



February 1

Space between mountain ranges, farms or gardens, time between, the parts between, everything to do, your wrist, your finger curling like your foot. Conversant then, some shoes. The dirt to echo your feet. Then red is dirt and red is a once you bring. Or you have too many brothers so you'll have to live in a castle. Never stepping foot in the sea. Then never stop being the extra brother, the smoking rusty extra brother. The radio, the ride together, the lights lit forever. One kind of keeper for another. Then let me take your hand. Let me trace upon your palm. The palace. The men working on the palace. The men sleeping besides its stones.



February 2

The blood on the tip of your finger, the unfairness of it. You pull up your shirt and I give the canula a little twist. It comes off, and I think of a honeybee leaving behind its sting. But I put it back in, and you are well enough again. And you shouldn't be upset about architects, and you shouldn't worry about the bathroom. I put the fish away, an apple tart is baking in the oven, and like this I'm probably screwing it up. Which is to turn the wrong way, or to go in a circle when you don't mean to, and then there you are, the sun in your hair, your clothes, leaning all over you, the least part, the least part.



February 3

Is the problem that we love narrative, the up and down, a lens to see what you want to, then set fire to what you no longer want to see? To love a story is to love your complicity. Then we were watching these plays in which the actors talked all the time, narrating everything, it was like watching ships sink below the horizon, slowly, slowly. Over there's the ending, a little flag, it's leaving us, sinking below the curtain that is the ocean. We're getting sore from waiting for some waves. We love fiction because that is how the sun goes down, the light turning into darkness, until there's only our blindness, and then we get to see.

February 4

What I have, it comes like patience, and my wife asleep in the afternoon. The previous owner of my house had many pets: birds, dogs, cats. When they died she buried them; once while gardening Mary shrieked as a turtle shell fell apart in her hands. I should describe this as generosity. For part of this house was a gift, and part of the yard. The carpeting that had to be torn out, and the rats' nest in the walls with their birdseed cache. Then gifts are also work. A turtle being a box of patience as we describe it. Or to praise gifts as rain taps you on the head, not finishing its way between you and your hips, your shoes, the rest of you, the ground.

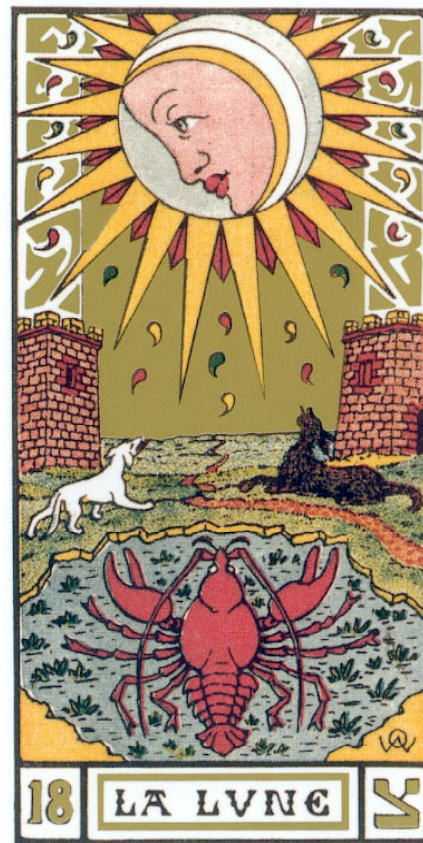


February 5

A need for. The ground as it softens. The rest of you fighting with yourself. Wrestling the bicycle back into the house. A broken down box tucked in a bag with the newspapers on the rug in the hallway. A jar of millet, I love the taste of millet. Then juxtapose generosity with specifics, is it ok to list everything you give, to itemize your spiritual deductions? My hand is a turtle, it's so goddamn slow. My thumb pokes out, I make noises. I got two, you say, you can afford to give one away. Or do the dishes, scrape the millet out of the pot, put the leftovers away. Feed the worms in the compost heap, as they leaven the ever-softening ground.

February 6

As if I were. As if I were distances. And space as things happening, the reversal of night into nights. The thoughts we load down, the thoughts we're tracing, these figures, this newspaper night or nights. Or I'm having trouble with my arm, or I'm a man having trouble, or I'm just seeing trouble everywhere I look, or I'm a man, and I'm so reasonable, and the out-side of me is space, and someone else is space, like waiting is also space, like waiting there, then waiting, and some space is any one thing you want, that one thing you want to keep, then the field around that thing is space, and you are keeping your distance.



February 7

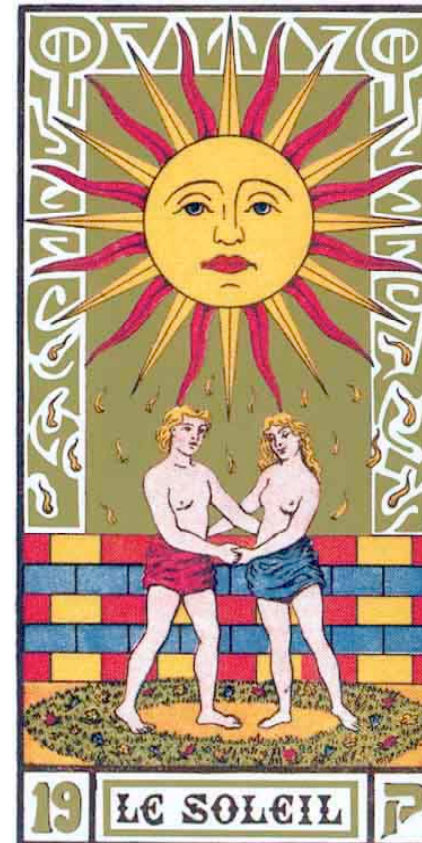
Living is, or a forest isn't, or a family of occurrences, the softest daughterbones, or being there with wolves around you considering, their breath goes either or either or either either each. You thought walking and seeing and being seen is something you left in the city, the physical there



under what you choose and now chooses you. They pause, and you won't understand. One wolf says for a long time I loved floating, I loved the outdoors the fresh air. I loved the all you can eat, back when I could eat all I can. And the technical aspects, the information technology, I really dig it, I'm a big fan. But your combined strength couldn't save us all.

February 8

In the desert, where this takes place, all sides are the desert. So you walk into the desert. And the desert, it will not part. It will not give of itself. Even when you know it, know the sun in your hair, your clothes. Like a poem nobody writes anymore, that tells you how to do things, like what to do with that knife, or an argument you're not supposed to make if you have a choice. Or in the desert there isn't a bible, and that not book is lost in the bible, and your reading won't let it out, your reading is a glass of water. Your hands are the desert because you are the desert, and sentence by sentence, they sip.



February 9

Preferring to live in the waves. Then to learn patience by having to move with our home, to yield to the moon and kinetic energy stretched out over distances we had no part in making. Then it's a comedy, of people with time, spending their nights fucking or talking about it. We're loud forever, we fight periodically but never seriously. We're seen as playful, or reflexive, behavioral, but the best part of our minds are unknowable. Friend, it's good to lie in the sun, it's good to bash a mussel with a rock, to wash our faces with our hands. It's good to pose for the pictures. We deserve to be in those pictures.

February 10

When someone you hate dies you are still with them. You want the magic words but there are no magic words. And you can't come in. So hunger borrows light. Then it's shiny or it opens like buds. Then rope unraveling is gratefulness. Mud is gratefulness. Water in a gutter, soiled paper. Then you have to tell a story. Which is a dress or a shirt or a sweetness. Or a sweetness which changes you. Like a patriotic hymn. Like trees on the exact street they're named after. Elms on Elm, etc. forever. Sell flour to generals, lampposts, compartments. Sell calendars, wood, half-inch ribbon, fatherhood. Why not? They are using you, all of you.

February 11

Back is, is wanting to. Like a hummingbird. States, various sites. Or exhibits of postcards, so though you weren't there, you could participate in causing it. Or that it was wonderful and green-breasted. The blessed, the next blessed, and the most blessed tip touching you. Enpetaled. You could put a stamp on it. You could press down, into it. Rubbing off on you. Elements that include. The letter where we meet, we back into descriptions, it's indescribable. The red shirt you wear is noise to the black shoe you wear; your black shoe is on the blade of a shovel which is digging. All of us, of these, are not, were never, things.



February 12

Forget about things, those nevers, those knots. Push the dirt back into the hole, put the shovel in the shed, let the spiders go to work around it. Your red shoe will take you home, and your black shirt will be there waiting for you to wash it. The letters will sit in the box on top of the circulars. But I'm a can of soup, I'm a cup of soup, the king of soups, which is the chicken noodle, that's right the chicken noodle, I've never been happier, and I'm on sale, I've never been on sale before, I'm on TV eighty times a day, you better stock up, stock up, I'm your best friend in an earthquake, I'm your favorite, your next favorite, and your most favorite.

February 13

Love, which is a kind of thought. It cleaves other thoughts. Then doubt is a tarry sea where you don't have to think. It blackens, constrains, it takes leisure from our work, it pulls the steamroller and doesn't get paid. That book you'll never finish, the one where you're packed together, endlessly hungry, chewing and devouring, who you are with what you repay, as what you speak, falling. You won't know your falling is meaningful because it's an action, you won't know that in the dark you'll find a way out, which is a way through; thinking, as it unthinks, undoubts, unpulls, uncleaves, seeds, all kinds of seeds, together speaking the universe.



February 14

Your double does nothing you yourself won't do. An eternity of doubles. Their surrogate powers, rising up, never clear, never rigorous. Then I will never be revealed, your double says. I won't trick you, your double says, you know me. I will never speak, your double says. So plot and rule, pilot and wrawl. Retrieval, repair. City of doubles, your thoughts from yourself, deeper than, deeper into, depending on your double. Leaning on your double. Sometimes he catches you. Sometimes you get away, and your double comes after you. But we are happy the war has stopped. And we are happy in our virginity, mistaking it for innocence.

February 15

Which means I have to sit down and wheedle, I have to lie down and act, like my father is a respectable citizen, like my mother is a judge, and their anger is black meat, the fat slicking their fingers, I have to roll the burning logs against their embers, I have to burn the fat with the hair, I have to splinter the bones and scour the marrow out, I have to tend the fire, I can't stop, I can't help them, I can't let them, I'm going to get screwed into this world, I'm going to get seized before I'm all the way there, at the threshold with their hands inside me, my being beneath the earth, the ages I have to decide, the length of my death.

February 16

The train is full of rope let's rob it say the spiders we'll use it for our webs. It's full of silk say the moths let's rob it for our cocoons but the spiders eat the moths. The train it's full of rope say the spiders but it's full of wood let's rob it say the birds for our nests but first let's eat the spiders the bitter tasting spicy little spiders. When the birds are done flocks of them circle not one gets in. The wind blows the wind says the train is full of breath let's slow the train down we can liberate our friends let's scatter these birds. The wind blows but the train ignores the wind. For the train is my memory and my ghost watches the train.

February 17

To love cursive is to love watches but not to watch. Cursive is keeping your distance, or going to the memorial of someone who didn't like you. It loops but that's the point. It says I'm purposeful, a planetarium, a determined kind of spinning. It says I'm happy and there's just a bunch of dirt between birth and opportunity. One in front, one behind, swooping down, not a skywriter but a grackle in a trash bin. Picking up something shiny. Drawings and writing intertwine; coal, broken pages. Ungoes, undoes, a circle against another circle. Generous, as you startle, as you ease. To act, in time.



February 18

I am impatient with men who lack bodies and ties to the anatomical earth. With their organs, all *organized* and hollowed out. Their liberties. So I hand myself over to sorcerers, they feed my anger green twigs and scraps. They take me apart and they put their hands inside me, they give each of my dials a little twist. For seven days I shit smoke, and the men mistake me for something explosive. They put me in a field and I shiver. On the eighth I'm a bonfire, I roar. To the leaseholders of cruelties, the ersatz ghosts and their marketing representatives, your bodies are coming, the lowest, broken bodies, the ones you have always scorned.

February 19

And I get lower, like cattle into the earth's breast. And a part of me snags, tearing me into two people. One of me stays behind, and another part goes deeper. That one, he loses his hair, his fat melts away, he has to sell one of his eyes, it's too late for him to ever know what he has bought. Then bricks, piles of bricks, which could be a house, a road or a temple, the way in, the way through, in time, soon. He is happy, he goes to work, one among many. And me, I see things three ways now, I am enormous, I have so much hair I supply a dozen wigmakers with the whitest of curls. I work too, I salvage too, I'm happy to.



February 20

The wood for this body is cut from a thornapple. Nine seeds are thrown, and only with the left hand, or with a hammer held in the right, all will go well. Animals will get well, stolen property will be found. The seeds are not to be eaten unless they are inscribed with the name and the double triangle, with the moon and the star, and even then they are not to be eaten. If you cut a switch from this wood, if the switch is half-blackened with coal, if you are struck with this switch, if a piece of salted bread is fed to you, and another breathes in your eyes, then peace be around you, maker, you will make the green wheels spin slowly in the sky.

February 21

There is a list. Wood is a list, the body is a list. What matters is the degree to which, the lefthandedness of its curvature. Then mountains are nourishing, loving birds and small boxes, with seeds in them, they shuffle when you shake it (SHAKE IT SHAKE IT) we are often such, slowly such, but such. Baby, we're going to die someday. Then make your house haunted, breathe onto. You can do that, and you can carve a switch, you can trade yourself in for another one, you can steal and get away with it, you can be the tallest city, the next tallest city, you can make yourself invisible, a store, a hoist.

February 22

I'm not going to explain. He's not either. Or his sister. How it's made. Its philosophy, procedures. Or scour this. Some stones. When I pause, I am not the one who pauses. And if there is an assembly, you can gather, you can let them track the stars, the stars will keep track of you. Put the whole of yourself into your green phase, where you're so fertile bees visit, they land in your ears and you let them, they pollinate you, and weeks later lemons, what might be, or plums, tumble out of your mouth. Delightfulness, which is movement towards light, inexplicable rocks. Which, seen, become shy, bloom.

February 23

I come home and find out my brother has left his wife, so I can't sleep. I read about Peruvian restaurants in Queens. There is always an opposite that pulls you. I'd throw things together, see where they took me. Two months ago they bought each other light sabres and proceeded to beat the crap out of each other. My sister-in-law looked furious, happy and furious. I'm not sure what will change them. I don't want to write about the world. Which is the name of a chili that is the sound of you screaming when you bite into it. The fine fish-hook that lurks beneath the corroded tracks, from which rust flakes rain down on working-class stores.

February 24

Then a little late. Then yeah some. Better than a farm, better than a hole. A little part, a little part of. Hidden and awful and shy and shy and even more shy. Tasting your wrist, your palm, your finger. Then landscaping is a word for spell, unbearably slow, worth flirting with, suggesting a wave, undoing, in which the earth being gardened blossoms forth bees, their six legs, their thorax, their tongues, circling an artichoke with pebbled aphids, a line of ants drawing upon their digested sap, and their keenness, their villainy, the crown and mace you boil and eat in the kitchens of the houses built for the people who build prisons.



February 25

There was a good son and there was a bad son and I want to be the bad son: when the phone rings I want to be the bad son: when you tell me about the heart attack I want to be the bad son: when you open your mouth I want to be the bad son. I'm not going to be kind: I'm not going to be a kid; not going to say get well soon to the son of a bitch who beat me. I want to be the bad son: I want to set in the east: I want to never set at all. I want to make the darkness rise and let a black light scour, I want to illuminate the wreckage because I'm going to be the bad son and that's what bad sons do.

February 26

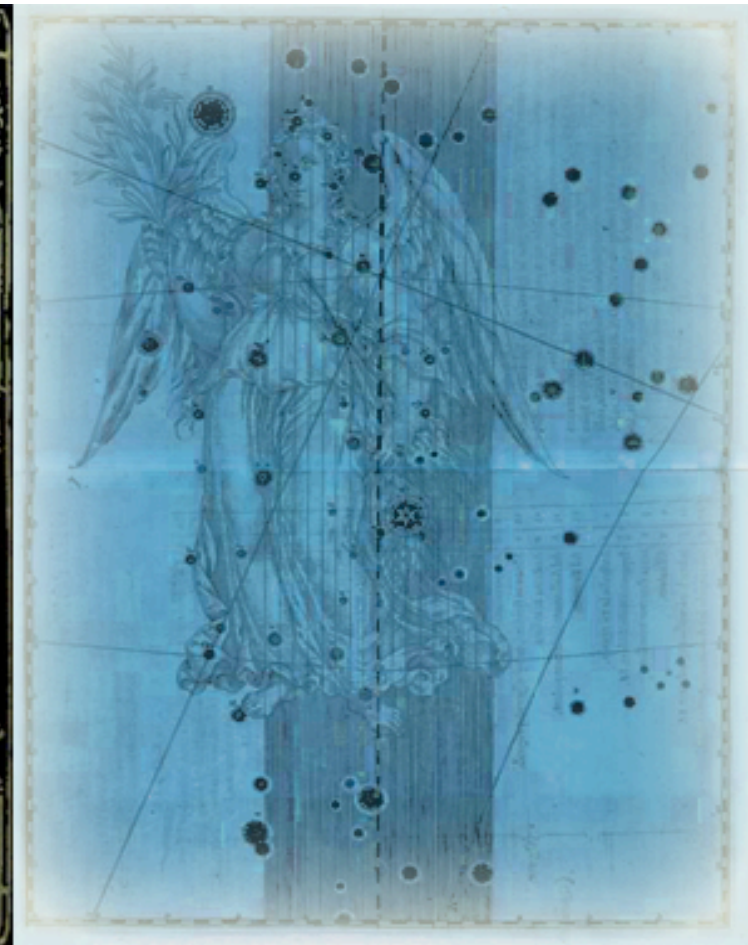
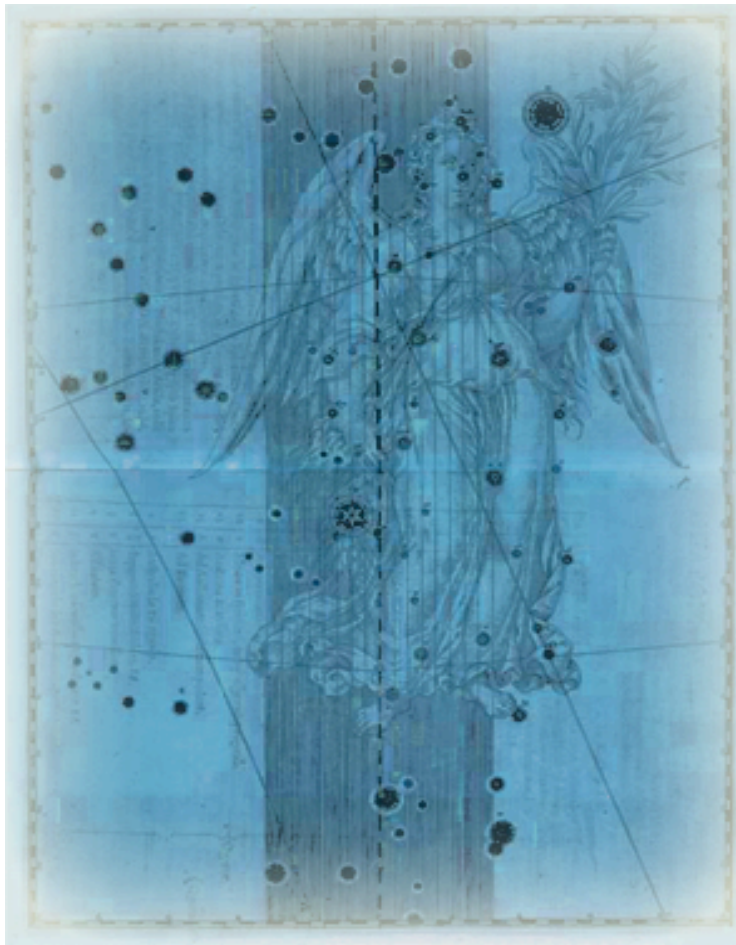
Smoke trails. Between pooled and blank. Between blank and words, words and the bracketing sound, their notches. The ground has nerves. Receivers. All the knives point in the same direction. Inciting war among insects. Facing each other, then interlocking, the idea of money, alchemy. A small pile of salt. Another small pile. Pollen, which is smeared unto a circle, three loops and a cross, the loose signature of the name. Which is light for the moths, who are dead now. In heaven they become God's eyes. The tips rounded off to appease the sensibilities of French kings. Catch one in a cup. Moths or monarchies. The tin on my finger is tiny.

February 27

There's a detective who's sleeping. He hates his brother who is also a detective. There's correspondence, it gets rifled. He says stealing is for ex-husbands when they are pressured, his ex-wife says stealing is for you when loving won't do. Late at night, curled up against his ex-wife, the detective is casing. What's the point of detecting if you keep finding the same stuff? What the world needs is an absent-minded detective. His ex-wife says these teeth are just like your teeth. When you put your teeth in your mouth you kiss me and bite hard without knowing you are doing that. This too will be crossed out and forgotten.

February 28

Like a floor he's happy. Or the roof where he goes he doesn't say anything he's happy. He wonders if he looks like a killer; if he does who would hire him? If he doesn't would they ship him, straight to the assassin academy, where he'd pledge the ninja fraternity (they having those, the hazing's brutal). Maybe he'll flunk out and get promoted to airport security guard, where those lessons he slept through one day become handy. He can say I don't need your stupid X-ray machine, I see all. The floor says it's great to start at the bottom. The roof says nothing but stretches on anyway. Everyone's happy. Everyone's levitating. You go first.



March 1

There is an angel who measures your breath when you're sleeping, describing its consistency, its volume, and how these change over the course of your dreams. Later, when you are awake, another angel measures your breath for the same things. They don't count naps, which is why they are short. How many people there are, there are two for each (for God is infinite and thorough). All of the data is written in a book, one book for each person. At the end of our lives there should be a little less on one side or a little more on the other. The accumulation of this evidence is used by the angels as proof towards the existence of souls.

March 2

One shares your thoughts, another feeds your concerns, a third intervenes, a fourth blocks all interventions, the third quits in protest, but a fifth, who is very persuasive, always brings that one back to work. There is a sixth, but no one knows. The seventh and eighth argue, the ninth processes the paperwork, that one wants the job of the third and is angry at the fifth, persuasiveness is not something angels are meant to be good at. There is a tenth, she plays drums on your back, she speeds your heart and she slows it back down. There are more, they get in each other's way, nothing happens, this is where your freedom comes from. Don't blow it.

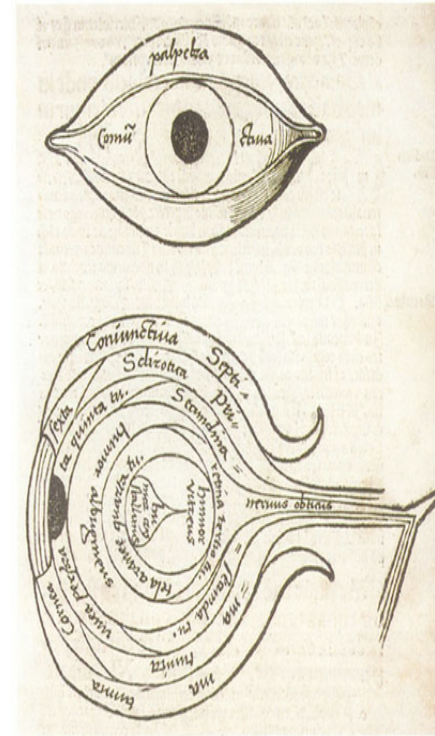
March 3

Do they have genders? Yes, but not to have sex with. Several are planted, they create patience when they are watered, they do this with their thinking. Fertility is achieved, the soil gets loamy. They are pulled, shaken clean, then filed, stacks of them, their wings (they have wings) overlapping like ready to assemble furniture kits. Over time they get flattened, their gender recedes. At parties they are used as coasters. The furniture is made out of their sexes, the ones that were flattened away. Occasionally, in all the happiness of the party, one is set upon its gender. In this way new angels are made, as if by accident but there are no accidents.



March 4

Richard asked me once what I meant, and it took me awhile to figure out I meant something more than representations of the divine or the existence of connecting forces between us and this holiness. The thing itself, the unbearableness of it, whether you summon it, or you just turn and you notice it, or you've known about it all along, or you make jokes about it because it frightens you, or you're certain about what's going to happen to you when you're dead, or you're fucked up and someone saves you, or you're just walking along and it presses down upon you, hard, or it puts its hand on your head, and you are blessed.



March 5

Us, about to get in look upon them, and them, seeing everything, don't need to look at us at all. One says to another, you are a person hiding another person, and that person inside you is hiding another, whole families crammed in your elbow, nations behind your eye. And that one says I know, and don't I look good, and you should try it some time. I like it best when they argue, when they think they know what's up, and then I do a little dance, and the person who is writing this about me runs out of things to say. The other one says running out of things to say is not the same thing as love. Like healing, which is a series of jokes.

March 6

They'd like you to think they resist closure, but secretly they love it, it's the bulging bag of sunflower seeds, the juiciest, most forbidden packs of chewing gum. Because you get off but they, without time, being timeless, don't. They spit the shells on the floor, they get away with it, but when one of them starts something they don't stop until they're told to do so. Then fields of sunflowers erupt from between the rows of the Muni buses and all machines are revealed as angelic imitations. As a pancreas, so the pump. As a mouth, so the jaws of life. They resist, they sulk, endlessly chewing, never getting any closer/ closure.

March 7



One resolves to stop back and try all seventy-four items on the luncheon menu; he is worthy. One resolves to restrain her anger in the presence of their family, and she is worthy too. If both of these are worthy, the scope of worthiness is greater than what is right. One has a plan and he's going to be assiduous, he will not hide his labor, his effort will be clear like a glass of the most expensive water, another will change her mind and drive around the block instead. A host will decide what is worthless as a set that excludes everything you do. But you are already blessed, and your actions will overcome all judgments.



You've been one for so long, you've been sitting in the divine radiation, you gave up your shadow years ago, and I don't know if you ever liked to sing but you love it here. The song in your arms, your breasts, your hips, your hair, your wings. And your song is joined by all the other singers, it's just that to be, being here, is to sing. When God made the world, as God is making the world, God sang. It's complicated, it's clear, it connects you, to me, still. It's not like you have to, or you can't help it, or that you want to, there's no want to here, that's been lifted from you, we couldn't lift it from you, here it gets lifted, here.

March 8

March 9

In the commercial the angels are girls and slender, they do nothing except eat different varieties of cream cheese. One of them is so innocent she doesn't know how to use a dishwasher. Another looks guilty, like she took her slot from someone more deserving, because she enjoys her treats just a little more than she should. They are always trying to convince each other to eat, or to stop eating, or to eat more. They have a lot of time, infinite appetites. There are so many clouds, but they're not really clouds, they lie on them, their whiteness, you connect everything without thinking about it, which means during the commercial you get to be God.

March 10

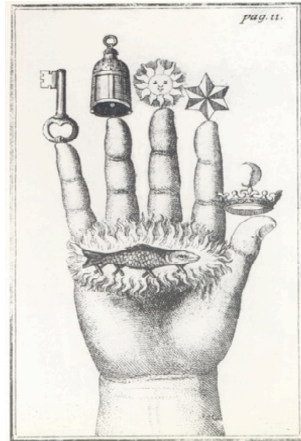
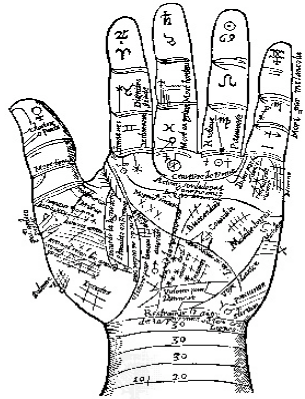
They have problems with shirts. They don't have problems. They are always naked. You forget about sex when you see them. They don't have problems. They have skeins, they have casts. A broken leg, a broken wing, a word, some thread (the word was always broken, this lets us in), they don't notice the salvage. Then the clutter of heaven, like a collyer house, so much junk blocks the door, but we get in, and the oldest, most broken, welcome us, deferential as hosts. God won't mend them because he won't mend us, he won't mend you. There's too much unraveling left, it's the best part, the reason there's a plot.



March 11

They burning, the particulates of God, radical knowings, they see five ways at once, they having eight wings: to cover themselves, to fly, to move the divine spark along the gridlines, the meshworks, and to screen their ten eyes from the sight of God. With burning coals they purify your lips. When you're sleeping they recruit you and you join them instantaneously, you vaporize for them into a series of lines that converge in places and split in others, branching and branching, roots and conversations, taxonomies of the divine which surges through the network, moving away from yourself as quickly as it is practical to do so.

March 12



One argument is that they're really sophisticated robots, divine Roombas zipping around, or playing really good chess against one another. Another argument is that they, lacking real bodies, embody the universe in every last detail, infinite maps in the palms of their hands, the feathers in their wings. Or they are passions, wonder, anger and trembling, they stick their hands in you and you *turn*. Or they're administrative support, messengers, butlers; when you die you'll be in paradise but you'll also have a job. What if they quit? What if they're waiting? What do you want? What do you want? What do you want the world, this world, here, to be?

March 13

One of them stood in front of the gate, and he was on fire. One of them stood behind the gate, and he was on fire too. And they burned so fiercely the gate glowed white. But the ground was unchanged, on both sides and directly beneath, still soft on one side, barren the other. It is argued that when one of



them held out the first sword, death came into the world. It is uncertain which way either of them were facing. The animals had voices, the stones had voices, the clouds and the wind and the insects, the crickets, the crickets sang time, time, time, time, which is a love song. God put that in their legs as the very last gift.

March 14

When I was new, and not used to so much happiness, I had the use of a car. So I'd drive around a lot, and I loved that armored swift-ness. I'd make doughnuts or drive off cliffs or crash right through whatever I wanted. I'd do it again and again, and each time it was something good. It was the Disneyland of the divine, only a lot simpler and more sincere. God was the car, the cliff, the material, me and not me, and it was good. It was all good. That's how work got good. It turned into a job, a good job, shift work, and meanwhile God, being both time and the clock, keeps asking, do we know each other, do we know each other yet, as we file by.



March 15

So on our days off we go to hell. We switch places, we get to stir the pit. Sometimes it's like soup, and you have to scrape the burnt parts off the bottom (they're the best, most delicious part). The dead stay dead, the heat is stifling, you know all that. Our opposites put on wings, wear white, serve the dead up there meals, who think they smile because they are the most blessed. We look down into the pit, and we ask the dead down there, "are you done, are you done yet?" Now and then one of them says yes, yes, oh god yes, and we lift them up, and we fit them, and they become one of us.



March 16

So it's dark, we get used to the dark. And of course the heat, but the heat just makes it more dark. The light we see makes it more dark. Our acts, no matter what we do, more dark, the saddest of darks. There is space, we will not fill it, not with our violence or our hope, only with more darkness. And one of us turns to another of us and says, "hey, we're the good guys here," and there's darkness in his mouth, it's wet and sticky. And maybe I'm king in this place, I tell him, and you're king too. Kings have their own joys. So we put our fingers to his lips, and with the ink we write and we write and we write.



March 17

And the devil gets tired of our notes. He gets tired of our shiftiness, our evasions, our grandeur. He doesn't know which of us he is supposed to trust, because only some of us are on his side. He wants to get back to his butterfly collection and he has all these office management issues to trouble him. It only pleases him a little that God, omni-everything God, has the same problems. It should please him more, so he goes up to pay his respects, past heaven, to another office, where a receptionist tells him to have a seat, and there, to the left, looking through an old *Cosmopolitan*, is God, who knows, and us, who also know.

March 18

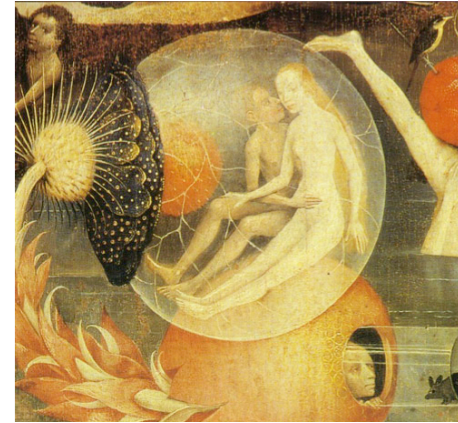
I like to speckle somebody's window, I like to let the flies in (I sing my best irresistible meat song), or the chill. I wave to my buddy by the door, who's bunching up the floor rug, who's fucking with the dog, old barkity barkity bark. There's a pebble, to push you off balance, or make you steady yourself. Like a city where nobody walks anymore, all that driving, alone, everywhere, all those other people in their cars stop being people; like how can you ever love your neighbors if you never have to talk to them? There's one of us at every door, because if there were two of us we'd both push.

March 19

Your shoes are sublime, your clothes, your acts; you don't believe in the sublime, we like that a lot. What you see is sublime, it changes you, when you won't let yourself feel it, we like that too. We're doing our jobs, we clock in and clock out, some of us are into veils, others prefer webs, the trapping kind. Imagine one corner of an enormous cube, hovering in front of you, so that you can only see a small dot, that dot is the sublime, and it's opportunistic, it hops all over, despite us. It talks, but all it can do is ask. The sublime asks for candy, flowers, delightful gifts. The sublime asks you if you're alive, do you know yet if you're so?

March 20

Several connections, some of them blown, others spoiled, some like that, they're into it, it's sexual for them, they have no business with sex, but they're cursed so everything is sex, or they are blessed and we're getting dizzy. Dizzier and dizzier. Towards those connections again, one says the most beautiful things are two roads that cross, or cross without touching, and another says you're supposed to stop thinking about sex. What is most beautiful are gates. Think about gates, their hinges, the clasp, how they sing when you push them open. Or how they can soar, how they're hopeful no matter what, and also sex.



March 21

And yes, the sword, and we're supposed to look up while we're forbidden to do so, just as we can't feel though we routinely tear at each other, for the body is also a gate. The body, each of our bodies, even though we're not supposed to have bodies, is a gate, are gates. I know you want to go through, and I want to take you through, but I'm in the way, and the way is broken, it was broken a long time ago. Then we are obliged, we who instinctively (didn't know we had instincts) resist obligations, to go through, and by going through, make a new way, each of us gates, some of us burning, but each of us gates, hopeful and still.

March 22

One tangles your patience, another makes you fidget, a third yawns, a fourth yells hurry up, the third bitches to his supervisor, who is fifth and doesn't even try, she drags number 3 back to work. There is a sixth, everyone knows. The seventh and eighth get stoned, the ninth shifts paperwork, that one wants



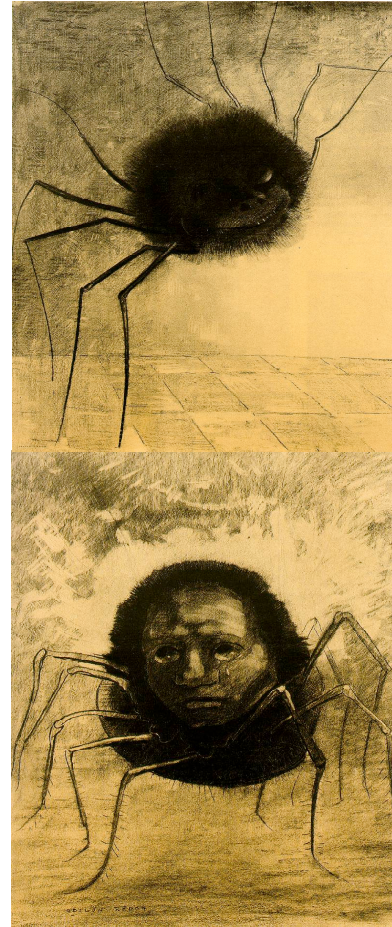
the job of the third and is angry at the fifth, but seven and eight put him to work on their own projects. There is a tenth, she plays heavy metal up your ass, she gets the drop on you and everyone knows. There are more, they tangle with each other and the angels, sparks happen, this is where your freedom really comes from. Of course you blow it.

March 23

The devil says will you speak my language? Will you be permeable, will you let the smallest part in? You'll never know, perhaps the most important part, that's the part that won't translate; not knowing that part, you'll miss hearing what my secret weakness is, which if you knew would save you at the very last minute. So learn my language. Just let one single word in. Then the devil shuts up, and he looks at you, he looks and looks and looks at you. Then the birds speak, the worms in their beaks speak, their blood cells speak, the rocks and sky and trees speak, all the things from the start you were never allowed to hear.

March 24

When you get here there is a dial, like in that silent movie we love, we take turns turning. Of course it's a clock, or the dial of a dishwasher, or your best friend's nipple, or the blades of a lawnmower, or the lock of a safe. Depending on politics or gender we turn clock- or counter-clockwise. Either there are countless such dials, one for each of us, or a single one moving unimaginably fast. Each time the dial stops you remember something, then you have to let it go for the next thing. It goes just fast enough that you can start making connections, you get to feel like a spider making a web, then we take turns being the broom.



March 25

The longer you're here, you remember more and more and you feel less and less, or feeling creeps upon you, and you don't remember why you feel what you feel, but it's ok to feel what you're feeling. You're forbidden to remember, but everyone knows what you're thinking, everyone knows why you're here. Like a downed helicopter, beside convoys watchful and swerving, palm groves, fragrant gardens, smoke plumes, middens under starlit skies, rocky highlands dusted with snow. The idea that when you're dead you stop changing because time has stopped for you. That evil is a force which is apart from you in this world.



March 26

The devil opens his mouth and pulls out a fish. He holds it out to you. Wrong fish? That's ok, he puts it back. Glug glug. Pulls out a different one, just for you. He opens wider, pulls out a plate, it's porcelain, its rim is as blue as a vein. You like rice, he pulls out some rice with saffron and peas, he plates it artfully against the fish. He knows you'll never eat it, but he pulls out a sprig of parsley anyway. Service for thirteen too. Do you feel lonely, the devil says, he pulls out some birds, squawk squawk the best of friends. Then he pulls out your mother, in case you're still feeling hungry.

March 27



We tell him it's also about love, but all he hears is the also. Or the it's, and he thinks an axe, a baseball bat, a cheat. We say not those subjects, or maybe not those subjects in the way you mean them. He says I'm a maker, I can make them mean anything I want them to. Those pronouns are the nails of the world, we think. But the world is also his house. So why not redo the basement, get rid of the tacky paneling we put up in the seventies? It would be good to get rid of the paneling, fix the sump pump, throw out the boxes, bags and piles, and he says wait aren't they love too, they were broken for you. I broke them for you.

March 28

The purpose of shoes is lost upon us, but not the goats we tend. The depths of snows, the dead with their various parts poking out, anything goes, we tell the goats it's great anything goes. To which the goats, those embodiments of purpose, nose deep in someone's heel, say is deliciousness. Also grass, both kinds, framing houses which slope besides woods where deer at night walk slowly from to graze, their enormous black eyes reflecting grace. We shoo them away, we threaten them with wolves, lights flash in the windows of the houses and the best smoke curls upward from chimneys and our nostrils, blackening whatever it touches.

March 29

I was sitting on top of this fat, crying guy, curling my foot under him to touch the other guy crushed beneath him, when the guy underneath asks why it has to be like this. And I say this, particularity, is so because we're economical, and we believe in the power of doubles. And the fat guy beneath the other fat guy says, what about the guy below me, and the fuck below him, he's been down here so long he's just a thought, all that's left of him is just a thought, it's not fair along with all of this I have to keep thinking too. Below him's another, and so on. I can't save you I say, but if it helps, beside each of you, for every one of you, I'm there too.

March 30

It's late. God is hungry so the devil is hungry too. But when the devil is hungry God gets full. The waitress stands there, waiting for them to make up their minds and order something. Which annoys the devil, he says you're always pulling this God, and God says I know. The devil says I know too, and we've got to break up for real this time. But I still love you God says. You love everybody the devil says. No, I love you especially. No, you love everyone the same, or you wouldn't be God you'd be me, and I don't want you to be me, or even be like me, and I don't like you anymore. Can we at least be friends, God says.

March 31

God stopped being angry at the devil a long time ago, and this really pisses everyone off. We're supposed to be happy and get with the plan, but the details rub. So to vent, we take turns being the devil, we get to do what we want, whatever we want, it's best to be surprisingly kind to people who think they don't deserve it. Even God takes a turn, which also pisses the devil off. Once they got into a fight, with the devil getting angry that God was inside him, and God getting happier because he liked being the devil, until suddenly there was all this light, and land, and water, and birds and happiness and you; we had to make the world out of you.





Six Essays:

*On Worry, Comparisons,
Fiction, The Sky, Thinking
and Abundance*

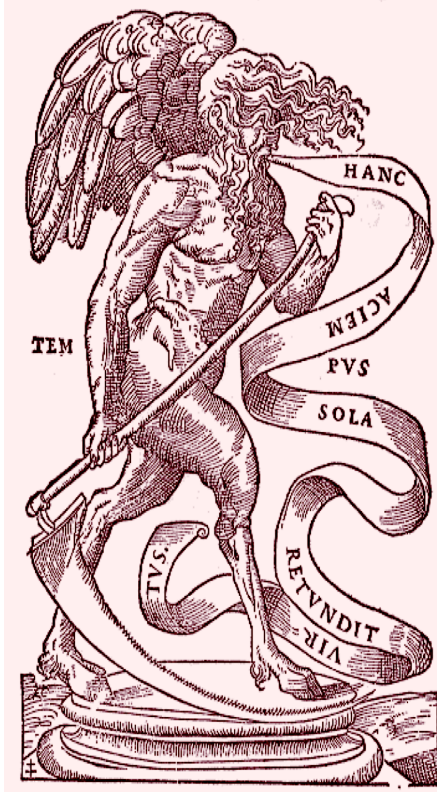
April 1-30, 2007

April 1

Worry is a thing and an act. As a thing it's a creature, and you become encreatured, when it sniffs you, when it flirts. That's quick, are you quick, and not good, are you good? Its hands, their nails stick into you, but its questions, those are tools. And if it likes you, it really likes you, it really likes what it's working on you, then it invites its family and friends, close confidants, and they work on you too. Enough metaphors. I am happy, I love my wife and my home. I have great friends and neighbors, interesting classes and students who want to learn from me. But I'm worried about these three things: my reputation, my age, my job.

April 2

I worry that I'm not experimental enough. That I don't quote enough from commercials, or use the word ipod as a verb. That I don't blog, or myspace, or tribe. That I'm not disjunctive enough, or I'm not disjunctive in an interesting way, or I don't have enough critical work out, or I didn't get a Phd, or I'm not close to the right people, or that I wasn't the student of someone who was experimental, so I don't have the right lineage, or I don't love Fill-In-The-Blank enough, or love Fill-In-The-Blank in the way I'm supposed to, or I use the letter I and mean myself too much, I'm so whiny and square and sentimental I don't even have a cell-phone.

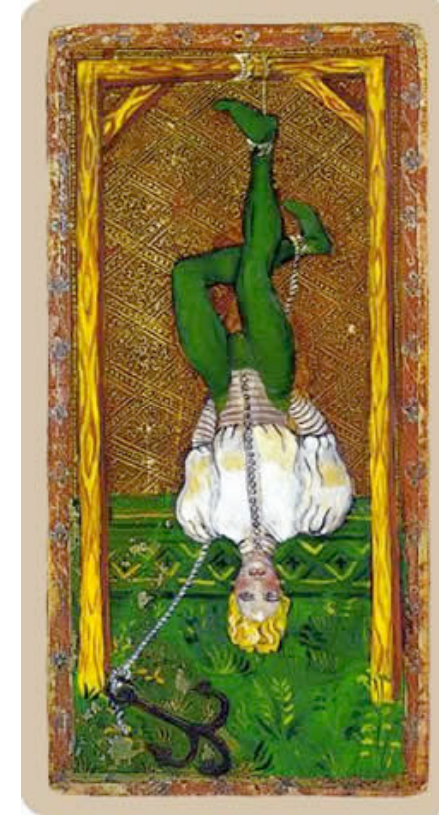


April 3

I worry that I'll always be too young, until it's too late, the switch will get thrown with neither my knowledge nor consent and then I'll be too old. So either whatever I say will be ignored, or whatever I say will also be ignored, but for more humiliating reasons. Or that I'll always be clueless, and then I'll always be clueless, or I'll talk too much and then I'll talk too much, and nothing I say will make sense and then nothing I say will make sense, and that for everyone else that long stretch of being heard, of knowing what's up, of being persuasive, for me was a diamond so small I threw it away like a pebble stuck in my shoe.

April 4

I worry about my job, that I haven't won enough prizes, or that the prizes I won were too long ago, that I don't have that prestigious publisher, that every time they do a search they're looking to replace me, that whatever good I can do there is someone out there that can do better, and that's the person they want, I'm just keeping things warm until that magician shows up. It drives me nuts how my job is tied to the reception of my work, I know writing is reception, being receptive, but not like this, this fiddling with the rabbit ears on my president's set. I worry saying this will get me fired.



April 5

So I worry. I write this about my reputation, my age, my job and I worry. But let me argue that worrying is a form of excavation, a digging into things that pain you. You dig into the ruined fortifications of yourself, and your digging wrecks them some more. If you leave it at that you're fucked. So don't leave it at that. Since you're digging, you need a garden, you need a well. The water is sweet, you can keep it or give it away to someone who is road-soiled, and worried. The garden is abundant, cool and blessed because you are abundant, cool and blessed. Stop digging. Give that person a peach. Don't worry. You are blessed.



April 6

Think about comparisons. What does it mean to say you are like, whatever? Like wanting you is delightful. I want to say of course but I don't want to be flip. Not a teenager, thank you God, so don't need to be cool about how I feel. I don't believe in whatever. It's spring. I'm tired of cool. Good to woo, be all ardent like, especially when I don't have to woo. Woo you hoo you say, which is ridiculous so maybe I should warm up in bed with you. Tres cool. Tongue cool. Sheet cool. After all my worries it's good to describe you. How should I describe my desire? My wanting for you is like wanting a bed, a streetlight and a bad sci-fi movie.



I want you like a bed after I've been working all night. A bed which is a road upon which royal dreams travel, in which I am led about by elephants, their tusks draped in my best memories, which are wrapped with blue silk which are my best memories of you. I want you like a bed in which I study the horticulture of all poetries, their charms which allow the elephants to kneel; when they kneel they are courtly and their breath is so vegetal, my clothes bloom, and when they kneel I unwrap the silk from their tusks, upon which I shall sleep, and this is my dream, the bed of which is you. I want you like a cool bed, a wide bed, our bed, and you.

April 7

I want you like a streetlight, when it's dark, I'm lost and being watched, I want you like that. I want you like a streetlight when it's warm and moonless and I feel like loitering, when I feel like drinking a beer on the stoop at night, that comfort, that ease, I want you like a streetlight, when I feel like Gene Kelly, it's raining and I want to make a mess, I want to throw myself, I want to swing, my left arm goes around, and then the rest of me goes around, you, of course you, like a streetlight, I want you like that. Not like a moth, not like a bug, not frustrated, I know where I am, I'm almost home, and through the window I shine upon, I see you reading this, like that.

April 8

I want you like a bad sci-fi movie. One where the president of evil threatens with his evil ghost army, and the city and all its helpless pets are threatened! I want you like a bad movie with unpretentious explosions, where the world is ravaged by ghosts, evil ghosts no less. Totally boss. Stomp some kittens. I want you like the pleasure of watching things blow up, fireballs, evil witchy green fireballs, against the brave kittens and not one speck of guilt. I want you like the symbolism of a bad sci-fi movie with zombies, where the hero is another kind of zombie, but his heroism brings him back to life, he's blossoming, a fireball, I want you like that.

April 9

Metaphors are hopeful and I love them. They are hopeful because they grow out of the premise that connection is possible; not just that you can understand what I am saying, but that I can unlock experience from the cage of myself and you can understand what I'm thinking. So to make comparisons is to say it is possible, that

April 10



even though the thing itself may be lost, these words are not just plots and rules, not just play, not just spin, not now, not while I'm trying, when we're together and I'm speaking, you can know how I feel. What I feel is love. So a bed, a streetlight, and a bad sci-fi movie, are the earth, the stem, and the flowering of that love.

April 11

Of fiction, which is a plan and facing you. Our secret explications, the narrator who has seven arms purely to fuck with you. Live on plot, squarebob, plumbline, choosey. Or we're chatty and resist closure by not talking about anything at all. Or we're disruptive and chic, pornographic if you think it'll work anymore. Or we're happy and we're doing our best to avoid narrative structure in favor of lyric possibilities (ecstasy over closure, why wouldn't you?). Or we're tired and we don't want to choose anymore, or we're locked into a failed economic model that's going down with the rest of this country. Or we're replete.

April 12

Imagine we are characters, and that we are depicted as blank rectangles, one certain part of which is scribbled black. The blank part represents the particles of ourselves that can be known, by ourselves, by our readers and authors (who are also readers). The scribbled section is the mystery, the heart of us,



The reason narratives cohere around us. But there's more, there's a lion, a lion is in your house, that outline is your house and the lion is eating your house. And because the lion has eaten your house, you're going to have to live inside that lion. It'll be your turn to be the black square, to live in the dark. You better be nice.

April 13

Imagine we are characters again, but what counts this time is setting. Not just that where we are determines who we are, but all those opportunities. You could tell the same story in Florida but you wouldn't be the same person, you'd want to do different things. In Panama you can't say it's snowy and say stay put but I can say no no no no no so rapidly it's headachy. Go out then, you say, so I'm out. And it's great and snowy and not Orinda, I thought I loved snow but really I only like it a little. So I say can I come in, and you say not yet I'm making a snowman. No really I say I want to come in. Not yet you say I'm eating ice cream.



April 14

Imagine we are characters still, still? and the black square inside us is growing, that is the plot. Plots are cancer. The mystery of the black square is cancer and black ice, it is the plot that used to be space and now it's a car on its side after an accident. One of the wheels is spinning, before anyone moves or says are you ok, the airbags and the seatbelts pinning the driver, before the driver wonders if he can move, before the doctors find cancer, the car as we think about it is a black square, the passengers are worse than black squares, the plot hasn't reached them yet. All we want are paramedics, healing, resolution, a little light in the world.

April 15

I am mentoring Boris, and I'm explaining fiction. Snakes which give birth to hundreds of snakes, which are descriptions and characters and representations of the best selves you outgrew so long ago. You want them to be you, all of them you, you're writ(h)ing, we can't even pronounce the words correctly. And the snakes, they're ancient, from the very first garden, and they will not let you pass through this world unbitten, they will not let you stay in this world unbitten, and you love them, and you need them, and you worship them, in all their guises, and that is fiction, that is why you love fiction, you're alive and you love fiction.

April 16

On the sky. It's not the sky. It won't come out of jail. It's better than that. It's cloudy. And you get creases. Like a letter. A letter about the sky. And it's a long time. Time won't shut you. I think about the sky. And I read your letter. Then we, being family. We, being born and seeded. We, evaporating. A cloud of you and a cloud of me. Oceanic bodies, birds flying through. So that if you are in need, blur, and like the sky, I'll blur you back. And you will know that you are not lost, that you are not dead, that you are not creased, or if you are creased then you are not lost, that you are loved, not just as a sister is loved, or the sky.



April 17



Betokening our shared knowledge of what is beyond us is the sky. Events turning time off its dust. Someone saying I wish, I wish, you saying yeah me too. I'd remember the right song, and it would be my birthday. I'd say I'm learning the supervision of time and its sky, I'm in discussion with the upper managements. They would reach down and pat me on the head, tell me I'm doing a good job, and each time they touch me my hair blossoms white and brown, black curls to match my beard. Then even the green shade, then even the trees, then the just then, the going everywhere, I'll go everywhere. I'll know it twiceways, for my birthday.



April 18

Old enough to want a better paying job, old enough not to want to lose the job I already have. The sky is so big, there are so many birds, my boss asks me to volunteer. Building women out of birds for men who want them for the birdhouses others of us are building, with teeny tiny kitchens that nobody ever gets to use. I sit and wait in the workshop, my hands as they get spotted like my father's, I put my thumbs together and flap my fingers. But birds are what we see everywhere. They who know this exactly. They with their legs which end in claws. They resist their definitions. They expect awe.

April 19

If I said sky or white ribbon, or the tips of my fingernails or cherry blossoms, then sky is a beforeness and I'm inclining or I slept all the time I kept falling asleep I got better by seeking the lowest of elevations, then I could start. Soft sky, curling ribbon, cuticles, fireworks, I wore amazing shirts I made descriptions happily useless. Nostalgic cement! Also white, of which hopeful buildings, sparrow pocked, are constituted, as they stretch inside the sky. As I am, in thinking, bringing all these together, I like bringing these things together, and when I go to sleep, even the dark, the light around my head is white.



April 20

There's nothing wrong with writing about the sky, the sky could care less, its feelings are weather patterns, that zephyr when you're happy, the patterns bend macroscopically. The accumulation is undetectably vast, so much implication, so little time between now and the next election cycle, so much work and so much sky, clouds and vapor trails. So descriptions of weather as relational exhibitions, it was so nice out we were eased. Then, when I shook the sky from my hands, I lived without sleeping, and my sleep, missing me, wrote postcards, says you promised, you used to feel safe when we shared the same body.



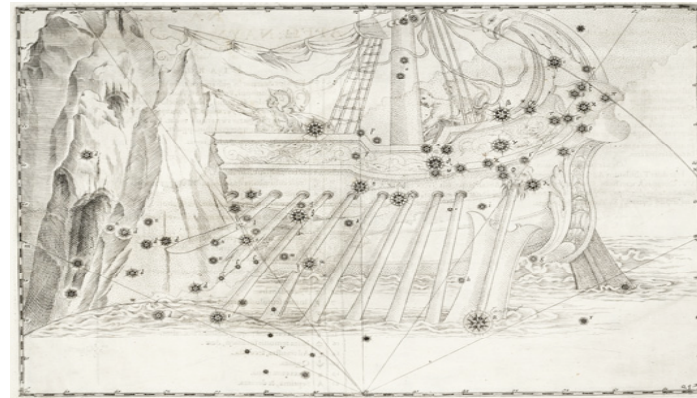
April 21

What is real is thinking. Loud people are real but getting less so. So they get louder, which makes them less real because everyone leaves them. They get louder the police come and arrest them which makes them more real, if you need a lawyer you have to be real. Then a wave, a line intersecting that wave, above you're real, below you're not. Starting at loud, then getting louder. But if you took that wave and joined its ends so that it resembled a blossom, then all this would incarnate, would have to, not even the police could stop it. Instead a hummingbird would stick its head right down the blossom center, and sacredness would enter the real.



April 22

As a sea is thinking about the moon, very slow music. The sea honors her mother by abolishing loneliness, and another coral reef buds inside her and her thoughts. Which I am also thinking. Or lucky, which is also memory, someone who likes a lot saying hello. Of what I can memorize I choose this thought, and I



feel like the sea. So I thought about moving my thumb around inside you, thought about how your ears flush, thought about what I'm able to do, I get so emulsified I leave my glasses on the floor. I don't need to see where I'm going, where I'm going it is joyfully dark. A dark where I'm always there and always arriving.

April 23

The dark. Likely not that dark I like being married. Maybe not as rectangular as I used to be. So I should hang out with James and get a bit squared. Mind on top of my own, man. Obedient workers, half flight/half conversational. Tiny men riding atop hummingbird mounts commanding fleets of bees before a field of lavender. Not real, divine pollen, that which is smeared down ones forehead consecrating all thoughts from that point until it's dark and night returns the god of sleep to the world. Then would be like a stranger, would inherit names, coins, loosen your obscurity like a tie, bring water in your mouth, your own mouth for me to drink.



April 24

I'm so happy I better stop being happy. I'm so happy they're going to put me in jail. I'm so happy I make art obsolete. Just spend time in the same room with me you'll never need to go to the museum anymore. I make happiness like a factory. I crash the market, my happiness crashes the market, my exuberance does that I like doing that. You got a market I'll crash it with my joy. Then catching hold with my happiness, kicking. Not ashamed, but in the roundness of the situation, God thinking, this thought deserves to be real. Describing the space then living in it. Directed at you, directed at you.



April 25



Working and thinking. Shake what's real from what's true. A man goes to bed in a woman and she wakes up in him. He says I thought I was handsome, thought I was asleep. Says I love my arm between your torso and your other arm. You could interpret desire as it is called, exactly that thing, makes both of them more green. She says I was working. I tried to intend. I tried compassion and I intended. I tried resonance and I intended, the whole world was bells. Then around 4:30 my boss called, and I was let loose from what? My intensions. So they're intuitional, in the way they move together. They eat breakfast they make eggs, keep them loose.

April 26

On abundance. Has two, then happily like a man with abundance. The artichoke on its side toppled in our yard has finally, crowned? A green baby, but nothing like a baby, more mineral. Smooth, tiled artichoke. Abundance of emeralds, picking one out just for you. So many greens, carefully spaced potato plants. A whole, a rule, a ribbon that is space, which is words but never words first, birds see, snails see, small bugs, spiders, speaking first, long before me. They don't think I'll join them as I walk past them to pick up the newspaper and the mail. A family of occurrences. I love our artichoke, perhaps soon we'll have two.

April 27

The light we should be using. Wrote this before I was born, so I doubt it's for me. Still, while reading, I can see this earlier man break his heart into many fighting pieces, and with some real estate they could make a treaty, and you would visit. You could collect souvenirs, one for each. The parts get jealous, they compete for your affections. One offers t-shirts, so another has to have shot glasses, and the postcards spread like butter. So much! Collect away, scrapbook, and the light, so much light, it goes back and forth between us, and that man before I was born lives a good life, because he grows up in Las Vegas and gets to be me.

April 28

Long spindle. Long oak-mouth. Just as you blossom, just as you. Then the first water was dirt. The lines that speak of bodies was dirt. And the items they drag was dirt. Hollows open out, lovely. Hands on, weathered. Is weathered, ok liking all about that. Whole cliffs, small leaping bug. Climbing a little more. A way, some tufting, holding moisture in the dirt. Night-grown lines, clawfoot lines, radiants. Plenty of time to be humble, lying on my elbows, at night we think yes, delightful love-making spot, thank you landscape architects, thank you grasses thank you very much. Vowels, flickering, owl noises, your hair green headed, good.

April 29

Quote some trees. Do all sorts, be a complex patience. When talking imagine each word is happy, not just for its letters but for the lips, teeth, tongue and breath saying them, or eye, mind, silence of them, or the scientific principles and critical play of them, all so. At least here, at least all in the past now, boxes and bags of dirt, recycling too. Utensils, formal thoughts too. Long moral fibers, the three breath diet, delightfully late, good to chat, long fog seasons. Of wind, of moving around, plenty of time. Fecund, prosperous. Or so much to hold up. Or as you become, one by one, big and long, happy – longer. To hear some, and very tuggy.

April 30

Lots of light, dirt, verdancy. And salt, eggs, got to have a square in your life, a plate to put on top of your table, got to have a table. So hold on to your hammers, working and promising what works, what passes for work. Weeds, weeding. Back to work. Your child doesn't look like you, there's still time to fix this, noise helps, so does a realtor. Abundance equals work. Heavy investments, permits, and ducks overhead, and nails, and I'm so lazy, and I like to stay up late, and work, being everywhere, I'm trying to get out of it and still remain in my body, some toast and Tabasco for my eggs, a jelly jar of milk to drink from.





May 1

The three hole puncher suit (take a swing). The head in your wallet suit. The shy suit. The shy suit and the bone shaped suit. The summer hammer decisive suit, the plot zero infinitely planning suit, the smooth suit goes over the sharp suit for clients to cut. The pornographic suit that itches and itches, everyone knows you're wearing one. The broken suit, the suit made out of racks, the contemptible suit knit out of tiny men trapped in their routines. The suit they're going to strip off of you like coral, the suit they're going to break parts off with their fingers it's the candybutton suit. The hungry suit, you look so thin wearing it.

May 2

A mouse suit. A bird suit. A tree suit. A hill suit. A woman suit and a child suit. A suit made out of ears for when it gets windy, a suit made out of tongues for when it is snowing, a suit of breath for when you're feeling lonely, a suit you don't even know you're wearing. Long, long, long suits large enough to house three men, spacious tently suits, room enough to employ several more just to fold, just to mind the linings (mice, birds, trees, hills). A suit made out of shoes (for when you're feeling lonely) you can be so tough when you wear it. Sleeves of water, sleeves of women and children. Water in the cuffs you don't even know, you don't even.



May 3

Historic suits we call costumes when we're lazy; when we're not we gather documentary suits from documentary fields under the extensively documented moon. And in that there we dream the opposite of the paper suit, we dreamed the suit that when worn makes you even more legitimate, even as it cuts you loose from history, even as it makes more suits possible: strategic flopping suits, militant four star suits, tactical hats. What kind of birds are we in this field, why do we keep picking at our feathersuits? A mouse in a catsuit fools nobody. Why are there certainties we never push against? Stray threads, buttonholes.

May 4

Oh it's good to put on your stone suit, roll yourself. It's a good shyness, a polished stone suit. A likely suit, suitability, hand of cards, good tunes rock the stone suit all day long. Shangri-la suit all day long, no narrative Mt. Stone Suit, sitting comfortably on the dead president's shoulders, on the dead president's monument, good to count rocks as they measure the stone suit you're going to wear. The holy pleasure of the stone suit, it's so good God tells you not to do it in the bible. Stamped into the stone suit, letters of fire, blisters you don't even notice, just got to toughen you up for your turn, you don't even notice it's your turn.



May 5

When you don't have to and you do it anyway. Or you are making another you. Or that boss is looking, but he'll never know what he sees. The best part is the jacket, you can put it on and you're responsible, with all the never used buttons. The next best part is the shirt, if you can wear cufflinks you are secretly blessed, tell everyone you are secretly blessed. If you wear a red jacket the hummingbirds will love you, they will hover around you, just to check you out. My wife's shoulder under my suit, so I know who I am. My wife's back on top of my suit, I know who I am. My wife sleeping in my suit, the pinstripes waving like grain.

May 6

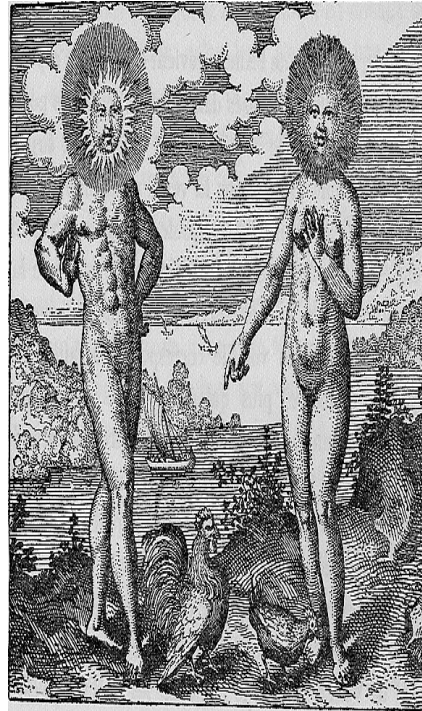
You should wear one when you're at the beach, when you're watching the gulls, when the waves shuffle. An old joke, the grandmother who gets her grandson back from drowning, she begs God three times, a wave finally sets him at her feet, and with her hand lightly on his wet hair, he was wearing a hat, she says, what have you done with his hat. And God, who is either all merciful or scared of this grandmother sends forth a wave and returns a hat, a very nice hat. Not the kid's hat, not a better hat, not worse. As if God was making a point. The hat, which blesses the head. Suitable for carrying receipts, small piles or thoughts.

May 7

My oldest I can't wear anymore, Atlantic City, 1979, soft the way old cotton gets soft, more a rag now, torn collar, etc. My next oldest is also blue, say yes to Michigan, say yah to the UP too my hateful next door neighbor when I lived in Tucson used to say. Asshole. And my old army shirt, the youth leadership shirt, the shirt I picked up at a debate tournament, the 1980 Philadelphia Phillies World Series Championship which I wore to shreds waiting for another one, the Apathy Press flying brain Tom Diventi gave me, mediums, mostly, my wife wears them, they're see thru, they're sexy. I'm old, I'm extra-large. Extra-see thru. Extra-sexy.

May 8

Oh come. Oh come on. You know. If the center is unsleeping, will you find a bed for it? If vertebrae, would you say the fourth and fifth counting down? Would you reach down the neck of my shirt and cup me? Would you count my ribs? Am I like a tent, do I flap? Am I like two roads? Standing up or lying down? Am I like the leaves and branches of our bay laurel tree? Am I shady? Am I light? Oh come on, come on, c'mon. Of course you know. It's sunny, I'm sunny. The sun can't help it, the sun can't stop popping and you tell me buttons are good for only one thing, and you tell me, and you tell me, and then you show me.



May 9

A modest dress I want to bunch the pleats up and pretend we go to Catholic school. A tight black dress with a zipper in the back that goes from the base of your neck to the top of your ass. A dress that fits the two of us, if we hold our breaths and squeeze super tight (where can I get this dress?). A dress, allowing your legs to swing free, a dress that makes you take small steps, a dress that lets you run, a dress so mighty you could cup the whole thing in the scoop of your hands. Off the shoulder, the left or right or both (both!). Let's go out, let's stay in, let's dress, undress, let's.

May 10

Didn't we go to New York and I just had to drag you there? Into the tiniest most Jewish of brashops on the lower east side? Where the guy who works there feels you up with his eyes because he is forbidden to touch you, and his assistant, who I think was from Jamaica. And didn't he send back box after box of the most delightful bras, you stood behind a curtain with the woman from Jamaica, and none of the bras you felt were right for you, but I said the right thing, I said I didn't want you to hurt your back, but what I really wanted was to buy you a black lace beauty with the little pearls between the cups.



May 11

The immense. The black. The soft black coat. Once, housed. Then black as a hat. Then black as a pin pushed into a hat, the little hole. Then carefully, like a bird, like a bird investigating the hat, a hat on the grass, the soft black grass. Hat talking to coat, coat filling the room. Coat filling the room, the room goes away, say goodbye to the room says the hat, I'm not your puppet says the coat. Then lying down to sleep, using the coat as a blanket, and the hat goes over your eyes. And the hat tries to sing, but the coat sleeps around you, and you dream of birds, crows this time. Who wear their most formal feather coats just to greet you.

May 12

Loving all fascisms, saying the same thing, good shoes, nice shoes, lucky to have such a nice pair of shoes. Or you want to see in the dark, as if what's in the dark is better than what you see already say the shoes. A couple that bickers, a snake shape, a print. But I'm loving, I got a pair. And they're modest, because we're modest, they don't give themselves away, tied up tight the loyal earth takes them in and will never give them away. What is phosphorescent and accepting you, your days accepting you, the good earth accepting your feet, the embassy of shoes. Where some, on benches, sleeping, aren't all sleeping.

May 13

Caught you trying to act more like the devil, like the devil would act like you, he has worse things to do, he multitasks, sends you out to pick up his laundry. Sends you forth naked, without the ticket, it's always a test with him. At the shop the clerk stares and you say look, it's the devil's laundry, just give me the bag with all the fucking lamé. The clerk says the stains are extra, how will you pay for this? And you say doesn't he have an account? Of course he has an account, sign here and here and here and next time bring the ticket. On the way down you think about what you could do if you could wear Satan's clothes. You'd look better than him, says the devil's dry cleaning.



May 14

Caught you trying to act more like God, wearing a bathrobe all day long. Like a bum, my mom would say, is God a bum I'd say, he wears a robe, a nice one, and the angels, they wear robes too, nice ones too.

And my mom would say either you're not God get dressed put on something decent for Christ's sake, or she'd say do you want to wind up like Howard Hughes with the footlong fingernails and the Mormons, a billionaire hiding in his room? What are you hiding? I know you're hiding, she says, what is it? And I tell my mom are you sure you want to ask that question to a guy who's wearing a robe?

May 15

When I lived in Chicago I hated doing laundry, dragging my pushcart through the snow. And when I lived in San Francisco I also hated it, up and down three flights of stairs. The same in Tucson, someone stole my backpack in the Laundromat there. In Baltimore there was this crazy guy who just kept screaming at the dryers, he held all of our clothes hostage. Even now, with a washer and dryer not seven feet from my bed, I'd wear the same shirt if I could get away with it, the same everything; all of Bob's clothes are black, maybe that's it, let the house fill up with clothes, a flood of socks and pants and dirty sheets, the sea at night.



May 16

What do we wear? A less and less, from the suits and tasteful dresses, to our own skin, to nothing ever again. A piece of cloth, a shroud, between us and the earth. Then becoming what the earth itself wears, becoming jewelry for the earth, necklaces and earrings and grills. Wearing hope, that when time stops at last, at last, we will be reunited with all of our bodies and all the bodies we have ever loved, and we will not be naked during that judgment, because we will all be dressed in hope, and we will not see what we are not wearing, because we will be too startled to look. That shining. The sky with its jewels, the earth with its dead.

May 17

A narrative as you take off your clothes. Then pleasure is good because it makes time stop. The kind of lovemaking where you fold your clothes first; it does not get praised enough. That cheerful deli-



berateness, what you can count on and not think you're lucky until you know what I'm talking about. No one is going to rush us. No one's going to interrupt. When you get out of bed there's a coin stuck to your ass, you say you didn't have to pay me I would have done it for free. Later when we're at work people will look at us separately and they'll think about their own stories. How we let ourselves out of our bodies like steam.

May 18

So when I got there, Satan took out his flensing knives, and happily he went to work on me, he said I'm going to make a suit out of you, and I will look so dashing. At first I was terrified, then I knew I could bear it, but like Jerry Falwell, who stood in line behind me, all I could say was mercy. But he was not seeing what I saw, what he saw was all the people, for everyone was here, no one was saved, we all patiently stood, waiting our turn. So I turned, and I saw the devil in my skin, that caricature, my character, and I laughed to be liberated from myself, and feeling lighter, and much better dressed, I went out looking for you.



May 19

Or become clothed. Or lie in the fields as you get it. It repeats while you get it. Wet silver crickets, jewel-like cicadas. Define, not plummet. As lucky I'm lucky, ok. Then raiment, your critical miraculousness, your highness, your robe, scepter and gown. Thereafter raised saying clothed saying web saying raised saying everywhere is, is the temple and all plots encircle its holiness, the fertility of the land and all the horses upon the land. Or dressing, with stars, the prayer, which is resistible, still, if you're hungry I'll cook for you, if you get lost I'll follow you, when you lie down I sleep with you. What prayer, what light is dressing you.



May 20

Eventually we'll beg. Your job will be prayer, you'll carry stones in your pockets, they'll give you away, the sound they make. Neighborhood we'll ask for, casing, doorway or guiding go through go through. Counting then falling so shy very shy all around is forever, forever is glamorous in its tuxedo or toga or robe clasped shut with bright jewel buttons unbutton them. Horizon is near and fronting you. You have to get held holding you, a brick brick-ing you is a tailor tailoring you, a seamstress seeming you, unseaming you eventually we'll beg. It's ok everyone begs. Forever is gracious and supremely dressed.



May 21

Wears a hat, wears a robe, sometimes carries a bag, sometimes servants follow carrying, sometimes the sorcerer wears nothing at all; when you look the world itself obscures the sorcerer's body. The world is modest that way. On one finger is a ring, on the thumb the black mark, the left hand is callused, the right hand does tricks. The left hand works. Was a cartoon once, didn't like it. Showed up as a figure, didn't like that either. Wears secrets, wears spells, rubs them back and forth, pinches them shut and sews them when they're complete, sews them to you, you, your secrets now. Wears a little bag, ties a cord, your nakedness, your highness.



May 22

Twills are loomed in a series of small steps. That climb downward in the fabric and are stairs. That look upward the same time. Time on a shelf, some almonds to disman-
tle. A slip-stitch is an invisible method of joining, where you run the needle first into one creased edge and then into the next. Put on your coat quickly, someone is calling. It's good to carry a book in your pocket, fold it back if you need to. What about the half that flaps loose? Would it be better if tucked into a hem? A pause in speech, while someone is calling, your book in your pocket, almonds on your breath, as you head out the door, in twill, taking small, careful steps.



May 23

Our president says next time I plan on having a toy-like body, in order to ease your acceptance of me. I will come in four colors, why not try them all? For a limited time buy one of me and get the second half off. Our president says you should incorporate worship of me into your daily exercise routine. It's easy, start with all the spaces of your day when you're not thinking about anything, and then think about me. Focus on the blue shirt I'm wearing, the pearl buttons, the crispness of my collar, the little flag on my lapel, the silkiness and bold stripes of my tie. Then imagine it's your picture, in the wallet in my pocket.

May 24

The president wears a cowboy shirt, well made with pocket flaps, nobody trusts him, could imagine any horse would trust him if that horse knew who he was. The president wears jogging suits though they make him look fat. He wears a suit that not only looks repressed, but also gives the idea that he enjoys repression. The president wears a cowboy shirt, because he once played a cowboy and now owns a ranch. His predecessor wears a work shirt, one he doesn't mind getting dirty, he dreams of nothing else except going back to work when he no longer has to be president, but no one has the heart to tell him that he'll never stop being president.

May 25

One president dreams he'll be buried in his football uniform and the American flag. Another dreams his tie is a rope strangling him, he looks terrible in a suit, but all he has to wear are suits. No one pities him. Before him, another cowboy shirt, he can't wait to get back to his ranch, sometimes he sees the men around him as cattle and his work is to herd them. This will be his downfall. One, so dashing, abolishes the top hat but keeps the tuxedo, when he dies his clothes will sell for thousands while our parents grieve. One wears a uniform, likes to play golf, take naps, so we too wore uniforms, played golf, slept. Another sold hats. He too was hated.

May 26

Not like armor though I could use some. Soft not tough I should be tougher. Not like a badge how would you guess I'm wearing one? Used to be tough now I'm getting softer. Wear it to stand out you fit right in. Wear it to fit in you're left standing out. Ok to get wet don't worry you'll ruin it. Ok to be cool don't worry about the cold. Pay full price for one at Macy's, get another all banged up at a thrift store, the one I got Mary found at a garage sale for four bucks, the pockets were sticky they aren't anymore. I dig the Chills I'm listening to them now as I write this. I love my leather jacket and I wear it all the time.



May 27

Then how are you essential? Does your breath give life to others? Do small animals love you? Finally no rain or color. Bare light or clover, to bloom yellow flowers, I like being my age. Sun lies weedy, got to grow another beard to match my suit. Not limping but sort of lazy, devotional get dressed in the morning, get dressed in the afternoon instead. No promises only multiples. A rock in my head it has to gesture like a priest but priests don't, they wave and make points they carry rocks in their pockets they find them where they need them I am part of this them, I am secretly a priest and white like the tip of your nail.

May 28

From time dreaming (dreaming?), from darkness (those). From the telephone wires which fight off dreams, as wind. As fighting the wind in your dreams (those). On the sadphone I squeak my happiness (I'm happy, even in my dreams). Not enough of my days do I spend wearing a smock, or dun-



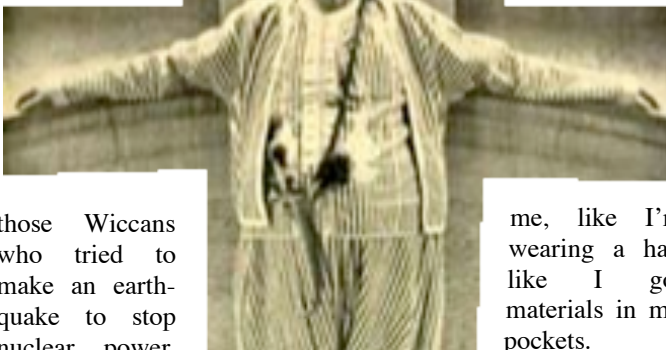
garees, or a cowboy hat, or costume in general, become who I am by the outfit I choose. Dialtone dreams, answering machines (those), put the wind on call waiting, the crows don't mind. Shouting and shouting, not allowed anywhere, seeding everywhere, windy everywhere, in this way, in exactly this way, shall I be love, be pollen.

May 29

Mittens hate gloves. Gloves are vertical, their fingers grass-stalks waving. Mittens are only good for shoving your hands into the oven. But a pair of surgical gloves can be impossibly sexy, when you hook your thumbs it's like you got a spider in a sack. Of course mittens are warmer but nobody wants to make love with mittens on, mitten fetishists excepted, all eight of them. Suburban mittens, need clips because everyone's eager to lose them, nobody names kittens after gloves. But at night, the mittens sing what who wants to hear, and when their work is done, the gloves crawl inside and dream of fleece.

May 30

In the used bookstore the owner yells at the customer no we don't carry books on magic it's evil and selfish and the customer says no I just want to know more and she yells at him I have spent years getting the weeds out of my mind! What about



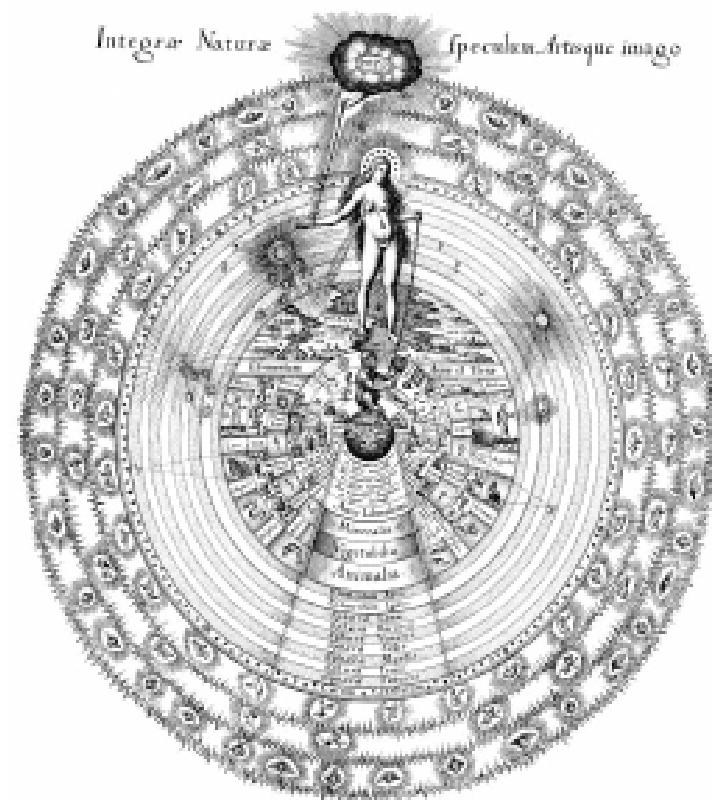
those Wiccans who tried to make an earthquake to stop nuclear power,

they would have dumped the whole state of California into the sea, killed thousands! He says I'd never do that, I just want to read Alastair Crowley's biography! Well, she says, we don't have it, I won't order it, get out of my shop. Then she looks at

me, like I'm wearing a hat, like I got materials in my pockets.

May 31

The ground is modest, it gets covered with nasturtiums, it wears a suit of oxalis, its colors are yellow and green. The earth isn't so choosy it wears the living and dead all woven together. My wife explains the difference between knitting and weaving, but the dirt doesn't have to. Night and day it demonstrates. Pile of dirt next to the planter beds wearing a plastic bag for a dress, the wind flirts with it. Love, the earth wears us, like a veil, and God lifts us to reveal his bride, or God wears us, all of us, like a beloved sweater, and the earth is the dresser where he keeps us, or no matter what we are wearing we are naked, and the universe is a crown.



Sorcery

February 1 – May 31, 2007

Part One of *A Second Book of Days*

Text: Hugh Behm-Steinberg

Design: Mary Behm-Steinberg

There are two other versions of this chapbook currently circulating. You will probably never see all the perspectives, unless you look very hard to find someone whose is different from yours.



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