

(Chronological, circa 2007-2013.) (Not all good but not all bad.)

1.

how nice to be sweet
to you and hear the word *piano*
and your breath to taste it
tomorrow

2. (Tutti Saluti)

You are better for it
so then won't you
miserably fashion words in a manner to
call the chaps diamonds
or forge a new opinion of yourself.

No.

Instead crease the daylight with the taunt of hello
grimaced from a mouth begging
the pardon of propriety

Your convivial affection
no matter the alarming falsity
or the obscenity
of all these day-times you've maligned
been fond to invite
then to entertain.

Buckle the shade of mid-day with a groan of agreement
guttered from the low of your throat
coerced from a nod to assuage doubt.

No men mattered more to me
or less to my memory
than those I lited through their loss
with drink and handshakes and solemn oaths
to never make a mistake again.

3. (So Then)

I.

misfit savant broke the mother's wall
and slain from the womb choked aloud
first sound from another bungling
broad-fat of flesh, here for all of you
but mostly himself.

II.

in the 'ole man's backyard holding a brush against the wall
stood pouting, forever entranced with that big white
for it is only in a photograph that this instance exists and
not at all in my mind.

I've no particle of a recollection of this
moment
I've a perfect intuition of it and am convinced
truly
It existed as an ideal beginning.

I do recall the awful days of summer
towing back and forth the mower, the heaving
think and glued grass and odor of gasoline
thinking while I paced out that lawn behind
that machine as it belched, snorted, chopped
of the girls I fancied to fuck and the elaborate
opportunities that might one day prevail
to give me a nose-full of cunt
astrigent air all accursed with grassy signal
blade to blade, he is coming.

III.

shorn from me
that moment made epistemological
when traveling the Turnpike in Albany my mother
turned and spoke she said
something I will never remember that sent
the flock of lies flying she sent
the world another cadaver to embalm
another fox to arouse the hens
another diary of poor riddles to be written.

please I've always asked "please"
and they never did, did they
but for a few and for them I warm and smile
and think of grandfather
what brutal crutches fastened to his elbows
what a forlorn fuckheaded nightmare of a life to abide
what for it, but empty beer cans and a crucifix
I love you, oh god I love you!

echoes of smallness like a turned-out window or
a scolded mirror flattening the image around a corner
duller, more vague in it's comprehension
that I've caught only a moment ago.

4. (Excerpts)

I've felt their songs on the bottoms of my feet
and their flies have curled around my face.

I saw the hero return unwelcomed to his mother's country,
a schoolboy heart soured by the sea and
sky wracked upon the stones of one more
ancient city, one more ancient hillspcak
forged unlearned ages previous above the mottled brows
of an evacuated people.

I saw him coming in morning to pay no attention
then creeping lackluster at night's fall
amidst the throng in a practiced laze
his hair perfect for no-one
his body a thousand year temple
burnished flawless by the ageless salt
lapping again, again.

So friendly their waters
so forgiving their songs
enshrining the most minuscule transgressions
while they slay so effortlessly whatever benefits them
always calling the other side of the mountain "they".

5.

It is almost time to pluck the strawberries from their beds,
twined lovely among the lines of grapevines,
the fortified luster of shade seeming to eroticize the earth.

I hear behind me the careful breathing
of an attentive lover as he shoulders
his bride on his hips, their pulse and pour being
everything that is beautiful to me.

6. (The Sodom Problem)

There is something of pigfilth to it all
as if the town itself were acrid,
ammoniated, offensive to an old god
who has contrived to punish all here
in the old-fashioned manner of annoyances.

They all still keep on though, don't they
regardless of the trifles
though I think I prefer to
respect the likes of Paestum
a community that rejected it's curses.

As would I, except that I am not
unsure why, except that perhaps
I believe I've something to learn from them,
uncertain if they are even my kin.

7. (end excerpts.)

That word they use for laughter is so peculiar
in its similarity to my word for
to tear asunder.

Brought out plain in her eyelids
and at their edge, their remarkable edge
the famous affinity of love
rendered in a curl indiscernible
without sound.

Might the lowering of clouds to the earth
compound air and leaves
forge and heavy the uninterested soil
that sinks and rises and salves the wounded
bent all at once to broker with the dust
for one more day year and minute
with her loveliness.

8. (excerpts 2)

On my skin a bit of the regular shame scent
credent yet impaired, imparted to remind
my shallow, shallow self of what is acquired
by a hand badgered and dumb

still swollen from the rush of swordplay
still frozen from the frost of Virginian winter
still firm from the choke of my enemy
still smooth from the bath bore by my widow
still vermin that spurns the offered shield

the offered cloak
the offered bowl
the offered cane
the offered furnace
the offered veil.

That which were and that which is and that which will be
has always been for me and always will

Still I love this dread of nothing
for all of the things I have been given.

9. (end excerpts 2)

Spent the morning murdering flies
allying my mind with the cold
onset of winter,
the allure of heavy clothes
the placation of a body against a body
the diverging sound
how is it that the air scores then
chords of a voice that
tends to the shards of a thought more preciously?

10. (goodauld sun.)

The shellshocked ripeness of lackjoy
curling about the windows
yellow fingerfeeling around the window sill
squatting and perched
cold outside-in

Mouthing ringsounds with the sunshine
mouth agape, the dullards appetite for
a circled heart sent
sent
sent

Making those lovelies open and close
shuttered scormless among the daisies
and the light once fed upon
noses up against the pane
litup on the floor allspent and holy

Then thinking of cold becomes allthink
and of itself
as all
always thinking
of coldread

reeling away from it
cushioning against the glassface of whatspast
and therein
and thereupon

Glowchar thrilling the vast unhappened
reflected back to your candletip

stared at
spoken to
dignified as a shred of existence
meantobe and valuable

Otherthan heatspeak bragging its best qualities
only.

11. (excerpts 3)

The old men in Gerace do not sit often
and whole days long I've seen them milling
over this old gravel
this pack of rocks resting as always
tender

Being fed and a bit of wine
and time, time is
comfortable

as it walks the *Borgo* and
considers pausing
among the cats and garbage
and fallen down churches

those men turn with three steps
like animated tripods

and climb back to the top.

12. (Next book, craft paper, Alex trip) (FORGET)

The click of women cutting at plates
my leg covered in smashed ants
scorned corpses smeared and not eaten

The odor of zucchini.

Pulling logs across cobbles
descend exhausted to stare
at malingering cats and ripe leaves
each painted for the sun's permission
to feed sugar to water
to molest the minds of men
perfectly

chirp chirp chirp

The birds at the table curious
their legs nervous

a pet a pet

They stay in a dangerous way
pondering wine and the shave
of skin petting against
skin
in the doldrums of *mezzogiorno* we take
baths in each other's ignorance
our eager arms flapping.

13. (But the noise, still)

A thousand drums barking in the trees

a cry
a cry for
testosterone

flailing like lizards askew

I want to become old and unapproachable
a senile stag
stuttering through days on swollen feet
having

built a concourse for scarab hunters
children forged from beach dirt and
foggy breath

charming and haggard in the daylight
a beast washed upon the shore
half consumed.

14. (A scare in the morning)

Kinky went to the toilet
and forgot her hair plush as a pillow
in the pot on the counter

famous poverty
overwhelms this food
and Kinky
rends sugar from the clay
and salt from her skin
begins the day with singing.

15. (Catapult earth)

They are tired of my affection
I am tired of my affection
boys on the playground searching
for the One

a plastic ball for beating
against the wall

but One

but One.

16. (Nice shoes)

Brethren become fire
become fire
become fire

and saying the wrong name
corrupts the heart

flies in the wine

apartment doors ajar
grasping the whole sky
and *casino* below

flies in the wine.

17. (Africo)

Din of cowbells in the Aspromonte
piling their piles
the aroma of authentic hospitality

Keen pines sway

Rubble heifer bent
plaster painted by the Ionian air

She grasps a breath
for another step ascending, descending

into cow sway
they stagger step
eyes full of love

Slaughtered like every village
in time
food for the stars
struck upon the earth

Always put a long table in the yard
for the violence of feeding

A place to careen into the joy of fulfillment.

18. (Stromboli)

Eyes scribbled on slate glare
record or ensure
neither nor
the haste of hands
adding sugar to beer

asyouageasyouageasyouageasyouage idiot grin

idiot charm
balustrade bacchus
brigaded, bloated
wheeled in to be stared at

SHEISASFINEASRIPENEDFRUIT APLUCK APLUCK

shouting carnivals to the clouds, the meanest men vacation
inside volcanoes, scoring rocks with canes wrought from limbs
a thigh snapped reckons the time of day, heralds wind to shut
the sky and pour closed the eyelids
of men
of women
cowed against hephaestian glow

BUT AS SURE AS A COCK CROWS

there is a button
hemmed within your
heart
to refine impairment
make absolute the ash that
steadies you

little girl pluck and twirl
Stromboli waits for you
a hiccup in the dusk.

19. (End Alex. Begin Scraps.) (Fresh Air)

I think everything began
with spherical calligraphy
and
no one ever dies
they just skip to the side.
No one ever dies
they just skip to the side.

20. (The accumulated blur)

I know there is an opportunity that
the pencil won't hit the floor
a fulfilled wish is still
a roulette spin
I like the illusion.

21. (Economy of color)

Novelty and anger
describe an object
stop describing objects
--follow turned stones
the rush of lit leaves

whorled like birds
or a swarm of flies
as dull as an empty confessional
known through
lenses.
known through lenses
known through lenses and
lattice.

22. (Love is the Atheist's crutch)

All spent up all spent up
to makesounds and
make light after sunset

we've lost we've
lost success, no
traded permanent
dawn for rest

panic panic.

23. (Pushbutton life)

It took two decades
to stop using flowery
language and I'm still
ashamed to appear foolish
but I love James May
and damn do I appreciate
earnesty.

24. (Your ugly poems are nothing now) / KILL

Where is the rest
Where is the rest
My nose crooks when
I smile
Just like all the rest
My sand
Becomes salt
aspiring mud
You've brushed against my
bricks
and
Feared their collapse
You've heard stories
And can make them
And they are all the same.