieve a new moment, to spark
a golden age, to recover the secret
essence of the past and make it sing
to our virgin ears of the old time
and its meanings, the abandoned
superstitions and the passions we
have muted for the sake of order
and progress, the evidence of what
humanity might be remains uncollected
and unseen but the seeds of escape
from our predicament lay
dormant within the record of
our species and its tragicomic march

22 March 2022 B

is it even possible to break away
completely from the nightmare past?
because it was also an era of
the most intoxicating and life-affirming
dreams, a pilgrimage through the maze
of spectral ideas, the days of illusion,
or also the days of cosmic insight
the triumphant glimpses of higher truth
it is said to me that such flashes
of revelation are mirages that appear
in the brain of a sick and lonely
man, that the entire universe where I
traveled and danced was a figment
of my diseased imagination, and I may
not return to such fantasies, nor
visit the spirits who used to be so close
to my identity, but the unbelievers
who scorn my visionary tendencies
must envy my madness, that’s why

they insist on pain and emptiness
as curative and virtuous, that is why
they mostly aim to meddle with the circuits
of transcendental mind, this contradiction
between numbness and sense, between
fever and chill, has yet to dissipate
no, the foundations of humanity are
undermined, we are asking dangerous questions

22 March 2022 C

amid all the indignities
and the troubles and the burdens
one thing which keeps me together
is my striking appearance
the trauma is written on my face
and my body was reformed by
the pressures of confinement
yet somehow I have retained
a slightly darker but intriguing
variation on the beauty which has
always been my unspoken source
of energy, the cause of my moxy
and the key to my verve, not
everyone has eyes for such a dreamy
countenance, some people take one
look at my figure and see weakness
and subordination, but
I know also that certain sensitive
personalities delight in the sight of me
the energy which crackles
from within me, the weather-worn
contours of my tidy physique
the years of carceral brutality
did a strange number on my very
organism, and in the mirror
I can notice this nightmare written

into my muscles, engraved upon
my skin my image makes
plain: thanks for the makeover!

22 March 2022 D

thus did spring commence
all fraught with nervous feedback
coursing through me, subtle toxicity
seeping into my makeup, or at
least that was my sensation
as I slogged my way to
afternoon which was cool and bright
as I finally left the house and once
I was weaving down Oleander Drive
with the music turned up I started
to receive the waves of significance
from the busy-buzz flow of cars
coursing along the arteries of Wilmington
on whatever business people handle
as the seasons transition I was flush
with dissonance and noise but I stood
in line at the bank while a crazy
autistic hippy character stood bickering
with the teller about signatures and
tokens, he was unbearably deviant
to the folks in line behind him as he
spoke like a robot and the manager
was giving him dirty looks but anyway
I lost patience and walked out to
my red station wagon that can zip
zip zoom down the roads that lead
from Leeward Lane to Orange Street
when I reached the apartment I
gulped down a glass of sparkling wine
then spontaneously got down to spring
cleaning, which I did, hooray!