

AT HOME, IN KANSAS CITY

By

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Andrew West

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Abstract

The poems that make up the substantive portion of this dissertation have been organized into a sequence made up of two large sets of poems. The poems of the first set, called “Essays,” neither describe nor evaluate the objects, individuals, actions, or events of their titles: rather, each poem presents an attempt to make sense of them and of my response to them, as one attempts to make sense of any novel experience and of one’s response to it. In this way, the poems are involved in both (self)observation and (self)examination; they take the measure of what it is that one sees, just as they evince an awareness of one’s own disposition and sensibility in the measuring. This first set opens up into the second set, entitled “Poems,” composed ostensibly of the generalizations, universal or otherwise, with which the inductive method culminates. And yet, these generalizations cannot quite participate in a reification of that method, for they are not bound, nor do they mark or trace their binding, to the experiences and the responses that precede them. They are generalizations, they may be said to “say something,” but to arrive at that saying, they have had to veer away, to find some space where the intractable complexities of the world itself and the objects, events, actions, individuals that constitute it may be held in abeyance. Ultimately, as the reader moves from one poem to the next, from one set to the other, he or she may come to experience a narrative, of the poet trying to find something to say about the world and his experience of it, that provides some context for a realization of the possibility and productivity of a critique of the conventional. The poems frustrate the application of conventional frames just as they use them as points of reference, providing the reader with a mechanism for assimilating the poems to some point of view while compelling him or her to work away from any conventional construal to something more novel, yet nevertheless meaningful.

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Critical Introduction

The Amateur's

When I began these poems, I wrote, as Lyn Hejinian puts it in her Introduction to *The Language of Inquiry*, knowing that “poetics...is a pragmatic realm” and that “the reasons and reasoning that motivate poet (and poem) are embedded in the world and in the language with which we bring it into view.”¹ I wrote simply as someone who was trying after a long absence to return to a way of living. I had not written poetry, really, at all, in nearly a decade, and to my surprise, as I wrote, I came to feel the need to write more acutely than I had imagined possible. The last few years, then, while reading in the fields with which my dissertation was to be concerned, I wrote poems.

If a justification is that which comes before the act and a rationalization that which comes after, what I can offer as a justification of the poems is twofold. One, I felt that I had lost, though in retrospect I do not think I ever had it, the authority of the scholar, or even of the educated man. This feeling arose almost certainly from my own psychological condition(s), rather from any appraisal of my position in the world, but it arose nonetheless. I could not think of anything to say, and I could not think of having nothing to say as Socratic. Two, and most importantly, the palliative for this condition turned out to be the pattern. As poetry has been conceived of as song, as painting, as sculpture, as story, I conceived of it as craft, and the working of the patterns—whether marked by punctuation, parts of speech, iterations of (the forms of) words, etc.—of that craft (as in a cross-stitch), even when it produced only intermittently some sense, was enough to keep me writing.

Poetry, as I have come to see it, may be defined as the superimposition of some (set of) pattern(s), whether arbitrary or motivated, on those fundamental to the language that we experience as intelligible: that is to say, those patterns syntactic and pragmatic that define the standards of prose both in its conventional and superlative forms. A poetic pattern may be fashioned out of the full range of material generally associated with the domain of language—sights and sounds, marks, categories, rules, concepts,

¹ Lyn Hejinian, introduction, *The Language of Inquiry* (Berkeley: U of California P, 2000) 2.

etc. Its realization alters the patterns both syntactic and pragmatic that are the basis of the forms that define prose as it moves along a spectrum from the conventional to the novel. In fact, this alteration may constitute that very mechanism by which a sentence or clause, stanza or line is worked from one end of the spectrum to the other: the formulation and imposition of the poetic pattern that through which the poet approaches the new and in so doing evokes ideas that likewise approach the new. Crucially, though the ideas evoked by (relatively) novel language may in turn be categorized as novel, the ideas that motivate that language, or, rather, the ideas motivating the patterns that through their realization give rise to it, may not themselves be novel (only the array of objects, the poem or poems, binding loosely one set of ideas to the other). The poetic pattern allows one who cannot find his or her way out of the conventional, linguistically or conceptually, or who having found his or her way out cannot yet find something new to say to do nevertheless some kind of work, composing an array of objects that may well realize in spite of everything some expression outside of the conventional and so evoke some understanding outside of it. In effect, then, the locus of expression becomes not the idea or ideas that motivate it or the idea or ideas evoked by it but the very pattern or patterns that constitute it. The work becomes tactile, constructive in the most literal sense, setting objects into an array defined by some pre-established pattern(s). It takes on the meditative rhythms of the repetitive work of craft in no small part because, though it risks producing an array that does not and even cannot evoke some cogent understanding or response, it lets fall by all the anxieties associated with the production and reception of an expression meant to evoke in turn the ideas that motivate it.

The following sequence plays with words, word forms and functions, parts of speech, turns of phrase, etc. at the same time it explores the sense of punctuation, the work that it does to aid understanding, to mark the rhythms of reading, to create ambiguities or ironies, all within the confines of the sonnet form, with its turn, its moment, or the possibility of some moment, of supplementation. The patterns internal to the sonnets are meant to work as a palliative for all of the aforementioned anxiety and confusion. They give coherence to the writing of the poems; they make of them an even quotidian exercise. The repetition of punctuation marks, words, parts of speech, turns of phrase instantiates patterns

that have to them a logic—a set of parts arrayed in accordance with some set of rules that all together constitute some whole—that may be realized again and again in and through the writing of the poems even when the language of the poems themselves risks illogicality (because it cannot be organized in accordance with some frame). This is in no small part what suburbia—that place where I have long lived and where I wrote most of this sequence—taken here in all of its manifold iterations and modalities—works to accomplish. Through the materialization of conventional patterns (construed as expressions both linguistic and extra-linguistic), suburbia creates a series of palliatives that works successfully to ameliorate the confusions, the antagonisms, the offenses, the discomfitures of complexity (or, as it were, diversity). It replaces the incoherence risked by this complexity with the coherence of a set of attenuated patterns: it is in fact their impoverishment that determines the patterns' value precisely because it ultimately bears responsibility for the ease and efficiency of their use. These patterns may then be taken up and put to work in order to produce successful social (cultural, political, economic, etc.) interactions. It is small talk as a totalizing phenomena. The patterns in this sequence work to make complexity endurable, as those that define suburbia would seem to do at their most decent, but they attempt to make it so without destroying it and the possibility of meaningfully experiencing it, as those that define suburbia seem so unable to avoid doing.

The pattern of the sonnet and the threat of its turn play an integral role in the development of this tension between the difficult experience of complexity and the mitigation of this difficulty. The turn not only threatens to expose the complexity—by way of the witticism, appraisal, digression, inanity, etc.—that the pattern seeks to ameliorate but also to undermine the very pattern of which it would seem to be a part—by way of a metastatic supplementation: it branches out and away again and again from some center and in so doing opens pathways that may reveal a vibrant diversity. Traditional and revisable, familiar and dynamic, the sonnets represent the houses that define the subdivisions of the suburbs and in so doing bring also to presence the sonnets' strange remainder, itself conventionalized, as certain punch-lines have become conventional, certain epigrams become clichés, which, almost in spite of itself, turns away from the conventional patterns of the sonnets, turns toward the very complexity that the suburbs

work to subsume. The turns of these sonnets exist, then, as moments of possible exploration and inquiry, of turns toward understanding, its revisions and perspicuities, where the opportunity may arise to break away from the pattern, to reject the palliative, to enter (again) into realms of complexity to (attempt to) find for the (first) time something to say about the world and its stuff and to share it with others. As one moves through the sequence, they become more and more a cogent and coherent comment on the preceding lines, which have become themselves more readily construable (as the punctuation becomes less arbitrary, less caught up in the psychologically palliative effects of pattern making, moves from marking the rhythms of reading to participating in the work of cogent and coherent expression; as the play of words ceases to be merely the anxious and ultimately inadequate attempt to unify or harmonize the parts of a set or sequence, becomes instead the reification of a process of exploration, of working through permutations and so possibilities of meaning). The patterns ground the sequence's movement from absence to presence, destructive to constructive, and so are the locus of its attempt to bring to the critique its productive, because empathetic, aspect; they formalize the concerns of a suburban writer wandering so often into abstractions in order to initiate as an ethical participant a conversation outside of the homogenized and homogenizing expressions of the suburbs and yet still in some conventional conversational mode.

The Professional's

In "The Rejection of Closure," Lyn Hejinian writes, "The 'open text', by definition, is open to the world and particularly to the reader. It invites participation, rejects the authority of the writer over the reader and thus, by analogy, the authority implicit in other (social, economic, cultural) hierarchies. It speaks for writing that is generative rather than directive."² An open text, unlike a "closed text," does not prompt for a single cogent and coherent, imaginatively-constructed and actionable construal: that is, the open text does not present an experientially and so cognitively entrenched array of objects

² Lyn Hejinian, "The Rejection of Closure," *The Language of Inquiry* (Berkeley: U of California P, 2000) 43.

conventionalized in and through the activities of those participating in the systems and institutions of a society and culture. The writer, then, of an open text must find some way of arriving at an array that deviates from the conventions, in this case, of a language, such that a reader will be unable to assimilate her experience of that text to some entrenched construal. Whether narrative or counternarrative, at its most schematic, a dynamic array of objects, individuals, actions, and events experienced as it works or is worked from one place and/or moment to another, the open text frustrates the application of some conventional frame. But this frustration is not ultimate. The reader may experience the open text as that which can be made meaningful in and through her own work. It is through a process of constructing imaginative and actionable meanings and in sharing those meanings with others that the poetic project, in its fullness, of Hejinian, and other Language Poets, is realized.

As Hejinian notes, “[I]t is not hard to discover devices ... that may serve to ‘open’ a poetic text.”³ One of the devices most closely associated with the Language Poets, a group, narrowly or broadly construed, with which Hejinian is often associated, is that of “torquing.” In his essay “The New Sentence,” Ron Silliman describes torquing as “the projection of the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection into that of combination.”⁴ For Silliman, as a principle of poetic construction, torquing disregards any syntactical ground from which one may choose among various (parts of) syntagma. As a consequence, it reduces all syntagmatic relations to that of concatenation and thus defines every syntagma as substitutable for every other syntagma. The only combinatorial rules then are semantic; sentences result from the combination of clauses, phrases, words that either evoke a conventional (counter)narrative or defeat one. Thus, sentences cannot be torqued without the poet’s first having gained some awareness of the conventional narratives, and counternarratives, that motivate and are in turn prompted for by particular syntagma (and the sentences they form). Torquing may be construed as a device that “opens texts” only when some conventional (counter)narrative evoked by a sentence or some set of its parts has been undermined in and through the manipulation of the sentence such that any attempt by the reader to

³ Hejinian, “The Rejection of Closure” 43.

⁴ Ron Silliman, “The New Sentence,” *The New Sentence* (New York: Segue-Roof, 1989) 89.

construct that conventional (counter)narrative is defeated. Thus, torquing is at its most subversive when the substitution of one turn of phrase for some other turn of phrase works to evoke a schema incommensurate with those evoked by the rest of the sentence.

As Gertrude Stein says at the opening of “Plays” in *Lectures in America*, “I made a discovery which I considered fundamental, that sentences are not emotional and that paragraphs are. I found out about language paragraphs are emotional and sentences are not and I found out something else about it. I found out that this difference was not a contradiction but a combination and that this combination causes one to think endlessly about sentences and paragraphs because the emotional paragraphs are made up of unemotional sentences.”⁵ Though perhaps not for Stein, for Silliman and Hejinian (and others), any series of words, not just one that constitutes a paragraph per se, that an individual experiences as emotional entails the evocation of some (counter)narrative. The poet of the open text, then, identifies some combination of words experienced as such and so the (counter)narrative evoked in and through the experience. The poet considers the syntagmatic units paradigmatically, that is, treats units that may well be (but do not have to be) syntactically defined—prepositional phrases, verb phrases, relative clauses, adverbial clauses, etc.—as straightforwardly substitutable with both other units of that class—whether schematic or rich—and units of any other class—likewise whether schematic or rich: e.g., “He waited for her at the altar” > “He waited that it would not be so angry at his condition.” Again, insofar as certain (counter)narratives have themselves become conventionalized—as conventions constitutive of the culture of some community or group within the larger society—one needs and wants to avoid them as well: e.g., “She waited for her at the altar” would seem to be no more acceptable than the original. What the writer of the open text is ultimately after is the transformation of the Steinian “paragraph” into the Steinian “sentence,” into that which is “unemotional.” In this sense, the open text is open because it does not prompt for or evoke any one particular (counter)narrative but presents itself as open to an indefinite number of readings, and it remains open precisely because any narrative associated with it must be

⁵ Gertrude Stein, *Lectures in America, Gertrude Stein: Writings 1932-1946*, ed. Catharine R. Stimpson and Harriet Chessman (New York: Library of America, 1998) 244

consciously imposed by the reader in and through a recognition of the conventional (counter)narrative subverted and the refusal to enact some facile substitution.

It is this absence of (counter)narrative, and the processes through which it is achieved, that makes of torquing a meaningfully critical act. The Language Poets do not seek the decontextualized sentences of some of Stein's more radical work: those sentences that in and of themselves live as sentences precisely because they are not motivated by and do not prompt for any (counter)narrative. Steinian sentences may be meaningful insofar as they are of a language and are experienced as well-formed in that language, but that meaning does not necessarily presuppose, imply, or entail other particular sentences (though, of course, they presuppose sentences generally as constituents of a language) and so do not necessarily “fit” into some narrative as beginning, middle, or end. With these sentences, there is neither “with” nor “against”: even though they may be said to be open, they do not necessarily prompt for any activity by the reader because they are not part of any process, whether poetic or narrative, experienceable by a reader. In contrast, the open texts of Language Poets display or are meant to display both the process(es) in and through which the writer opens them and the (counter)narratives that have been critiqued as part of that (those) process (processes). They evince (or are meant to) the identification of that which has become conventionalized and the revision of it, so that what is conventional is made irremediable, and they invite the reader to respond with his or her own act of creation—the text is open but it has been opened by the poet and so is opening up for some creative activity by the reader, the very possibility of which a consequence of the negative work, a kind of clearing away, as it were, of torquing.

But there remain questions surrounding whether or not readers experience these open texts as enabling and inviting, if not demanding, their own creative work. In “Migratory Meaning,” Silliman writes, “Specifically, the issue is a question as to the alleged capacity of meaning to unify a work of writing, to create and endow coherence, whether or not this be conceived as ‘beyond the experience of

words' or within them."⁶ Silliman recognizes that many, if not most, readers will try hard to unify a recalcitrant work, in this instance, an open text, with whatever meaning, linguistic or extralinguistic, that they have available to them. In so doing, they inaugurate a process of meaning-making that fails to consider meaning and the making of it per se, that reduces manifold possible (counter)narratives to a single actual (counter)narrative and in so doing destroys any awareness or understanding of (their) difference(s), or they refuse to inaugurate any process of meaning-making at all, (dis)content, as it were, with their experiences of antagonism, offense, discomfiture, confusion, etc. To knit the gaps and tangles of an open text together so as to author a facile (counter)narrative in spite of the work that they do to make such a thing impossible is to do a kind of violence to it, unraveling all the political and pragmatic work that Silliman, and his fellow poets, has tried so hard to accomplish. Yet the same sensibility that keeps poems open and antinomian is the same sensibility that compels Silliman and others to refrain from giving readers specific advice (if they must give advice at all) concerning the reading of their work (even when readers ask for it). In the end, they may offer little more than a well-worn series of vague prescriptions—"read more actively," "pay better attention," "consider more complex readings," etc.—for the very generality of these prescriptions follows from a political project intent on the rejection of authoritarian positions.

The difficulty in arriving at a full understanding of what has gone wrong with the reading of these poets remains in part a byproduct of the use of the term "reading" in the domain of poetry. In *The Brown Book*, Ludwig Wittgenstein admits that cognition plays a key role in the activity named by the word "reading," and he notes that some feel "a great temptation ... to regard the conscious mental act as the only real criterion distinguishing reading from not reading."⁷ But he makes it clear that this temptation while well-motivated leads one in the search for the criteria of a definition of reading to insuperable difficulties, for if one asserts that "this internal working is the real criterion for a person's reading or not

⁶ Ron Silliman, "Migratory Meaning," *The New Sentence* (New York: Segue-Roof, 1989) 109-10.

⁷ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *The Brown Book, The Blue and Brown Books*, 2nd ed. (New York: Harper, 1960) 121.

reading,” then one must acknowledge that “in fact no such mechanisms are known to us in these cases.”⁸

This inability, then, to gain direct access to the conscious mental activity constitutive of reading has resulted in a characterization of it in wholly intersubjective terms. Though understood as an activity that does not simply reduce to a behavior, its cognitive aspect has been held in abeyance on the assumption that little to nothing can be said about it. Consequently, “close reading” has come to designate not the activity of reading per se but the product of that activity, the effect of a cause. Thus, any attempt to shape or control the activity of reading does so by defining the *product* of reading on the assumption that the product, properly defined, will only be achievable in a very particular way. Though Language Poets offer general suggestions for how the reader’s state of mind ought to be when reading a poem, they do most of their work by specifying how it is that readings, as products, should look and sound. In this vein, Silliman and others have tried to redefine close reading in and through a surfeit of essays, as responses, on the work of fellow poets. Yet, as has been noted, close readings persist in the face of their every attempt to alter them. The question then must be: why?

Importantly, in his own attempt to understand the problem and to give a fuller account of why readers continue to make such mistakes, Silliman himself turns to Charles Fillmore and Paul Kay. He notes the affinity between the tendencies of readers and a principle, the Parsimony Principle, first articulated by Fillmore and Kay. Silliman suggests that this principle elucidates the process whereby a reader “converts the latency of the text and the ideological dimensions of presupposition into an actual Envisionment [defined by Fillmore and Kay as ‘some coherent...understanding of the states of affairs that exist in the set of possible worlds compatible with the Language of the text’], combining frames always to a maximum of unification with a minimum of effort.”⁹ The Parsimony Principle gives to Silliman a piece of the puzzle, but it is only with Paul Grice’s Cooperative Principle that that puzzle may be completed. In his essay “Logic and Conversation,” Grice defines the Cooperative Principle as such: “Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or

⁸ Wittgenstein, *The Brown Book* 120.

⁹ Silliman, “Migratory Meaning” 115.

direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged.”¹⁰ Based upon this principle, Grice distinguishes four categories of maxims—of Quality, Quantity, Relation and Manner—that contain stipulations of the sort, “Try to make your contribution one that is true,” “Be relevant,” “Avoid obscurity in expression,” “Avoid ambiguity,” “Be orderly.”¹¹ Of course, as Grice himself has acknowledged, the Cooperative Principle is neither entirely prescription, for there are any number of contexts in which relevancy, obscurity, ambiguity, disorder, etc. may be used to effect outcomes that their antinomies cannot, nor entirely descriptive, for it is clear (or should be clear) that conversations often, for any number of reason, do not proceed cooperatively. And yet, Grice’s Cooperative Principle reveals what the Parsimony Principle alone cannot, for the open text violates nearly every rule—e.g., it does not avoid obscurity in expression, does not avoid irrelevance, is not orderly (that is, felicitously ordered), etc.—that falls out from the maxims that define it, as a description of an organic “ethics” of conversation; thus, the Cooperative Principle suggests that a reader of an open text cannot but construe it as (conversationally) unethical and so will most likely dismiss it as such (or, perhaps, at best, dismiss it as a mistake). The Cooperative Principle, then, reveals the reader to be ill-prepared to take the open text for what it is—the ethical expression of an individual concerned with and critical of her own experiences and those of other language users constrained, manipulated, and oppressed by the very system and institutions that enable and facilitate their communion.

In the *Philosophical Investigations*, Ludwig Wittgenstein writes, “we are brought up to perform *these* actions, to use *these* words, as [we] do so, and to react in *this* way to the words of others.”¹² He conceives as a whole each set of actions and the individuals who enact them in some context amid some set of objects, and “[he] call[s] the whole, consisting of language and the actions into which it is woven, a ‘language-game’.”¹³ He goes on to say that “the term ‘language-*game*’ is meant to bring to prominence

¹⁰ Paul Grice, “Logic and Conversation,” *The Philosophy of Language*, ed. A. P. Martinich, 5th ed. (New York: Oxford, 2006) 151-52.

¹¹ Grice, “Logic and Conversation” 152.

¹² Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe, 3rd ed. (New York: Prentice-Simon, 1958) §6.

¹³ Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* §7.

the fact that the *speaking* of language is part of an activity, or of a life-form.”¹⁴ As a poem conventionally evokes some (counter)narrative, so a collection of poems, as a set or series, conventionally prompts for some way of living, a life-form, or, as Wittgenstein calls it, a “language-game.” However, a collection of poems does not necessarily elicit the positive work that the Language Poets ask of readers: to construct genuinely unconventional, even novel, (counter)narratives in a critical examination of their utility, to explore language and the devices which it constitutes and their use in the poetic process. It could do so, but taken as a move in a language-game, a collection in the context of its use too often fails to escape the conventional, for it is the School of Quietude, as Ron Silliman calls the poetics of an eloquence of avowal, that has come to define not only the conventional register and techniques of poetry but the manner of its presentation and so the language-game of reading it. As objects or images, as a set or in sequence, as a volume or chapbook, aloud or silently, alone or communally, poems are to be read as meaningful, to be understood as trying to (re)present something of and in the world, to say something to or for that world. Readers come to poems, even Language Poems, with a certain familiarity—formats, media, contexts all conventionalized to some degree—to experience meaning and, perhaps, to construct, if the meaning apprehended unconsciously is experienced as only partial, some (counter)narrative.

Of course, as alluded to, it is the case that no move *entails* a particular language-game. A given move may partake of an indefinite number of language-games. Participants in the context in which a move takes place may take it (and so themselves) to be part of different language-games: a participant in a context may construe a move as part of a game that another participant does not see because he or she sees it as a move in yet another game; but often these differences are not so radical: the games differ no more than the varied sets of house rules for a single board game. It is empathy then—as an imaginative, embodied form of imitation—that allows one individual to see and adapt her play to that of another in and through her recognition of a particular move as part of a different game. It is against this empathy at its most facile, effecting an easy assimilation of a group of construals that may be readily categorized as “like,” that torquing works. In so doing, it seeks to enrich the empathy of reading, to make it, as a

¹⁴ Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* §23.

communal exercise, a significant engagement, which frustrates any easy assimilation of construals both consciously constructed and appropriately complex. And yet, it is the case that different construals may be more than that, may be genuinely incommensurate, which not only frustrates any empathetic act but leads to incommensurate valuations of moves within the game and so potentially antagonistic responses to those moves and the game of which they are taken to be parts.

On the one hand, the poems of the Language Poets present themselves to those who participate in the language-game of Reading a Language Poem as opportunities for the deep exploration of the grammar of a language and its complicity in a set of institutionalized (counter)narratives and for a communal critique of those (counter)narratives, which results ultimately in a slow attenuation of them; they present themselves to those who participate in the language-game of Reading a Poem as conversationally unethical, as near total violations of the Cooperative Principle. On the other hand, the poems of the School of Quietude present themselves to those who participate in the language-game of Reading a Language Poem as imperious devices put to work by those in power to bend a critical intelligence and an antinomian life to their will; they present themselves to those who participate in the language-game of Reading a Poem as the very heart of wisdom, a recipe for living with a grace so rarely experienced in the world or the people of it. The Language Poets reject conventional language because they see so many of its turns of phrase as caught up in (counter)narratives that they ultimately understand to be constraining, if not coercive. And yet, to reject reading (even) in its most thoroughgoing conventional form—nothing more nor less than the (un)conscious work of making sense of an experience of a motivated array of objects—would be to reject the very thing requisite for the realization of their poetic project. Insofar as the open text, of language, motivated by, if not prompting for, some (set of) (counter)narrative(s), presents itself as a move in the language-game of Reading a Poem, the overwhelming complexity of possible construals will be reduced by readers, as a kind of overcorrection, as the absolutist shouts “So then everything is true!,” to the overwhelming simplicity that any act of dismissal presupposes. However, Language Poets, as poets, seem disinclined to supplement a volume such that the paratext, as a single item or set of items, overruns the text itself, as a poem or set of poems, thereby presenting to the reader

something that cannot be construed (simply) as the game of Reading a Poem. They often do supplement their volumes, but that supplementation tends to incorporate the poetry into a (counter)narrative inscribed by the text itself, a (counter)narrative that begins with a motivated (theoretically or otherwise) writer who works in and through some process(es) to produce a (set or series of) poem(s) that compel in turn a response creative and/or essayistic. The reader thus experiences the open text as part of a process, and yet, that process tends to end with the poems themselves, from which follows the host of difficulties previously discussed, or with a set of commentaries written by critics, scholars, or fellow Language Poets, all of whom offer individualized responses to the preceding texts, responses not so unlike those which the Language Poets reject, effecting in readers outside the narrative inscribed by the text only a sense of alienation. It appears, then, that a supplementation enabling the reification of the poetic process in the space of the text itself very likely produces nothing more than the reactions of which Language Poets tend to be anxious: a rejection of the poems as conversationally unethical or an imposition on the poems of a construal that assimilates them to a conversational ethics defined by the kind of conventional (counter)narrative that the Language Poets are trying to reject. Yet, to revise reading itself is a project outside the bounds of the poem and the context of its presentation, as it is for so many people a product of the process of an education—of teachers and classrooms and study.

The following sequence is then some attempt to respond to, since it cannot solve, the issues that have been raised by the preceding discussion. The poems of the sequence remain open at the same time that they reify a (counter)narrative. This (counter)narrative—a movement from uncertainty to a certainty skeptically regarded and so back again (and on)—is at the heart of the inductive process, as I take it, of the essay. In “On the Nature and Form of the Essay,” György Lukács writes, “There are experiences, then, which cannot be expressed by any gesture and which yet long for expression . . . I mean intellectually, conceptually as sensed experience, as immediate reality, as spontaneous principle of existence.”¹⁵ Lukács goes on to say, “[B]ut in the works of the essayists form becomes destiny, it is the

¹⁵ György Lukács, “On the Nature and Form of the Essay,” *Soul and Form*, trans. Anna Bostock (Cambridge: MIT, 1971) 7.

destiny-creating principle. The difference means the following: destiny lifts things up outside the world of things, accentuating the essential ones and eliminating the inessential; but form sets limits round a substance which otherwise would dissolve like air in the All.”¹⁶ The essayist brings, or attempts to bring, into the text and onto the page, and so into being, the fullness of these experiences, as had by embodied minds: yet, the essayist controls only the act, only the bringing into being, for once the essay, brought into being, takes on (textual) substance, clears out a space, it demands and so acquires a kind of autonomy. For Lukács, the essayist and the essay give life, textual and so material, to conceptual objects, things that may be said to exist in the world and in those who inhabit, even constitute, it but that, without form, risk dissolving into the “All.” Through the giving of this life—that is, through the giving of linguistic form to the conceptual, always also experiential and so in complex ways material, object in bringing into being a textual entity—the essayist creates something, the essay, that takes up and marks out a space. Though the essay itself reifies the destiny of its contents through the linguistic form that it gives them, it holds its own destiny in perpetual abeyance, for its destiny becomes actualized only in the activity of a reader, also a writer, who fulfills that destiny through some act or object in the world.

What the above suggests is that the essay reifies potentiality as a kind of process, as Theodor Adorno makes clear in “The Essay as Form,” “[The essay] must be constructed in such a way that it could always, and at any point, break off. It thinks in fragments just as reality is fragmented and gains its unity only by moving through the fissures, rather than by smoothing them over. The unanimity of the logical order deceives us about the antagonistic nature of that on which it was jauntily imposed. Discontinuity is essential to the essay; its concern is always a conflict brought to a standstill.”¹⁷ Adorno recognizes, as does Lukács, that the essay attempts in giving form to what is irreducible in our experience to preserve the dynamism at its heart. As such, the essay involves itself in forms—linguistic, textual, aesthetic—that refuse to set limits or, if limits are entailed in the very act of formalization, refuse to valorize those limits, acknowledging always that they may, in fact will, be overwhelmed and so demand revision. The essay

¹⁶ Lukács, “On the Nature and Form of the Essay” 7.

¹⁷ Theodor W. Adorno, “The Essay as Form,” trans. Bob Hullot-Kentor and Frederic Will, *New German Critique* 32 (Spring-Summer 1984): 164.

enacts this acknowledgement by, as it were, incorporating forms that are not only iterative but permutational, always on the verge of some supplementation or modification, some new coherence and cogency, prefigured by and arising at each deviation from what has come before. The essay, as Adorno notes, “refrain(s) from any reduction to a principle, in accentuating the fragmentary, the partial rather than the whole.”¹⁸ The fragmentary invites the activity of the reader, as that in and through which the potentiality of the essay may be, in some way and to some degree, actualized. For the very existence of an essay, as fragmentary, reveals that this actualization cannot take place within its own space: its potentiality remains forever within a “destiny-making” process precisely because neither the essay nor the essayist has been able (or willing) to fit these fragments into some larger structure that would make of them parts to its whole. And yet, the very possibility of actualization, which the essay offers up to the reader as the product of her own work, presupposes the essay be “not unlogical; rather it obeys logical criteria in so far as the totality of its sentences must fit together coherently. Mere contradictions may not remain, unless they are grounded in the object itself.”¹⁹ This coherence, this logic, is aesthetic or ethical rather than epistemological or rational: the fragments of the essay bear some relationship to one other but that relationship is not sufficient to explain them, to make sense of them; it is only enough to show that they are of a kind, that they arise dynamically in and through some essayist’s motivated work. As a result, the essay stubbornly maintains an openness that refuses to disrupt, restrain, or destroy the antinomianism of its condition just as it enables a reification by the essayist in its space of the destiny of objects, individuals, actions, events so that they may be encountered by readers who actualize their potentiality in and through their own work, through their own momentary acts of reading in and through which they engage in its project and stand as witnesses to its efforts.

In the end, the essay, as Adorno writes, “becomes true in its progress, which drives it beyond itself.”²⁰ Sincere, effortful, reflective—attempts and trials mark the essay as truthful. Nevertheless, in opening itself to experience and admitting its particularity, the essay resists the universal. As such, it

¹⁸ Adorno, “The Essay as Form” 157.

¹⁹ Adorno, “The Essay as Form” 169.

²⁰ Adorno, “The Essay as Form” 161.

cannot help but reveal a critique of its own experiences, its own processes, and its own conclusions: the truth, then, of the essay demands recognition from the reader yet, in so doing, invites her to carry forward both this critique and its consequences. The essay works, Adorno notes, such that “transitions disavow rigid deduction in the interest of establishing internal cross-connections, something for which discursive logic has no use. It uses equivocation neither out of slovenliness nor in ignorance of their proscription by science, but to clarify what usually remains obscure to the critique of equivocation and its mere discrimination of meanings: whenever a word means a variety of things, the differences are not entirely distinct, for the unity of the word points to some unity, no matter how hidden, in the thing itself.”²¹ The essay evinces an awareness of its own activity and of how and why that activity bears on the world, that which constitutes it, and that which inhabits it. But this awareness does not preclude its own careful consideration of that very world and its stuff. The essay may “reject the conception of truth as something ‘ready-made,’ a hierarch of concepts,”²² may hold in abeyance an investigation of “what [science takes] to be the more or less constant pre-conditions of knowledge and [their] develop[ment] ... in as continuous a context as possible,”²³ may too “distinguish ... itself from the scientific mode of communication,”²⁴ but it nevertheless refuses to reject also the inductive method that is both science’s public mandate and its private joke. The essay, rather, rejects the masquerade: induction as a series of deductions based on an experience of the world that is itself nothing more than a set of first principles, which are in turn nothing more than generalizations taken *a priori*, received not wisdom but fact, as a set of descriptions of states of affairs gathered together to constitute a world (able to be) experienced only as an abstraction. The essay disregards these deductions and, more importantly, abjures the generalizations on which they are based and in so doing seeks an experience of the world in its particularity, works, finally, to induce from that experience a set of claims that evoke some understanding of the world and one’s experience of it just as it marks that understanding and so any truth entailed by it as provisional. The essay tells the story, enacts,

²¹ Adorno, “The Essay as Form” 169.

²² Adorno, “The Essay as Form” 166.

²³ Adorno, “The Essay as Form” 157.

²⁴ Adorno, “The Essay as Form” 168.

as it were, a narrative, of the essayist experiencing the world, or, rather, some very small part of it, working to come to some understanding of that experience, and working still to communicate that understanding and the experience entailed by it. In so doing, the essay asks the reader to take up her own story, to set about a narrative that is her own, that begins not with a truth, absolute or universal, held within the work, but with that very world, of which the essay is a part, that she now experiences in and through her reading.

The realization of this inductive narrative ultimately relies upon the techniques and registers of both Language Poetry and Cognitive Linguistics. The language that marks its culmination is central to the stories told by Cognitive Linguistics, particularly the Metaphor Theory of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson and the Blending Theory of Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner, insofar as it consists primarily of English's closed classes (and the more schematic words of its open classes). Cognitive Linguistics suggests that conventional language evokes (as it is motivated by) certain basic image schemas (SOURCE-PATH-GOAL, CONTAINER, etc.) and conceptual metaphors (MORE IS UP, EVENTS ARE STATES, etc.). Ronald Langacker, in his development of a Cognitive Grammar, contends that it is the closed classes of a language that evoke conceptual schemas the open classes then enrich (e.g., "X in the Y" evokes the conceptual schema, CONTAINER, which may be enriched by particular nouns to form English sentences on a spectrum from the literal to the metaphorical). The evocation of these schemas, as Langacker sees it, rarely, if ever, involves the work of a single term but rather requires the coordination of a set (or sets) of terms. The following sequence of poems makes use of the notion that certain turns of phrase, conventionally construed as syntactical units, are more compellingly construed as lexical units: "in the middle of the night" ought to be thought of as, in effect, a single "word" (entailing a variety of more schematic formulations, such as "in this of that," "in NOUN PHRASE of NOUN PHRASE," and "PREPOSITION NOUN PHRASE PREPOSITION NOUN PHRASE"). In other words, Langacker's work bears an resemblance to Silliman's torquing in that it brings into the lexicon larger syntagmatic units and in so doing organizes certain syntagmatic units paradigmatically.

The sequence, then, in an important way, explores a poetics of these closed classes: one that

motivates a (set or series of) poem(s) that attempts to evoke these schemas without enriching them, leaving that to the work of a reader. Schemas approach salience in a poetry—instantiated with the aid of various closed classes—exclusive of those words that would obfuscate their work in the evocation of those schemas’ enrichments. English’s closed classes in combination with certain very schematic nouns, verbs, and adjectives (e.g., “thing,” “is” or “do” or “have,” “better,” etc.) prompt for the imaginative construction of schematic concepts. Those schematic concepts may then be arrayed such that they evoke or prompt for some structure either simple or complex. Even as such a poetics motivates a poetry oriented toward the evocation of schemas both coherent and cogent (however conventional or unconventional), it provides for the possibility of calling the coherence and cogency of these schemas into question, the modification and enmeshment, the torquing, as it were, of certain lexical units opening gaps, gathering tangles, generating slippages. All the while, the reader remains free to enrich the poem, to replace, in effect, certain schematic units with nouns and verbs and adjectives of a specific sort, in and through the work of her own imagination and with the aid of her previous experiences (both linguistic and extralinguistic). The opportunity is there to write a poetry more constructive, to, in effect, say something to some schematic degree and yet to say it without imposing upon the reader the epigrammatic. The reader, even unconsciously, may enrich a schematic (counter)narrative, but the act itself of enriching that (counter)narrative, of seeing it her own way may involve also some awareness that the (counter)narrative defines a category of which her enrichment is one member among other members.

The first set of the sequence, which I call “Essays,” neither describe nor evaluate the objects, individuals, actions, or events of their titles: rather, each poem presents an attempt to make sense of them and of my response to them, as one attempts to make sense of any (at least, partly) novel experience and of one’s response to it. They are in this way involved in both (self)observation and (self)examination; they take the measure of what it is that one sees, just as they evince an awareness of one’s own disposition and sensibility in the measuring. And yet, all the while, they admit of the profound difficulty of making any strong assertions, really, about anything at all. As this first set of poems comes to its conclusion, the diction becomes more abstract, the open classes—nouns, verbs, and adjectives—more

schematic, the closed classes—prepositions and conjunctions and pronouns and demonstratives (etc.)—more predominant. This first set opens up into the second set, which I call “Poems,” ostensibly the sort of generalizations, universal and otherwise, with which the inductive method culminates. And yet, these generalizations cannot quite participate in a reification of that method, for they are not bound, nor do they mark or trace their binding, to the experiences and the responses that precede them. They are generalizations, they may be said to “say something,” but to arrive at that saying, they have had to veer away, to find some space where the intractable complexities of the world itself and the objects, events, actions, individuals that constitute it may be held in abeyance. Even then these generalizations miss so badly whatever their ostensible mark they never quite escape a certain sense of vagueness, a certain sense of “that’s not quite how you say it” that prevents them from being readily construable in and through conventional frames. Even as one comes to feel as though one has something to say about the world, about who and what constitutes it, about oneself, one cannot help but feel some of the same confusions and anxieties that motivated the difficulty of responding to one’s experiences in the first place. The complexity of the world and the complexity of responding to it and of sharing something about it with others always risks one’s own enervation.

Ultimately, as the reader moves from one poem to the next, from one set to the other, he or she may come to experience a narrative, of the poet trying to find something to say about the world and his experience of it, that provides some context for a realization of the possibility and productivity of a critique of the conventional. The poems frustrate the application of conventional frames just as they use them as points of reference, providing the reader with a mechanism for assimilating the poems to some point of view while compelling him or her to work away from any conventional construal to something more novel, yet nevertheless meaningful. The sequence begins in an experience of the particular, and the poems as responses to this experience, as “essays,” attempt, though they so often fail, to present that experience in its fullest sense. At the same time, the poems evince an awareness of the conventional (counter)narratives that drive those responses, and they initiate the critical work of torquing them. But this torquing may be experienced only intermittently as a torquing of a (counter)narrative. Too often it

becomes rampant or wayward, and so, the poems produced by it deeply confused and deeply confusing (more confused than critical because the critical has confused more than clarified). However, the sequence slowly moves from these attempts to something nearer completion, something that approaches the familiarity of the aphoristic just as it maintains its critical distance: the poems, as “poems” now, at the level of diction in which the process of induction ends, try to say something about the world (if not, exactly, the objects, individuals, actions, or events previously essayed), the poet, and the relationships each bear to the other. Though this approach however critical may be no less a failure than what has been left behind, it remains deeply empathetic, working to construct a world in which both author and reader are freer to act, worrying all the while about the possibility of doing so. It is in this way that the poems as a sequence evoke a (counter)narrative as a process (or a process as (counter)narrative): of the poet trying to make meaning, to arrive at something to say with and for others about the world, both narrowly and broadly construed, in which he lives. As Ludwig Wittgenstein writes, “I contemplate a face, and then suddenly notice its likeness to another. I see that it has not changed; and yet I see it differently. I call this experience ‘noticing an aspect’.”²⁵ For Wittgenstein, the importance of this “noticing” or “dawning” *as a process* cannot be overstated, for only in the dawning of an aspect, in the sudden realization or alteration of a perspective or perception, characterized by a “now” and a “this”—as in “Now I am seeing this”—can the “I,” the limit of the world, of language, be experienced. In the continuous seeing of an aspect, in the exclusively iterative, the “I” remains no more than a subject position—an object in the world (and so, according to Wittgenstein, a fact of the grammar)—but in the dawning of an aspect, the “I” becomes something more. He goes on to say, “A perspicuous representation produces just that understanding which consists in ‘seeing connections’. Hence the importance of finding and inventing intermediate cases.”²⁶ Though the “essays” as they work toward the “poems” and the intermediate cases at the pivot shortly before and after the turn from one to the other are not themselves perspicuous, as parts of a sequence that reifies a process, even a conventional one, of “trying to make sense (of something),” they

²⁵ Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* §II.x.

²⁶ Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* §122.

are “set up as objects of comparison which are meant to throw light on the facts of our language by way not only of similarities, but also of dissimilarities.”²⁷ As she moves from one poem to the next through the sequence, the reader may experience both the presence and the absence of (counter)narrative—enriching that which evokes some (counter)narrative familiar or unfamiliar but not that which fails to evoke a (counter)narrative in even the barest sense—as a part of the larger (counter)narrative of the process of coming to something to say. It is in and through these experiences that the reader may explore the relationship between (counter)narratives and the work that they do, that she may recognize some possibility of coming to something new.

²⁷ Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* §130.

ESSAYS

City Lights, North Bank of the Missouri River, Beneath the ASB Bridge

all; the gold,
that silence

wins glitter:
from pots.

silvers precious,
most hearts

will hold:
that goods

may be
more golden.

as the kid
for calf;

than all the
aquamarine

Red Awning, New Lofts, West Bottoms

so rarely,
does she

see. blood
in the air,

of a line:
see, snow

does it,
so bravely

the vandals;
care not

for: canvas
sees paint.

care not;
for graces

Graffiti on the Southwest Chief into Union Station

what the
rams, out

cropped, the
brick ages

against the
rams, on

the docks,
who will not

write, curses
which warn

beyond leaves
rams still,

wait for,
the last car

Space Available, Office/Warehouse, West Bottoms

with: space.
one, of

the veil,
of many:

seep. we
will

that: this
ability,

be so.
may, your

clause:
absolute

fail, to find:
security.

Sprint Festival Plaza, Union Station

what: it is
that which

above will
be, who

will be,
above this:

for: when
it is. that

the will,
under god

will be,
under this:

workers,
in parting

Harvey's at Union Station

it. they
laugh;

all, at
for who

can? by
them, it

laughs.
all for

what,
one in.

grand
she that

is, the
stage:

Penncoyd Bridge, Crossing the Rails, Union Station

over: it
is all.

that is,
what to

say,
when: its

yet. all
under:

who had,
to know

that:
when, so

much
laid by

Western Auto Building

that. can
you?

over—
there all

along.
off into,

this can.
you!

over
here: some

among,
out beyond,

have gotten
through;

Penncoyd Bridge, Close-up

line.
let! of

god,
above

in, lines
parallel

to:
let lines!

far,
below

profusions
of, line

wilds
red: bridges

Grand Hall Clock at the Entrance to Harvey's, Early Afternoon

you. for,
therein

one for
all, no.

alright:
let then

some. in,
for there

you are,
no. one

then: says
right in

time; tells
times, up

Beneath the Grand Hall Clock, East End of the Sprint Festival Plaza

oh, yes,
there is a

name: for
that. which

you will
see; that, we

ah, well,
there must be

names: for
these. which

who can
tell; this, we

know, any
word. may do

Wyandotte St., On the Penncoyd Bridge, Facing North

frame, as
in there

will be,
what is

in frame
will be:

as. in
a picture,

we are;
pinned,

pine.
we were:

there, in
as any

Brother, Self-Portrait, On the Driver's Side

too much—
there may,

never, be
one now—

for this:
here

too many—
then can,

always, do
all that—

to those:
these

senses, perhaps,
of context

Brother, Self-Portrait, On the Driver's Side, In Profile

of a
gallows;

who will
profile,

the
ground,

back;
of it

what will,
undo

its,
behind

all past:
to this

Brother, Self-Portrait, In Profile, With Fedora

one, all
ways:

dies in
profile.

or, like
so:

the, great
actor:

says in
state.

or, make
me:

fall, legs
breaking

Town Pavilion and Bryant Building, Late Afternoon

red. is.
the color,

of, right!
look,

the dot,
halved

rain. is.
a kindness,

for, when?
I am,

gone,
will you

miss me
where I am

Brother, Self-Portrait, On Sidewalk, Across from the Wallstreet Tower

the sky;
for you,

that looks
so, unlike:

other skies
but I,

steal: so,
that you

like; streets
but, for

the other:
street, I

wait with
you, here

Brother, Self-Portrait, On Sidewalk, West Side of Walnut St. at East 12th

yours: a
side, for

whom?
stitched:

a, wound
up. out!

you're an
auteur. who

from?
unframed:

an, act
out. up!

you, to
farther wards:

North of the Midland Theatre on Main St., Dusk (Low Light)

power
hence, we

and for
our, you

of the
middle

light;
landed

but on,
unloved

in; no
alley

lightly
landing

North of the Midland Theatre on Main St., Dusk

often, some
dome

will. catch
the eye,

dying, here
for this

who arcs
the hour,

driven,
bought, for

who tells
the car.

street to
street,

H & R Block World Headquarters, Western Façade

of, the
body

what
would, she

say, to
this—

the curve
will be,

lie here,
wonder

who will
lie, for

straighter lines,
for this—

Hotel President, Beneath the Kansas City Power and Light Building, Early Evening

of drum,
room

of visit,
let us

stay;
sing

president,
happy

days, who
will

live in
shadow,

us, in
glass;

Hotel President, Visit the Drum Room

in closer,
now;

we go to,
shadows

of some
pin;

nearer in,
to visit:

one day,
the grand

hotel, wills
spring,

fall, amid
precedents;

Brother, Self-Portrait, Facing Bathroom Mirror, Hotel President Lobby, With Flash

you can.
take it,

again;
take, in

at once,
all there

is: you
of, the

mighty.
to this

we go:
through

mirror;
after mirror

Brother, Self-Portrait, Facing Bathroom Mirror, Hotel President Lobby, Without Flash

it is:
a picture,

of nonchalance:
a flick.

of this:
to press

it: is
you're

an object:
a click.

of wrists:
please, bless

us, for there
is no blood

Oak Tower, City Hall to the East, Night

as if.
she feints,

and bears.
as if,

some
great fit.

were: you
to take

the green
light; skies

were who?
a wake,

having seen
ground, lies

City Hall at Night, From Ilus W. Davis Park

of the,
night:

some great
crane:

park:
of this,

here. we
will say;

let go
the lights, they

cross. be
now drawn;

to lots, so
wondered on

Oak Tower at Night, From Ilus W. Davis Park

once, time
took

to point;
to all,

in this,
the middle

just. left,
so blue.

the sun
I knew

so bereft
of love

still. of
no, one.

National Fabric, Back Row of the Main Warehouse, Closeout Upholstery, Facing West

in: see,
in it.

or,
rather,

how to
say it:

amid:
the fabric

one would
smell.

forms, great
hides,

would:
one. tries,

National Fabric, Back Row of the Main Warehouse, Closeout Upholstery, Facing East

to close.
out of

the making
of the

new
too: original,

we will
pass the

lots to
cars.

unloved,
for wandering

for aisles,
too: bedevil

National Fabric, Wholesale Vinyl, Cutting Table in Foreground

as no art.
tells us,

with, what
one does.

a thing
beyond the

useful, as
art. let them

know, what
one has.

an act
beyond the

beautiful. as
not made, we

National Fabric, Entrance to the Back Warehouse, Foam Padding, Boxes, Pallets

no whom:
may, not

the beam,
of some great

I. wide
of mind,

as you,
though,

are: a
hatchet not

the beam.
red

widens,
the mind

National Fabric, Main Warehouse, From the Back Warehouse, Forklift, Dumpster

it were
as if

a minstrel.
were

to say,
the sun

that lifts
a pallet.

the cleft
of do,

let
the day

run in:
to, well

National Fabric, Back Room, Miscellany

and, this
that, it

were one.
things will

not continue
as they.

are they,
in one?

who. will
make this

and it
will. continue

as cutting
to abstraction

National Fabric, Back Room, Inner Cinderblock Wall

waters. one
wonder,

what walls,
did. he

know?
what stone?

water
springs from,

for who
would not?

love the
great general,

an aqueduct
away?

Stanion Wholesale Electric, Co., From National Fabric, Inside Loading Dock

what?
the tales

we have,
go off

ship, off
trailer:

let us
truck on.

let them
come: on

where the
trash

that gathers.
will turn

National Fabric, Main Warehouse, From the Loading Dock, Vinyl, Carpet, Pallets

for all;
history

fills. with
men, in

doorways,
where

for; one
moment

turns. in
silhouette, to

tableau,
these

for whom
we watch

National Fabric, Main Warehouse, From the Loading Dock (Low Light)

to move:
as one might.

if one
were a

dancer,
halved, why

go on.
as one: how

then would
a one,

halved,
wheeling may

catch. the
eye unaware

National Fabric, Break Room, Table, Chairs, Step Ladder, Ledgers, Sample Books

the records.
break, in

the, darling
oh, grandma.

break,
down we

go, why,
do I

we long,
for my

the cicadas.
sing, and

sing, oh,
grandma. the

National Fabric, Front of the Main Warehouse, Vinyl, Headliner, Cutting Tables in Foreground

down, for
of law,

there is
no in.

in front,
of the tables,

down by
law, for

who is
in. not

in front,
for the firings.

of the lay,
men on line

National Fabric, Back Row of the Main Warehouse, Closeout Upholstery, Foam Padding

between.
would it be,

that we were
among.

would it be,
that we

destroyed
what, but

between
us. is it

that no thing
among.

who is it,
that destroys

National Fabric, Old Ventilation Fan

at. the sea,
will you?

in we go,
and our.

look: up,
at me,

you will
say, the sea,

why do you
turn, so

dearly? we
fall finally,

in a position
of disregard

National Fabric, Loading Dock and Doors

whom: for
will you,

tells of
the gambler,

who gambled
all day,

who: from
now, till

then, falls
of flowers

maddened
whom, fell

like men.
in their day

National Fabric, Fuse Box, Miscellany

boxed:
along the

line. of
profusions,

dear:
through the

clay. on
boxing

the rider
says, who

makes
connection,

whose to
say, grace

National Fabric, Original Upholstery, Stacked and Unsorted

close: out.
you will

carry her.
you will

say, who
does this?

closer: down
you may

fault her.
you may

say, who
faces sloughs?

as if, we
were all mad

National Fabric, Original Upholstery, Boxes, Stacked and Unsorted

he. her.
who will,

carry
whom? oh,

yes, the
great wave.

her. him.
I must.

live
here? ah,

the black
water, yes,

the brick
wall, yes

National Fabric, Forklift

my father,
or, rather,

I; who
will tell

him? what
they've done

is; its
to tell

them what
they'll do

as we, go
or, gone

our? days
are dear,

National Fabric, Storage Space above the Back Offices, Stainless Steel Ladder

indeed.
were it?

to go,
all this, way

up the
great ladder,

up some
implement—

war would?
in truth,

to come
nearer this way,

down, some
troubled, wards

National Fabric, Back Warehouse, Overflow, Vinyl, Headliner, Foam Padding

all, structures
should.

be yellow,
and bored.

why would?
it bleeds.

this meridian,
for you.

every pattern
would.

how? should
it abide,

if be,
were nor will

National Fabric, Exterior Door of the Back Warehouse, Red Trim, Exit Sign

through: all
exits are,

red, the
signs will

all, ways
are red.

amid: more
doors are

oranges, the
admixture of

more, ways
are oranges

and not.
of; blood

National Fabric, Light Switches

to be. and
unbarred,

near: to
switch,

to be. far,
unbothered.

who sidles
by. next

to, or
risking,

who touches
up. past

somehow, of
tying these

National Fabric, Glue Room, Cotton Batting (Low Light)

how many
sheep lost?

their lives
for others,

as all
live, for

who would
wrap them?

on paper,
their cries

seem, like
others, on

we go
confounded

National Fabric, Glue Room, Weldwood Contact Adhesive, Cotton Batting

contact.
aside, or

to front
the spray,

to turn
to, do not

back.
away, for

to front
a solvent,

to turn
it, to not

what will
cut the hands

National Fabric, Main Warehouse, From the Loading Dock, Returns in Foreground

off; of
the pallet,

to be
what:

out? of
the brush,

of: this
great canvas,

to be? of
the great

man; outed
in the offing,

as of
our, joy

National Fabric, Main Warehouse, Back Cutting Table, Carpets (Low Light)

no. so
much to

give. for
the hedge,

will cover
this. just

so too
much? no,

turn. for
the lights,

will double
him, just

the one.
over all

Brother, Self-Portrait, In Bedroom

to sit.
against,

in. to
set down

the letter,
in against.

the law
aside,

say. its,
down to

this lie,
its. beside

you, who
tells again

Brother, Self-Portrait, In Front of Bathroom Door, In Profile

always,
we? want

to know.
at, what

is he?
looking,

always
we want.

you know,
we, what?

out, for
looking

in, off
in the yonder

Brother, Self-Portrait, Entrance to Bathroom, Looking Down

why cast,
down?

how, does
this move?

of all
things,

who minds?
under,

what? do
these tell

of all
things,

that sadness be
not of body

Crumpled Delineator Post in an Abandoned Lot, West Bottoms, Night

in front down
before it. of

this ground;
or of the wall

where at for
margins, who is

out front. out
beyond them of

another center,
yet of a field

where out and
seen, who will

be not. reflective,
orange, as traffic

Flashing Red Lights on a Crossing Gate and Crossbuck, West Bottoms, Night

across. along,
with others:

from here before
the gate: which

though the crossings
on these, there

amid: aback,
by others.

to there beneath
a sign: that

since the midden,
in this there

will be allegories
of; for children

Vacant Store Front at 817 Santa Fe St., West Bottoms, Night

not, perhaps,
the wall; nor

what they have
written upon them.

on, to the dock,
for only up

on. to broken
stairs, up

what they will
ridden unto them;

in, to the braces,
for only up

in. to awnings
gathered up,

Green Exterior Building Light, West Bottoms, Night

there. onward, we
will head

toward the light
green, as money,

as going on. up
to, forth, forward

here. parts we're
for, of some

wall, there is a
brick, is where

what lie. but
were they, all whole,

the vandal may
say, canvasses so

Rumely Tractor Building, Fire Escape, West Bottoms, Night

in closer. now,
sure? of your

movement. to
inclose it. for

who will? to
split them, to

not be shaky;
to wear splints.

in deeper. dive,
now? of your

thoughts. to
deepen them. for

who will? to
bind it to

Kansas City Livestock Exchange Building, West Bottoms, Orange and Blue Light Trails

let me. I am
in over me.

of you, in
over there, so

just, as this,
so fair, let it

lie to me. you
are before it.

to me lie
just, so I,

before as, here
let this so fair,

fall, like that,
and these, so dear

Rumely Tractor Building, Loading Docks, West Bottoms, Night

toward it. as you
find yourself.

alongside them.
maybe. one is

oneself only
among, within.

toward it. again
we find ourselves.

alongside them.
as one is. oneself

only amidst,
withal alleys.

or allies? all
that hinges

Dark Alley, West Bottoms, Green and White Light Trails

it is that they
are dancing.

they were not
there, no; were

stiller than. this
or more than still.

wider in the field
than, in the frame.

as partners,
they are. that it

were not they;
here, were no

farther. than this.
and more than far

I-35/I-70 Interchange South of Charles B. Wheeler Airport, Behind the Rumely Tractor Building, Night

for many. were
to be, of one

who would
fly, much that

one would
be less of, for

many were, too.
being of one

flying, what
this much would

be were
one more of, yet

all there is, to
see so, simply

Road Closed, Detour South on Lou Holland Dr. to Richards Rd.

let them be
right; of us,

who are
nearly to it,

then, on
it, we may go

let us be
new; for we

are who nearly
were them,

now, in it,
we can turn,

away to roads,
back, closed

Downtown Kansas City, From Charles B. Wheeler Airport, Early Morning

as if, toward;
that were

the great cure.
to move as

they moved, as
you were of theirs—

as though, away;
were that

the aching cured.
moving as

they move, as
you were not theirs—

for we, of so
much, cannot

Brother, Self-Portrait, Full Length, Facing Bathroom Mirror

to this, when
you have.

you had it,
were at,

some place
came of this,

from there, you
have, when

you had it,
were as,

some person
left with this,

to be one,
so few standing

Brother, Self-Portrait, Full Length, In Profile, Facing Bathroom Mirror

who would
have; given

her the
paper?

would it
not; have been

better?
to have

not; gone
into it,

or go. if
a wall,

who sees
it so, kindly

Broadway Bridge, From the South Bank of the Missouri River, Early Morning

without, as
not in.

for with,
what would be?

as one
with; of others

you are
not so, as

these are.
and all to you?

as each
by the other;

yet all it
could be

Lights on the Missouri River, Northern Terminus of the Town of Kansas Bridge

this may.
be up; for

that on,
down, so

that to be.
in is all there

is; out of
this may

be that,
down, in

as off. from
all that. there is

under her,
something less

River Market, On the Town of Kansas Bridge, Early Morning

he was;
or maybe

not up
there. on

that thing,
just so?

she is;
not maybe,

no. here
upon

this thing
so just!

without all
that may:

Parking Lot, City Market, Early Morning

into one of
them. below

that above
it. over

there, you
will, and again,

there, you
will be of

one again,
and over

them. below
it, who above

for all that
is here into

Vendor Stalls, City Market, Early Morning

as: this is
it. all

there is.
as: you

would if
it were only.

like they all
are; my

they all,
like you,

will this;
are they so,

where we
would rather be

Stuart Hall Building

of all? that
it could

have been
for; into

this, with
which as

we do. that
out into

that; for it
could have

been this,
which as with

the others is
as each is

Dome of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Dawn

so that it
is. if

not what
will be.

to seem?
not as it

could be,
not as

you? might
though it

is, who
that you

are more
than us:

Liberty Memorial Tower, Heading South on Main St.

what is.
to be thus

again in
this place;

hence, to be
again, yet

will there
be more. as

from other
places, as

to this,
so few; be

here. it
with them

Street Sign, Corner of 63rd Terr. and Holmes Rd., Brookside

then, as
it were,

thus, who
could have?

further on
into this,

then, like
so much

hence. what
would be?

forth on.
into this,

there: was all
that may be

POEMS

On the Inside of Things

that is not in
this; as she is

not in it, not
more than he.

nor any who
would be out,

we are not for
them; when they,

never in it, are
more than us.

yet all who
would be out,

where now? and
why so much?

On Its Being Likely That They Will Not Sing to Me

it may be
you. who will

be this for
now? I would

so not like
to be. there

you will have
what? as it

could have by
then. this that

I may so
like. to have

been, in a way
less certain, better

On What Has Happened in the Past

where will
you be.

you may,
as they always

are, be from
that other place;

where have
you gone,

you go,
as they often

do, to those
other places; gone

as the greater thing
says of people

On Time Spent in a Place That Brings You Joy

down into it,
down in there,

you may, if as
all that will not

be yours
is to us as

at the top of it,
on top here,

we may be
more than what

will not be, as
if ours were to them

so much of what
would have been

On Not Really Knowing Anything Particular

let it be that
you have been

there, too, as
I have not.

will you do
that to me.

let them have it
as you have had

it there, too,
as I have.

may I say
that to you?

there should
be so much

On the Question of Whether or Not the Absence of Activity is Requisite for Activity

forth from
this which is

nothing, or
there is no

way forward
on into that

other thing;
we are all here

while on the
way is this

one thing, which
is meanwhile

into that and
from there

On Seeing Someone Else Accomplish Something of Significance

to do what
you cannot

have, as
getting is

anything less
than this;

to get, so
that everything

is more:
what you

will have not
done than

to have gotten
too little given

On a Place the Thought of Which Fills One with Ambivalence

to be of this
place, so

wide, as to
get there

will take as
it takes. let

to be be of
us, as

wide as this
place. to

let go there,
gotten so, goes

with us, for what
may be ours

On Deciding Finally To Stop Doing Something

this, may well
be it, for

who would,
after all

has been, as
though nothing

that is well
may, for who,

before one
has been

as nothing,
would, though it

will see
you nearly

On the Things That Keep Watch Over Us

we may that
they are

above us; to
do so, as

we could not
otherwise do.

that between
it and them

is what might;
to have, as

we cannot have
others. wiser

in time than
of what is seen

On Turning After an Inconceivable Absence to a Thing

it was then
that I was

in what I was
not before; as

if I were
out of it.

may it then
be as it

is what I was
before; not that

if I were
in or out,

but something of
the life between

On the Idea That Something Might Be Possible

perhaps, it could
have been that,

or, no, let us
say that it

will be just as
we are. now, here,

maybe we will
do it better,

be, no, have it,
say, let that,

as we will, be
just. we are now

more than that,
here, and going on

On Whether or Not There Is Something To Say

there will
always be

what we
already have,

but to have
something else?

this is what
we will say,

to know as
I have not

who may finally
have nothing;

that here you
would be, listening

On What It Is To Be with Someone

all of that
comes to be

with all of
this. you say

to yourself,
it could have

all been so
different. yes,

it could have
been. what is

it that one
is? when one

comes to be
yet another

On the Quality and Character of One's Work

that it were
simply so,

that it ever
could be

a matter of
doing it, simply,

for some great
thing, more than

that it were
we who,

as it were, being
less than that,

try, as the world
tries, to live

On the Occurrence of a Tragedy

you knew that
this could be.

as one of them,
a thing that

could happen.
for it follows

from what you
knew to be

that from which
derives all that

is possible. but
then it happened, as

you see it,
again, again

On the Taking of Something Which Is Dear to Someone Else

there it is.
if you must,

please do so
without it.

as all of
this is yours;

so there it is,
then, you must

do as you
please. without

all of this;
is its

enemy any
less inexplicable?

On the First of a Series of Things

from out of
some place

farther from
where we

now are, it
came to this:

that ours, of
some person

nearer to
where we

were then, came
in from there:

as the snows
and all

On the Holidays and Their Attendant Expectations

what will
I get you?

that you
do not have:

all ready?
off we go.

what is it
to get it,

that having
will not do:

off we go,
unready.

on come lights,
bearing down

On the Manifold Forms of Doom

it follows.
as it must,

she would
see it;

as it were
they can go.

it arrives
as it would;

they must.
hide it,

as it was.
she may tell

of willful climes;
and weather

On Music That One Finds Enjoyable

one would
like to know.

what is it
that can be

known? to
be there,

for one
must; to know

what it is
to be there.

this will be
known: one

would like it
to be better,

On Things That Happen with a Certain Amount of Regularity

there are so
many things

above us, that
in being from

up there, seem
as though

they are as
not things,

for in being
that, down here,

seems so
below us, though

we were neither
here nor there

On the Loss of Someone of Note

upon a thing
you think,

this could not
happen to me,

and yet, upon
this, all arrive

at a thing.
you know

that this could
not happen. I

leave and yet,
at that, few

see the trouble
of a thing

On What It Must Feel Like To Fall from a Great Height

we all die
for what

we have
done. did you

not know this?
or, perhaps,

we all die
of what

we had
to do. you

know this; or
perhaps not?

or maybe there
are great mysteries

On What It Means To Be the Fittest

we might, if
it were that we

could be so
much more than

this, make
something more

of us, or the
other thing;

we would then
were it that we

could be as
more than that,

making much,
more, something

On Those Who We Would Most Like To Teach

you might say, or,
no, they have

heard that which
you might say,

but tell them it
will all be well;

they might, or, no,
you have heard

that which they
would say; hear

this, it were all
well would they tell

it as we would
hear, so silently

On What It Is To Be Free To Choose

it ought after
this that the

matter would
be as it

was to be;
this is just it,

it might that
after all this,

would the
matters be as

they were just
to be; that is

of the array,
of its fitting neatly

On Hearing of Yet Another Atrocity

it fell, but
at a slant;

and while it
came: if

there were
too few stars,

we leaned, as
though a fire;

if it dies,
and while

there are
too many flakes:

in the notes of it
yet, we were

On the Passing of Someone Who Was Much Despised

yet the pale
will; always

as a fire, so
much more

for that which
will burn, as

at last of it
less than one

will pass just
for this which,

just a specter,
so seldom

more; yet much
may the fire

On That From Which I Cannot Escape

we would be
on our darker

day, we would
die as the

day, darker,
would be;

what would we,
so nearly alike,

do, if the
day were, being

what it
is, nearer;

we have, in so many
contests, wandered

On Experiencing That Which You Have Not Yet Experienced

from what is
in one that was

once out amongst
us, or some set

of us, feverish in
its desire for this,

or that to whom
some set of us, out

amidst its desire for
one, once feverish,

in this, in
us, is, was

what could have
been in all

On Groups Which Have Acquired Some Degree of Power and Those Who Run Them

we will not
allow it: to

continue as
it is, for

who would see
their share?

you do not
agree? as for

countenances, it
is who would

keep it: their
net of

the matter,
distribution aside

On Sitting in Judgment of Others

I, let me make
this clear,

am not you, for
who would have

done it, as we
would have?

for clarity is not
what you would

have, as I would
have it. they

make me do
this, let

go, as though at
a great precipice

On the Coming of Something Greatly Anticipated

around it goes
again, though

it seems it
will never

be as it
is now, here:

though always
we then go,

we are as
we will again

be: around
here, we seem

ped pipers,
following our tune

On the Attempt to Create Something That May Be Profitably Read

is this so
novel? there,

all the things
you would have

said more plainly
than I,

were these things,
all novelty, so

darkly said. you
would have

here more
than I a

means to some
surer advance

On What It Is To Have a Measure of One's Worth

you would
have them,

live for: so
much less

than it would
be. to live

as they
would? to

go on: many
more yet

then will we
go, having lives

as yours is who
must conquer

On the Invention of Things That Make It Easier

there is little that
can be done, for

what there is is
only that one would

like some other
way of doing it,

yet were it of what
could be that

way, were one there,
that little done, doing

there only as the
others, would were

we makers amid
what we have made

On Competition as a Mechanism for Solving Problems

it is that which
brings about

a thing, and we,
having this

thing, make of it
what we will,

for we have
brought it to

a place made
of this, which

we will place
that what it is

will grow as
ours once there

On Those Who Have a Sense of Place and the Meaning of Their Work

there are
those whom

one may find
in higher

places, as
we are like

those who
do one thing,

finding they
can do

more here,
as of, like

every maker,
a worked thing

On Knowing What Is To Happen

there are
the things that

follow from
what those are,

toward yet another
thing, and what

beneath these
things leads

to them, which
is yet another

thing, and which
is what the

worry would be,
if deeper down

On the Ceremonies That Open a Momentous Occasion

it is what
we may

go to, when
we are

of a different
cast of mind,

we may, for
when we go

casting for
minds, what

differs is
that it is to

others something
of a joke

On a Those Things That One Ought Not To Do at Certain Moments

at a certain
moment, there

may be
a very large

set of them,
things not to do

may be of such
moment here,

that they do
not set things

by, for that
very large

interval between
it and them

On the Refusal to Serve Those to Whom We Object

that there
would be

but one
way to do

it all, turning
toward it; we

would be
one with it:

that of our
fitting it,

every way,
there is only

that we
must have it

On Spending Time on a Profitable Endeavor

they move
as you would,

if you were
one who

could do
many things.

as you move
and do,

can you be
one thing?

many would
whom they

have thought
so little of

On Wanting Something Very Badly That You May Not Get

what follows
is nothing

more than what
results in

moving from
there to here,

as much as
what moves

is what follows,
nothing then

or now results
but from

a thing that
cannot be had

On Feeling As Though There Are Only Two Options

you fall
down, as

if you were
to come upon

it, under it,
overwhelmed

as you fall,
it comes

over you, being
overwhelmed

by it, then
down under

what you were,
you weep

On What I Am and How I Came To Be It

what is it
to know

or to make
of it, as one

does so often,
what you are

to it, who
makes of you

one who often
does as it

is known,
or are to so

wildly want it
for its life

On Observing the Departure of a Thing

against all
that is, they

would have
it do nothing,

to figure
the change

that it
is nothing,

against all they
would have

done, the figures
changing until

we ourselves
change by them

On Finding Oneself Surrounded by Others

you come out
for a few

of the standard
pleasantries, to

say, how could
it go that way?

few would say
of the standard,

it comes so
pleasantly. you

go out that way,
to somehow

see what lesson
there is in it

On an Achievement That Gives to One Some Notoriety

it cannot
all be as

black as that:
who would

let it turn from
this to nothing?

as all that,
black as nothing,

turns to this:
let it be it

for what?
would to

the kings! we
give our eyes

On Going to a Place That It Is Considered Ill-Advised To Go

she went
because you

said that she
should, for

the betterment
of you and yours:

that of you,
he would

say, you go
because he

bettered yours,
and for the

trip, you eye
each thing to take:

On Beautiful Things

it may be
that you are.

there is often
so much of that.

that they will
say, why so

dearly, but,
my darling,

they may do
as you have

so often done.
who did as much.

as what? so
say it will

On One's Ideas and Their Relationship to the Life That One Lives

having, as one
alone, no more

than what one
will have, in

one's own pursuit
of a thing,

as all would be
alone, no more

all of a thing,
being pursued,

than by what
one's own

self would deign
to assimilate

On the Multitudinous Forms of Travel

before, as
so many were.

but for, so
briefly, are we

all in this: can
do what besides?

what were
we, but for

this, so longingly!
after all: as

among, so many
are done in. could

you, until we
get there

On Those Who Feel the Need to Have in Their Hands Something Which May Threaten Others

to bring about
an end;

if you, of
some moment

therein, were
to see it as

it was not,
would you go?

therefore, it
begins; as if

you were to
know the

story, brought on
to few among

On That Which Precedes a Substantive Engagement of Something Complex

over there, they
will, as one

thing, to bear
a force from

there to here,
be drawn

up; then, as
they must, all

bear down to
force a thing,

drawn now
like then, being

so much more as
it falls, well-manned

On the Taking of One's Own Life

that you would
give so much,

to those of whom
you have, said

so little: of them
or of

that which would
take, yet more

of them from those
who have, done

so little: from you
and from

that great, large
thing in the sky

On Having Endured

what I go
through. to

get to who
we may,

without having,
be, we will,

as though to be
still were not

what you, having
gotten by,

go to. with
you, I,

from who
will, may be

On the Empathy Requisite for Critique

of where she
might be, they

will yet, so that
in all of this

is more than they
may be, but

for when she
can, they are

so, yet will they
of none of it

be more than
her? could then

do as done, as
just anyone doing

On Denying the Utility of That Which Has Already Been Shown To Be Useful

thus, it will
no longer be,

as the structure,
always a thing

of some other
stuff, up there,

as it were
of a thing,

no longer always
some stuff, hence,

down here the other,
institution, will

go, as the wind
goes, quietly

On All of That Which Demands One's Attention

around us, who
would do such

a thing, if
to go away,

were but to
come back,

as going up
is only so,

coming back
around us, who

does, for a
thing, will for

it have a
certain fondness

On Seeing Something to Its End

that it might, at
the great

moment, that
one were

of something
that could not be?

that it may,
in the finer

scene, be
that which

one could. were
everything not of

so much less than
this, going in

On the Prospect of Wreckage

there was nothing
to make it

not happen, and
so, it all

came, as one could
not but know it;

and yet, nothing
as it were,

would all come
for each knew

it happened there; not
to do it, not

to walk fields made
fine by wreckage

On the Ways in Which What Is Imminent Oppresses Us

may it be
here again,

in this, which
is no more

than to have
it as it

was to do
it for that

which may
be again, here,

as it, no
more than it,

tries to flee
our doom

On Doing What There Is To Do

about this
and that, we

must say, there
will be more

of them, as
they cannot but

be this or
that, yet we

will say about
them, as they

cannot, of
more, there will

come to be
only an iteration

On What May or May Not Happen

to have seen it,
one would

not, having for
a time a turn

on a larger stage,
believe it,

for it has not
the time to

turn, having on
the stage the

belief one would
see it, larger

as one takes it
up in some intimacy

On the Absence of Something Which May Actually Be Present

that you should
have seen it

there is something
of a truism,

or, no, perhaps, it
is another thing;

that here is some
truth: a thing

is of another
thing, you see,

it should not have
it, and perhaps,

we will turn only,
to ask of your touch

On Wondering Why Something Happened As It Did

what with all
of that, what

could one do
to make it some

other thing, more
to our liking?

what would you
do with it,

all that one makes
of some things?

to like others
more, what to

a certain mind
seems foolishness

On Missing a Thing in Every Sense

what it must
have been

to not know,
as it must

be when we
fall from it,

what we have
to know, as

it falls, is
why it should

be not by
it, should

be as it was,
once with us

On Something Happening Long After It Should Have Happened

it has already
happened or,

at least,
most of it,

in the main,
has come to pass,

and it does little
to stop most

of it, already
happening, done

with the whole,
going by

as if there were
nothing to hold

On Finding Oneself on the Inside of a Thing

within what
you are, with

everything else
out there, as if

it could never
be yours,

they are what
else you could

be without in
there, as if,

never yours,
everyone, with

a little sigh, passes
by and smiles

On One's Inability To Make Good on a Guarantee

to do it, so
that each

part of itself
fits the moment,

to make whole
what we will

fit ourselves to
is the part

that makes us
for one moment

what we will,
yet whole, by

the artificial light,
hope to be

On That Upon Which We Rely

it was then
that it fell

apart, as a thing
will stop when

it has done
its work, yet

this thing, as
it falls, is worked

that when it
stops it will have

the part and
do then its

great impersonation,
of a thing furious

On What It Is To Be a Thing of Interest

clearly, it must
be funny, you

know this as
you see it,

so clearly what
you cannot do

is occasion for
their humor, to

see what you must
hear, that you

cannot be their
occasion, you

now understand,
for such warmth

On What It Feels Like To Open Something New

you sleep
upon a thing,

yet, it knows
that it is not

only a thing,
nor only you,

but a place
into which

you slip, or
you knew only,

it is not only
a place, it

is a wilder
matter, still

On Recognizing an Affinity Between Two Things

we are
bound to

that, of
which we

want so little
to be,

of whom
we are

so wanting,
little bound

for what
we, for being

not still, had
thought to seek

On an Occasion Which Is Not Always Regarded with Seriousness

there are days
when you

would like
to be some

other kind
of thing,

like the day
you were

to be there
when things

of another
kind, would

they were fine,
went mad

On What It Is To Go from One Thing to Another

to tell
a thing

always as
though it

has an arc,
this is key;

as if it
had the thing

always; to
say that

the arc
is key:

is what it
is not so troubling?

On The Student (Part I)

to bend
inwardly,

of all, that
may not be,

what it would be
to be better;

to have been
better; it may not

have been, turning
outwardly, of that,

one would have
been to what he

most needed a
great comfort

On The Student (Part II)

we have
left for it,

for who would
have said not

to leave? that
it were so much

that we have,
to say, “for

whom would you
leave so little?”

but you were
not left, had

to have said, “ours
is just so”

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