

*spide (apocope)*

not a spider  
nor that thought  
'not a spider'  
given thirteen lines  
of Stevens' poem  
'Bowl'—remaining  
ever a part, never  
a trick. The  
word 'apocryphal'  
arises, although—or  
maybe 'in spite  
of' or even  
'regardless of' the fact—  
it had not been  
signalled. Indeed,  
what's not necessary  
does occur: hot water  
displaces cold  
into the basin. This, in  
response to a poem  
that remains half-read:  
& that, when read, will  
have dedicated  
to it, 'Bowl',  
this poem, 'spide'—

together, with fruit.

*pager*

earlier in imitation  
of Shelley's 'white radiance'—  
promptly gainsaid. Or  
Baudelaire's 'les bas fonds',  
done with,

in that sense. Or,  
like an anagram of  
some thing  
transfigured—scratch that!  
Our very earnest

sense of appreciation. Now  
I wonder  
what holds things  
together, a singular  
concern. Trees gather

in massed proportion. Shaped  
in breath  
words are said,

releasing intentions. So one  
can remain uncertain

whose writing is  
to be acclaimed. Bloom's  
'garden without images', not  
granted to the care of others,  
endears the eye

to itself. Seeing settles  
among a mesh of  
leaves on  
branches themselves entangled  
in thought—what is to

be made  
of writing  
in our time, to elicit  
the unconscionable?  
Mere words

used  
& re-used: a place you must  
go to  
in order  
to speak, describe, gather.

*illustrative poem*

somesuch commensur-  
ability

of living. Brilliant.  
The rocks are made  
by

the sea. But the sea  
is not made  
by rocks. Or  
trees crown the earth,  
or somesuch.

The blue of the sea  
that waves  
crashes upon its  
own whiteness

& on the rocks,  
which assume whiteness,  
as do I. Against

anticipation, against  
measure,  
against the dust that settles

on the car—no longer  
blue. Against  
againstness, as if  
commensurability

were a kind  
of cure for blue.  
The air is blue, yet  
that which  
I breathe

delivers me  
to the next one.  
I long to stop,

that I might grasp  
to-and-fro's  
wherefore.

*circumstantial set*

each moment  
shakes itself, blessing  
designation. The nectarine

exudes yellow, not  
fruitfulness itself.

And green bamboo shoots  
daily extend centimetres: attests  
the control  
of major processes in  
biology. The

station of activity  
plays out,  
elaborating terms—  
a cup ceaselessly  
spilling

order into  
vocabulary:  
'In the East' is a  
phrase  
we condone, savouring

representation. 'In the  
West'—a pattern  
established, that others might be led  
in a direction  
known.

Poems are an effort made  
to draw  
the ungovernable, playful  
cats in that tree. These leaves  
are the sound

against which, of all  
austerities, is made the  
sense of being *one*—  
rather much. Neither  
blocked nor

a lens that's  
mere conjecture  
against  
images discovered, though  
demonstrable

enough. It's like  
something slowed  
sufficiently to become  
visible—spray escaping  
the skier!

On the table  
a roll of toilet paper

unravelling  
near Lewis's *The Monk*,  
escapes notice.

*vase bowl*

out walking I  
do not consider that the cloud  
consumes the moon  
or the moon the cloud  
or what happens to the spill  
of light (that settles in the bowl!)—  
nor is it clear to me  
which moves which or whether  
both are moved by something  
that (as it were) 'spills' each  
into the bowl of its own ends—

—& now the moon  
reemerges, & the stars I notice  
are separate, though I see  
them & not the negative sky  
that separates their brightness...

I came out thinking



to frame a thought  
to 'match' a pink rose propped  
in the stone Japanese vase  
on the green table.  
The stem of the rose  
extends the vase  
upward—& the thought  
of stars, ear-white, is where  
it ends. The stars  
I know only in nightly bursts,  
the rose, the vase—  
*never apart!*

*residual*

the sky with nothing  
in it (contains something)—  
a mynah, traversing, thinking  
to traverse it,  
knows nothing.

Knowing everything  
is the circumfluent song of the thrush,  
unaware of the sky it inhabits.

I—

or the emptiness of the  
laden sky, ordains its  
own possibility—

terming it blue  
or frosted blue when beheld  
beyond the runnels

& watery condensate  
on the glass ranchers  
gazing out over Kaipara flats.

*conglomerate (Wong Kar-wai)*

The greatest thing (they say)  
is to  
give yourself away: there's  
always  
someone waiting.

Seeing a mountain  
I wondered  
what lay beyond—  
another mountain,  
another mountain.

What doesn't speak  
to you  
you need not know.  
Another memory  
relinquished!

I no longer wonder  
how once  
I did:  
change doesn't  
change this. Pictures

are of  
other things, numbered,  
water, eels, flies.  
Go further,  
be auspicious!

*blackbird*

*blackbird*

the brown fenceline  
has snapped onto it  
a blackbird

which I count &  
the number is one:  
sufficient to say

that it is black  
with feet in the green lichen  
that carpets the fence-rail

as it turns a  
yellow beak my way—  
ballbearing eyes.

Colours match  
beak, claws—a  
delinquent body?

In sum: that figure  
of the blackbird  
one & the same.

—the world—  
better, perhaps, the mind pitched  
against fixity:  
cabbage leaves that  
rotate, fernfronds  
*yessing*—even bustle +  
stillwork of manukas  
opposite, or the  
congregation of sandpipers on  
shore at Shelly Beach—  
seemingly arise together,  
out of one another;  
on the jetty steps, the boy  
to his father says, 'look jumping!' &  
'water's go', his body a bare  
measure  
of the harbour  
the mind's also  
measured by

24 may: 'the everlasting gospel'

somehow 'aliveness' more  
than black quiet, a no-time  
when the mind & the  
bedside ticking clock  
coincide:

take coffee, undesirable, yet  
the mind, earth-finger on tongue,  
moistens the nostrils, each  
notices:

Blake & Wei Wu Wei:

the future is past

is mere memory: neither we nor time:

dear Blake:

*this life's five windows of the soul  
distorts the heavens from pole to pole,  
& leads you to believe a lie*

(*nines*)

I  
neither wish to name:  
one outer, or  
recess,  
muster—  
yields sorrow, what's  
this acuity: seer

*krishnamurti*

for Klaus the moon  
a place the sky  
lodges: 'eyesight  
for such things':  
moonlight considers  
the moon  
an aperture  
lacking vigilance

*rajghat*

self-drawing—  
confluence of *Ganga*  
*Varuna*—stands  
to survey  
a garnering  
of rivers—drawn  
singly:

*krishnamurti*

says  
the *bhikku*, each  
moment's a  
grasping,  
—to circumvent  
openness or enclosure,  
language's  
berth

(i) *levels*

a simple conception leaves the mind at ease  
or so it—*sinks!*—  
from level to level, from 'line to line',  
where upward & downward share  
the one propensity, giving  
or wanting—*confidence?*—  
& 'profundity' proves itself an issue of  
thought. Mere seers of words,  
manly, Jacques *et* Jacques, philosophers,  
goofing it, wary  
of tripping. Not so  
here, where the mind turns *in*. Around  
the sheer rock that leads  
to the level summit, the villagers burn off  
the yellow grasses before  
the summer heat arrives: in the evening  
a red glow covers the hillside  
down to the *Shanti Patan*,  
where the meditators walk, eyes downcast

(ii) *inside*

as ample as are the trees along  
the *Shanti Patan*—crows diminish  
them: black ousts green, green yellow's hold—  
of rice fields  
over which I now gaze, guileless.  
A villager in white *kurta*  
strides home, carrying water, eases  
the weight of the field.  
A train bears noisily upon *Igatpuri*,  
assuming its  
shape, while in the corner of the field  
water under a pipe  
forms a pond, that's black.  
Beyond the white clad man—  
on the narrow walking track  
that separates the fields—  
on the heads of women  
in a line, frolicsome, vessels glint  
in the late sun



(iii)

the moon, edged from its base,  
threatens to topple,  
the grouping crows grunt in the trees  
which turn from green to black at evening,  
compressing the moon's brightness.  
Buddhadasa's student, now bones  
in the coastal cave, sketched  
*nibbana* in colour  
on the rock, & left notebooks  
rich in expostulations!  
Now, gardening at *Tapavana*, watering, or  
sitting cross-legged in the small bare cell  
of the gold-domed  
pagoda, & hearing  
the chimes on the narrow spire  
above where the crows gather,  
one understands that  
the universe bolts firm on nothing.  
The mind cannot escape—  
*when a reality reveals itself*  
*a name disappears,*  
remarks the Sayadaw

(iv) *mahabodhi*

of the two  
the way to standstill—  
like the bird—a mynah?—that sits high in the *bodhi* tree  
beside the temple that bears that name  
where dusk is spent in (a snagging) meditation—  
emits a cry with the in-breath  
& a cry with the out-breath—  
a raucous hermeneutics of air, vibration—  
or the moon 'way up there'  
which requires the earth  
as platform to be viewed—

*negombo*

beyond easy sounding—wind  
& tide, say, rather than  
day & night; sea's  
peregrinations that wash a shore  
unending days, moreso,  
the self-same impulse—fishermen who lop  
& toss back into the sea fishheads, over  
which crows & dogs  
bicker. As such, associations form  
the sea—mastering  
the discrete, a quarter  
of the mind, which embeds  
the ungraspable as lure:  
drops of water, grains of  
sand, scales of  
fishes, thoughts that  
must begin to see through  
inestimable tides, where  
each 'droplet' clasps  
a proxy *concupiscence*

*Rangiri Dambulla Raja's*

'Monk with Lotus' marks the cover  
of Ledi Sayadaw's *Manual of the Excellent Man*:  
ringed with a halo  
which shines—right  
hand opening a white lotus while  
the middle fingers  
grasp the stem, further  
straightened between forefinger  
& thumb.  
Face, robe, hand, lotus, smeared  
with ochre, ridder of  
allure.  
Outside, Kandy's lake  
brims, nudging  
the road edge. Canopies of  
large trees, *Parkia Roxburghii*,  
*Samanea Saman*, atop thick stems,  
loll over adjacent water. From the BPS  
windows eyes observe  
pelicans, waterfowl,  
plus fishes, monitors—  
markers of plenty.

*monk in orange (burmese rest)*

flame's afterglow—even  
the rain, drawn down, patters  
on the nutmeg leaves,  
crows cross—rendering a triangle:  
sky, tree, leaves.  
Leaves, at least the height  
of the upper rooms & more, adjust &  
glitter. The monkeys  
linger—& beneath  
the monk's sandals, amongst discarded foliage,  
the yellow grit of the square  
criss-crossed by a juvenile  
& four grown turtles, who take  
a meal of chopped cabbage  
& other scraps. In the  
morning the same leaves are swept  
into small heaps, which he  
or his mute helper, red-mouthed,  
will clear, & later burn. The yard's  
kept thus, leaves will feed  
another fire—*Nibbana is not  
reached in blissful oblivion,*  
reminds Bhikku Bodhi.

*mallaraparam*

a white cloth or a branch  
distinguishes swamp or 'lake', containing,  
late night, a cloth-like streak  
of yellow—or  
hardly yellow. Spreads a source  
of light, occasionally blinking, from  
a guesthouse wall  
across the water. The morning crows  
cross, black bodies  
bright, fearing  
ceasing to be. At night  
the stone lighthouse, fixed  
on granite still worked by  
Mallaraparam artisans,  
dispenses a sharper light, again,  
again, as far as this  
*Ramkrishna* guest-room,  
illuminating (stop) the walls  
inside: the long motored  
fishing boats by day are pulled  
high on the sand, against the persistent dumping  
of sea water, near the heavy stone  
*Vishnu* temple, fenced & illumined  
by night. Chisels  
tinker, then the canopies

& red rooftops of the town  
appear. On the sealed  
roadway, a cow follows  
four calves, the hindmost  
forming a circle when it takes  
her udder, a swishing  
of tails.

*mihintale*

the bare-skinned dog wanders  
before the refectory  
over yellow grit, at odds with  
the place's comportment, which begins  
at the broad granite  
stairway set between  
sparkling white frangipani:  
from the roadway, up narrowing  
steps, where lovers settle  
in each other's arms, to  
*Kantaka Chetiya* with its four flower [],  
geese, dwarves, one resting  
on the other, behind which  
a pair of rocks lean together,  
providing a shelter  
for meditators. Near  
their own quarters, novices  
in orange robes roll empty barrels  
around to the kitchen. We  
take a path through trees  
to a further rock pair, forming  
an outcrop  
under which Mahindra  
sat—the dais upon which it's said  
he briefly rested.



Black-faced monkeys  
help themselves to our food, while we survey  
270° of jungle, cropped hills, lakes,  
& in the distance—the raised domes of  
Anuradhapura.

*station master*

All day the trees are matched by the birds. When they take flight, their wings are leaves, and among the leaves are flowers that distinguish them. Flight is in the flowers that lift with the birds.

It warrants probing, particularly in terms of what is the direction of such a word used in such a direction. We are in this together: ti si em!

One counts pronouns until each one of them sits in the tree that is composed of birds. The music of the birds is what occurs to them and they sit in amazement to hear themselves.

Why do individuals write as they do? We jump into the field of writing in order to be protected. It guides us to the above so that we might claim or proclaim it. It is the birds that circle and the circles that circle and the dancing letters of the alphabet.

I am so fresh being able to be me. Me be to able being fresh so am I.

When the thought is fresh it holds me. When it holds me it is so fresh. When it is so fresh it holds me more delicately. In this delicacy is the delight to share: a strange rest it grants.

Words come from the station. The station is the origin of words and knows no end until *it* is stopped. It is not the station that stops but it stops at the station and makes sense by stopping there.

A hundred billion things have been written and these things can all be tracked to the station—it is the station that gives rise to them. Something is curious in this, because words depend on the station but only to the extent that they have meaning being words when they have left the station. The station is the place where there are no words and where words arise. Arriving means they are able to leave.

Otherwise I stick myself to the station and nothing can come of it, neither words nor birds. In a cuter sense they say 'love rhymes'. How do I know the verb or whether I care for any insect or for any human being or for a *deva*? How do I even know that?

Nothing wraps tiredness about. Tiredness wraps itself about, making itself tired. It can count up to about so much, making us laugh and thus forget ourselves.

Under the light is the shine. It is near. It cannot leave because it is in its nature to only be itself when it is itself, when it evidences unbrokenness. When the flow of light is broken it cannot be fixed. When the flow of a thought is broken it is breaking that occurs and not the thought. The thought cannot cross broken. Nor can light.

seen watching—hence captivated:  
although I enjoy Angelique's visit  
seeing & being seen  
proves a disequilibrium:  
& I wish the world to be cleared of names  
that divide—

in the dark of the early morning  
there is sound in my ears—  
or the absence of sound—car tyres  
driven at speed on the highway north  
further up the Kaipara  
past the A&P Showgrounds—in my mind  
I hear the cattle as well although I am certain  
that the cattle are sleeping—sound  
in the mind requires no place of origin—

resistance is pain—in early spring  
a few brightly lit kowhai bulbs  
appear on branches that house  
the new thrush—  
prized guest and host—  
one's taken aback  
should either fly—or fall!—

fear works its way through me  
like sweetness that pervades a fruit—  
whether it is absorbed into what  
it is not or else it absorbs or  
infiltrates what it is not  
remains unclear—ripeness  
& fear penetrate each other—  
teeth break the skin of either &  
confirm the sweetness—

fear ripens & I set my teeth  
against it—there is the sweetness of fruit  
just as in the mind, blessed in poetry—  
is delectation—

the noise & activity that the mind  
sets up about itself is hardly  
decoy or disingenuity—beauty  
eschews the nonessential (Baxter?)—  
beauty—mind  
spares—clear—

'breathed'—	one moment
I can't	the sky's
argue	blue
with that!	next
bamboo leaves	the very
no less	same
<i>thus</i>	though
subject, <i>thus</i>	lent
bound:	perhaps
witness	by green
mere	fields where
purpose	cattle stir

Triangulated strings suspend Daijo's calligraphy.

Kanji reads: *forget both*.

I had the same inscribed on the gold plates  
inserted in our arms when we married.

One side a brief verse, the other: *one time, one meeting*.

—the shadows that play  
on the white painted wall  
seem to match  
outside the window bamboo  
leaves shaken in a light breeze  
that swings down the nearby Kaipara hills  
brushing cattle & pine trees  
on the way

*cold southerly*

no one decides this  
cold wind should blow—  
the hills in shadow seem  
unmoved while outside  
the window the bottlebrush  
can't marshal words—  
thought levels  
on the train tracks below



*white oxen*

white sun of the northern plains  
stark rocks of *Gayasisa*  
where 1,000 ascetics were taught  
*eyes burn, form burns*  
a pair of yoked oxen  
churns dry soil into diminishing  
bands—thus  
we enter the world of stories, a book:

in Chiang Mai, thin-armed thin-lipped,  
*Ācariya* Mun entertains *devas*, seeking  
'frightening places'—with talk of tigers  
& 'savoury flesh', exhorts his *dhutangas*:  
'Your death is one form of *dhukka*'.

I, therefore, 'trail' him, from Lumbini,  
the Mahabharat Range, into Pokhara.  
Village two-storeyed, white  
ochre trim, where we settle, perched  
on benches on the winding street, to  
*masala chana* noodles fried

with egg, mother & son serving coke  
from the rumbling fridge.

*Khandas are khandas pure and simple.*

Sheer, intermittently flat alongside  
the river, terraces swathes  
of young corn—emerald  
encased in stone walls—brown soil red  
red brown, & elevate. Young pines  
solitary or finely needled, bamboo  
clumped in places, vertical or  
arched over the road. At the plateau,  
jacarandas (which also line

the banks at *Phewa Tal*, where  
the dome of *Shanti Stupa*  
whitens chestnut forests to the south  
& snow, cloud to the north)  
shine purple light within green.

*Unjudicial—cause & effect is the law of existence.*

From the doorway I see beyond the concrete terraces  
of nested guesthouses, against which banana palms are  
ranged  
with red bourganvillea, & trees  
of various greens, as far as the 'notch' under which  
*Phewa Tal* resides—  
to the hillside of *Rani Ban*'s chestnuts, green only—  
& above us a piling of blackened cloud, as rain threatens—  
& to the right a small black & white 'zipper'  
turns in half rotations atop a metal lightning 'rod'—  
or on the uppermost branch of a juvenile Norfolk pine—  
whose sweet whistle seems to presage  
the thunder cracks & streaks of lightning  
which release huge hailstones that pound  
on the concrete and the corrugated iron roofs  
and the greenery:

*Ācariya* Mun had the *arahats*  
demonstrate the exact moments  
& precise postures adopted at *release*—'a goldmine  
cropping up spontaneously in the middle of an  
Emperor's imperial city'—himself an instance

of 'serene gracefulness'—nor  
did he hesitate to recount what was involved  
to his *dhutangas*—  
razored, pure penetration in all directions—.

*i ii*

the crow e 'sitting'  
the gull—is not  
*caw—caw—poetry*

*viriya* between  
snared windows  
proportioned

by a half  
balance—day

*Phewa Tal*

a fish scratching  
pulled under  
its hay rick

clutter  
thin to lakewater  
air host

*limbs / torso*

*iii iv*

the red-  
froked's  
woman's constitution:

*Phewa Tal's*  
under the incessantly  
hay rick—shifts

buffalos & each  
'carved' moment  
air lacks

fishes content to  
'bestill'  
the lake past

egrets' future  
feature only  
crows suppose

*wedding party—bodhnath*

the man with  
the prancing clarinet  
undoes me—

who had the thought  
to abnegate  
this music

of trombones &  
trumpets, & various  
drums, tight or deep,

cut & sliced by  
the prancing  
clarinet

the moment heard  
carried  
by strong arms

*vaisali / patna / taj mahal / jaipur*

the body, straining to contain  
the ego, seeks increase:  
a lanky youth awaits us  
outside Ashoka's 'stupa within  
a stupa', prized pillar & lion standard  
nearby, largely intact—one youth,  
ruined teeth & words tangled  
with spittle, to whom we offer  
the coconut cookies that we'd packed  
for a picnic. Across the expanse  
that's the water tank—in which two  
slight boys, akimbo buffalos, douse  
& scrub the gleaming black hides,  
& half-standing dive into the muddy water—  
*Shanti Stupa* gracefully resides, landscape  
within a landscape. The day before,  
from Agra Bridge, the *Taj*, similarly viewed,  
wavered between a haze  
of river & a haze of sky. Things held  
to things—on boards that line  
the ink-stewed river, *dhobiwalas* thrash  
clumped shapes that they spread as colourful  
rectangles edge to edge along the  
warm expanse of white sand, past which  
straggling buffalos saunter. What cuts

a line to Jaipur from Patna is not a  
questionable nothingness, or  
Wordsworthian-like, vast somethings  
tethered to the will—where the solidity  
of Cumbria, its stone walls & lakesides,  
assumes *self-in-self*. Yet, here too,  
lure & 'lock' apply, sequestering  
the admirable for those who admire.  
Such 'passing shows'—a boy  
at Vaisali, grateful for cookies which he takes  
to share with friends—or the fold  
in the river at Agra where the *Taj* appears, or words:

*By which we multiply distinctions, then  
Deem that our puny boundaries are things  
That are perceived, and not that we have made.*



*within a lake*

within a lake a lake  
wished or granted  
either side of this weighty 'between'—  
of threes—lakes, trees, mountains:  
'Choice is based on irritation'.  
Within the water bodies  
exhilarate, consider themselves fulfilled.  
Each tiny pulse ripples beyond  
the flatbottomed canoe  
that's occupied, as a solitary bodied shawl  
rows towards *Bagnas*, transversing the *Tal*. She  
beckons  
another to come collect the pair  
stranded on the grass patch  
abutting the leech-infested path.  
Further on, hovering near the *ghat*, small grey  
fishes  
flatten themselves on the lowermost step,  
flash  
&'re gone!  
The lake is level under Annapurnas,  
under Macchupuchare, a  
flatness upended.  
What one desires stimulates one  
to regret, or remorse, or further desire;

the illusory *bardo* body (they say)  
is hallucination, a discrimination—disrupted  
here by  
the beaming villager's deftly swiped *saringhi*  
as he chants 'a mountain song' (his chin a mountain),  
& a slight, red-clad dancer who raises her hands  
entreating us—others come & gather  
on the stone platform—  
the contest is desire, letting it  
catch amongst the tumbled chestnutleaves,  
& waver  
& clamp on earth or skin—or water  
from the hills that carries vegetation  
into the hollow, smoothed lakes:

*From ruin and from change, and all the grief*

*The passing shows of being leave behind.*

Or Rinpoche: 'We see something, yet at the same time  
we are not quite certain whether it's the background or  
the scenery itself.'

*z-bird*

Some eight or ten times  
the bird I term 'zipper' repeats  
the particular scale it intermittently climbs,  
erstwhile companion,  
watcher-over,  
through the hours spent in meditation:  
breakfast through noon.  
In narrowish cascade,  
up, down,  
arrangement without colour:  
*Says the Buddha, 'Nothing for taste matches Dhamma.'*

*bodh gaya, dhamma bodhi*

*i. moon up, lighthouse*

Squared by the new *dhamma* hall entranceway

this 6:15am

the moon is upturned, its hollow filled with blue air

& tethered to it a small star—

reminder of the mother with its purple-tongued calf

outside Raju Ram Sharma's guesthouse

left with only a metre or two to 'roam',

yet quiescent, most quiescent.

*The urgency of the moment always missed its mark.*

Overnight the moon, ducking behind clouds,

is rendered black, & the night sky, in contrast, white,

both moving, formed.

And, on the same steel pole it occupied a year earlier, the

same

*drongo*, with its long forked tail feathers,

calls intermittently & restlessly cocks

its head, as if the word

comprises an enemy: *For how*

*could one express those emotions*

*of the body? Express the emptiness there?*

And the dry sparsely leaved *see-sams* on the far boundary,

along the misshapen brick wall,

the rasping of which—even at this distance—is

insistent, & the contrast

between the morning leaves  
& the bickering yellow-eyed *babblers*,  
or the silent activity of the sky—how driven?—are each  
communicated, not the words, & now  
the hanging brown pods on the *albizia lebbeck*, which swell  
& darken,  
& eventually fall to ground,  
spilling seeds, the rest—endless spinning!

*ii.*

alongside the new brick path  
leading to the servers' quarters  
an open area has been planted out—  
one side *dhal* chin-high &, the other, forming  
a kind of purple-flowered groundcover  
*chana*: an arrangement  
which carries the signature  
of *Babu-ji*, this day's Anathapindika.  
Late in the afternoon a rising moon makes an appearance  
near the sky's height,  
while the sun melts in a steady but final burning,  
shaping in the morning the east &  
in the evening the west, modulating  
the mood of the land, adjusting

the bearing & weight of things, as it does  
the restlessness of the leaves  
as they dream of flight—for it  
is this that ties them!  
Sitting twelve hours a day  
one thinks: the gong heard  
is no longer anticipated.  
To hear without purpose  
is to be in accord with the words of the Korean Master,  
following months' sleepless consideration:  
*lakewater lakewater.*

*iii. mucalinda lake*

on the day Romaine recommends  
postcards be sent to Gretchen  
& Anthony, the 'since-divided',  
I observe, while we 'sit'  
on the rim of the square bank,  
anfractuous images of the far trees & air  
in the browned surface.  
Near my crossed legs, a carpeting of leaves  
from the *bodhi* & other  
trees: some green, brown, chipped, stained, scarred,  
or pulverized & the colour of the earth,

through which a few stray blades of grass  
continue to press, this early February.  
Prayer flag colours are strung out  
on makeshift lines between the trees  
& lift & fall in the breeze—  
& their images & sacred scripts  
are stencilled onto the ground.

*iv. bodh gaya park*

trees are not thoughts,  
nor one tree (*ficus bengalensis*) another (*cassia few-*),  
the leaves of one are boatshaped & waxy,  
those of the other narrow & rough:  
between the two of us thoughts remain discrete, though  
a succession, given the different sources  
of light, above the darkening paths,  
that are more intense the more they dispel  
the darkness the park is enveloped in.  
Cloudless, rimless, yellow light,  
like thoughts afloat in the air that, without colour,  
represents what's dark or blank:  
one dry leaf falls like a fish twisting through a medium  
that resists it;  
a mynah, among mynahs, their night sounds, occupies

the place of a large leaf at the top of a large-leafed  
tree, & departs, an unleaf-like non-leaf,  
to another tree even more fully occupied with its kind,  
in the manner of Woolf's *Old Joseph*,  
sparsely feathered, who, out of care for them,  
guided fellow rooks from tree to tree  
to find roost.

A cream-coloured bitch trots past us, skinny, her  
underside swaying asynchronously  
against the rest of the body, indifferent  
to our attempts to draw her to us to be petted.



*sewagram ashram*

ministering *the path*  
Ñāṇamoli, 54, dead—  
so 'mind'—consciousness—  
sheds an object. No answer—one  
high-backed bird here needn't  
answer another—  
and 'later' neither's  
avoided:

from a passing bicycle  
—in Durga-ji's colony—  
a seller of jasmine scatters  
*that* scent: afternoon rain's  
brightened by lightning, earth beneath  
shudders under thunder—  
*of* swollen roses, over-pink,  
*of* red bougainvilleas, over-abundant,  
everything's drenched—

like the moon, this dinner table:  
bean ends  
clipped, sliced, placed  
in a sizzling pan, courtesy  
of Marti, then poor & angel-whitened,

now wielder of the flimsy wooden-handled knife,  
Gandhi's courtesy—

*rendering Hal's*

choice words  
constitute insouciance,  
twigs that,  
like branches, haul in the extraneous,  
the tree stripped—this one *neem*, of  
odd-shaped leaves, that wobble down  
past oaken bark, down past  
rings white now brown—  
twigs re-issued (toothpicks):

grime

renders light, foliage  
enough to submit  
leaf-like, barques like  
those of Hal's  
'City in constant billows dancing'  
that register outside  
one's bare mind,  
sustained in open air, in an order—

*these* oars prod the sea—  
*this* tongue traduces air:

at the doorway

two dogs, pressed together,  
seek entry—wait!—  
much held at bay  
—sensing that 'slough'—

in the neighbouring village *Durga's*  
trident swishes eight armed blessings—  
wallpaper of CDs—  
pieces cast down the chute into which  
depiction topples—