

The Problem, The Questions, The Poem

PART ONE

THE POEM

How does it lie. Does it memorialize or anticipate. Progress. Regress. Protest.
Captivate. Dissipate. Fluctuate. Masturbate.

I wrote the first poem the day after the day of love, on the day of love's official registration, to mark it well. Each poem mourns the other poems, the other people, their other selves left behind inside itself, and it brings them back to life inside itself, eating them up to become them. Only what's said is said, and therefore alive. Mortal words breathe and die, the ordering of an anticipated not-real reality that nonetheless – in the mental sphere, and written, and spoken – assumes reality.

These things dance around inside and come spinning out outside of me, on everyone's wrong side. Everything is blind. We all can see as far as any of our eyes can see, we can help each other know the things that are most enclosed in privacy, the things we do not even let ourselves begin to admit to begin.

Here is the creature or creator as a self-dramatized idea of an idea of self, in no one's waking dream. Doing it wrong again and again, I say all this but really I want to know what love might mean. These things mean: that Rachmaninov's hands were so big they could take and hold anything. His music had all the feeling it was possible to have and can we make it the basis for having more, in touch capaciously, believing with all sincerity in every switch in harmony, in every big tune. You can only say that these things are ironically true to you, true to life.

The defence façade corroded.

Order is restored and the universe is off piste. In peace. We are resting in peace.
You speak with such
fetching false
teeth.

It dies. What dies.
Goodbye. Hello.

Here it all lives again.

Sign or consign, co-sign, witness my will though you can't see the script;
between two persons, in two minds, the straight face reversed in statement says
I don't want to complete anything, but you are there,
so to speak,
in speech,

and we did, speak, but of that substance nothing only vague intimation remains, of such intimacy that once was all the world.

Then the music of Ravel on the radio is pure melancholy, as I explain it comically, hyperbolically, the filtration of loss and desire through the decadent restraint of nostalgia for what never was, calmly in tune. But also at times it is catastrophe, crescendo till it explodes.

Accused of a nihilistic will-to-destructive-being-towards death, at the end of a civilization or a particular mode of highly developed society, within the highest and most developed forms of that mode, exaggerating their contradictions, with all the thrill and the sadness of breakage and loss.

Speak to me, it speaks to me, in the kitchen, on the floor, getting up and going on out of that door.

The world is not a symphony, is not in sympathy, binds up its ears with the waxen image of something too perfect to be moulded around and upon.

Frustrated that you got this all wrong, were not tempted to extend address in a way they could see other people among that thus dressed up to be words, architecture, each building building itself up and tearing itself down.

Drunk with drink or love, imagining that any of this is interesting,

Getting down off the ladder, I step up. I step up. Or, up, I step down, lounge around, growl I am hungry for more. The throat clears and it begins to speak in rhyme and the line extends as far as the eye can descry or describe the horizon that opens up and closes in. Everything and something, no one and nothing, you, me or we are all breaking and making, slipping and slipping up. After all, anyone could say anything, but who are you to say?

A whole mass of people have a universal claim on the gold rushing from the chopped neck of the god heedlessly rushing to the gate eager hands are tearing down.

Lying on the ground the grass gets thinner, greener, or better, depending on the weather. On the water, sheaves, the water flows, the leaves, with renewed hope for the future fracked from the sky itself.

My eye is as far from me as the sea is a hopeless anomaly that will swallow us all alive.

My knee bends and cracks at the hip, my waist repeats all the mistakes the human frame tells a story about itself, to itself, and hangs on the frames, formatting it in an institution tells it where to go, what to do.

Think for yourself, make your own mind up of books, and air, and occasional activities such as the practice of activist networks and occasional spectacular events rejuvenating the soul and then retreated back into healing or making a thing of being sick, taking it all in.

The problem is that the subject seeks to self-abnegate by eating everything up, and eaten away from inside decides to decry itself with the sighs of its self-abolishing re-affirmation, sneaking in the big back door. I want to tell you all, ALL OF YOU, why I am here and everything is so near we can touch and taste the rainbow making our differences a smiling example that shines the world over in a broadly HD beam. When I say me I mean the world, and none other than myself.

Do you really want to know everything that 'love' could really mean. That love. And saying that you do, do you really want to know what the figuration and configuration of the really approaching end of any world as a framework as a living dream means, seen in movies as scenes that any number of actors could be the voices and the friends swallowed in something that seems so small and so very far away in each tiny bar of each tiny heart whispering assessment in each tiny room paid and not paid for. Someone else has struggled for each word you speak. I'll be travelling on my own.

THE PROBLEM

The problem is that the subject swallows up all those other voices and sources – conversations, with friends, at parties, on the bench, on the train, in the middle of the night shaking with rage and the social milieu you're in; or historical accounts, bits of the poems that swirl in the head, living with them very deep in the bed of the brain shaping a conscious or unconscious thought, theoretical frameworks invoked as parodic half-digested bulwarks of argument, of what has and might have been taught – that the subject swallows and spits them out to claim them, as *its own* self-multitude, containing contradiction;

which is also part of the process of turning on itself, in disgust at its having an emotional life at all, as the self-obsession with the nuanced ordinary feeling of a 'bourgeois individualism'; which is also falsely mapped onto and elided with a self-disgust at the poet's positioning in the middle of the class road, which also keeps turning on others with snide asides and half-references or détournements of things people have said, in and out of poetry; which comes to seem antagonistic polemic, shooting off, yet one without a fixed position; so that these two poses – polemical certainty, however parodied as academic jargon or nonsensical or nihilistic sloganeering, being against all organic life, and constant self-mocking contradiction are not *generous*, are not satisfying – this conflict is not the *reader's*, is not *given* to them, is not *open* enough to them. The use of the second person pronoun is often a part of this, functioning often as a non-differentiated or un-specified object of seeming, even if that attack and that address is self-directed. The poems can't work out whether rhyme is a mellifluous flow of pleasurable affect or a stupid tool of satire. The short lyric poems would seem to be more comfortable with the former, but get

barraged, when they do appear in flashes in the larger whole. This has also to do with length of line.

THE QUESTIONS

The sun comes down from such giddy heights each day, it needs to relax.

Why are there fireworks in the sky?

Why are there still fireworks in the sky?

At the party talking about guilt and shame, were you *feeling* shame and guilt?

THE POEM

Not on the run but counting the exits and the ways. Not letting anyone block the door. Whether you choose to open up or to shut down possibility, trapped inside the house, trapped *outside* the house with no way back or no way in, is calmness more interesting than alarm.

Another new day is a wide band spanning the possibility of recalled tranquil action, trees that fall like tears that fall like trees that root the sense of renewal in watered grief.

It was so bad.

Someone said something was like something else, or someone was like someone else, some thing like some one like each step back went to the routed square paced in amplification widening down.

Why is it the *road* that you take, the metaphor of travel, of travail, why did I ever go away or not stay awake with the body at my side. A distance had opened up in the clasp of a dead arm in sleep, who could say what was there within the face shut wide open to rest, to the rest, to the world enclosed and clasped together by ourselves away from. Narrative vissitude and clarity, each pole-axed polarity, each invested hope makes no return as hope but cannot be – in another sense – anything *other* than just re-enacted return. Every little thing you do.

Map the paths, map the sun, whatever it is you find yourself guided to. The sea is hungry, the sea is wanting, say swallows that swallow up some idea displaced onto them, even the idea of outside itself, objects that fly past but stay stone-frozen, the things that died, quick movement as the tale buoys it up, trails off.

Come clean into it, cold.

A sound of waves is heard.

Who hears, who reveals, baked in sweat or dying of any ill in the coldest winter yet.

Fifty pages of poems and the entirety of life make a big size scowl or sneer at the fact or idea of wanting queer displacement in the cage. Not wanting to talk, or to talk too much, to open up the hutch and let the little domestic animals of childhood, the first thing you remember that you owned, run amok all over your protecting heart. Open the throat. Do you count the times you are struck by the possibility of death each day or is this just the play of a child who remembered non-existence for the first time and in that thought just stayed there giving up. Without a sibling share, over-share, abundant spilling, it all goes out but then comes back in. No feeling is greater than the re-entry into the blood. I wrote my doctor a letter to the government to the private care espoused and being lost each day.

You now understand the *condition* of what it is to be a *woman*. Rivulets trickle into the sea. The waters evaporate.

For the earth as a whole is warm.

Ask each object what it is. It asks or answers back. The idea of a screen onto which images are projected is the technological fact of a life known through the films with which we make our pact, with what the medium *itself* desires.

In our lives we keep a little mystery. Did you ever think about leaving me. Something or someone is gone. It is the poem's lost un-recaptured tone. It anticipates its going, pleasures in each tooth that falls into the mother's lost pot. Does father punch the face. It is getting hot. My wedding dress, my bridal gown, my clothing's covering in feathered down. Dis-robe, de-press, wake up and go naked yet. I so much love you like you. That would be kind.

Like like and unlike lacks the wit to charm the birds into the hand outstretched and circling the coastal breach erodes. What walls will fall once everything in my head explodes. Silly to be in the condition of hurt but not blessed, a walking wound makes you, what, the walking dead? Save I know I ever only saw one corpse once, I saw each flap of skin of one I did not know taken off, as if in a dream, the face, as of personality and humanity itself, gently professionally and carefully scraped and then thrown off. Each mask that helps one to see.

But this is real. *You* are. Are you
O private personhood, wherever
ever

have you gone, press-ganged to go away, to sail all seven sides of a world-discovering life. I find a world in other people that are globally within the destruction through death of a law I hate to need. It is so beautiful to think of the raising of the dead even now among us, they saw them on the road, invented hallucinatory power and through this we learn to love to live and put away childish things, syllables, keep, hold. The question is missing. The question mark. Enter, back.

THE PROBLEM

The problem is the problem, to find out how to be a poet. Accessible parking, wet floor. What you need to know. I can bring my own. The legs are spread. Hearing bands on a march, marchers as bands, do we sing, do we hold hands. For reduced filth. Flush. Flesh. Delight! Charm will magic everything into being wonderful and we can own it each our separate selves extended not the other who made it, listening at the rapping table not a worker but a ghost, a greater personage, cares so much for the self, strokes the surface, even. All the daughters or the sons I will never have called Ezekiel, make the valley heave up its bones to a life I will never lead and

The object that provoked the poem is carefully re-worked, re-moved, relieved. The stimulus becomes another field of things that handily are there, they are too easily seen.

Truly the simplest, what's wrong.
It comes out of the tap hot. My bag is open, is it /
broken. Visitors get shown around. My heart is open, is it

You can normally enter through there.

THE QUESTIONS

Ease of life, ease of craft. Try too hard.

Of these things enough has been spoken, has enough been read, what token falls flimsily beneath its wish to reach, its reach to wish the matter in hand. Is friendship enough. Wan and won.

Where are the snows of yester-year, built up as drift?

Who is it falls down the cracks of each successive rift?

Who deserves their making into some other person's proffered gift?

Said no to, say on.

PART TWO

THE POEM

Twice I dreamed of you, as spring.

Moving up and down the coast, we have the whole summer.

I would like to have them, the seasons, all of them, cutting down every living thing, launch an all-out attack in UK English, protracted and split up, unnecessary stress – material – natural – we would talk it over, done talking over, the bad time happens hard.

Lift up your heels, on adventure holidays getting away you don't find out who you are, or what you are, your message awaiting approval, maybe nothing in escaping.

In the streets, the blood, how could you do this? The flowers, the smell, you,
 escaping
 folded
 goaded
 golden heart.

It seems so far back. I can see it. In myth, in legend, the puns on the fairies, in their secrets give up, that basically what means the world,

is no big deal, it gently wins, extinction forms, worked in their minds.

With great bitterness I say it dies in peak and ordinary peak, trails off as speech. Death is so small, unkind. The least orgasm. Disappoint.

No looking back is personal, memory here is figured as the *impersonal*, when the personal comes in the community will collapse. It is so hard to have built up so much of your sense of self on a graduated sense of fine and even coarsely woven feelings, only to have the tapestry catch fire in the light of specific ignited incidents which demand objective response, it is so hard, I loved them.

In love it looks sad.

He dressed their wound and loved them. In private places. The father for his children, loves them, but public embraces are hard and remain merely as shallow traces. Something in the nature of daily life, when you get out of the theatre it is still the theatre but it is no longer, dark, and magical, the light is so bright at first it hurts your eyes and then it is the same scene you saw on-going going on. But changed? Here it would be easy to bring music in and to say,

Transposition, the problem of each new thing offered in clusters exceeds the bounds of the previous thing that had been. Each day learning something new about us, about me, about you. It is a not a good thing. The same mistakes repay the same pay-offs, the commune flops, each group goes mentally wound-up and the structures are not in

place to tame the gendered force of harm. But harm makes it too passive, too hurtfully inward, a person does something, a group, dominating the group. If we can't even do it in our utopia here, fostered and cheered in a thousand forum formulations, a thousand reading-groups, in horizontal spread or the closed top ranks of even the small inflated party, where then *can* we do it, can it be done?

THE PROBLEM

The problem is the problem that I am wearing a T-Shirt because it is warm and I like the warm feeling on my arms.

I wrote hearts for hurts.

Writing and reading in the sun.

To recapitulate: is all that can be offered in the place of these individual instantiations of continuing injustices, imbalances, without consent, each bad iota of tacit, implicit and actual force, to convey and inhabit the habit of being within the condition of a certain kind of convivial pleasure, an open, capacious expansiveness, everything that is not boring and gives pleasure and charm, everything that seems not to try to bring harm?

Or, on the other hand, to match the violence, accelerate and in berating have the same feeling reversed?

Of a hate that says on the basis of love it must hate. Non-violence objectively not passion a hex, a curse, evisceration, a list, murder, a purpose, clean, a stab, a grab in despair for the most extreme thing.

What does this mean it makes us do, or not do?

Enough, or too much?

Too much, or too little?

Not near, not nearly.

What is held the closest to us, can we ever let it go?

THE POEM

Dear.

Some of the things in this poem are the most personal thing.

The quotations direct.

I pressed not the lighter but the cigarette onto my face with an eager to please please a stranger, dressed as a stranger, I had no way of knowing. I burned off my own face, singed, a scar. Every bad thing in me. There is not a finger I cannot lift. Burning burning burning, burning burning, burning burning burning.

These people are separate.

What does he really think about the aristocracy?

What feelings does he have about these things in the world, these things not invoked but observed?

How much do you think in holding back you lose, how much protect, at what cost protect, waiting for surprise to be no more pleasant than hurt, disguised, pleasure, boredom, trauma? Can you be troubled by reckoning them all the same, what the mode you adopted had made you say? But too much troubled, too much in love, too much alarm raises the roof or brings it down so hard the head cannot breathe and be more than fermented itself.

When we spoke our great debate by the man in the back seat of the bus, he was amused, how much disturbed, with great violence HEGEL and you were wearing a serious shirt. I stood outside while you ate.

It is this moment in that I have been coming back to, the moment before the waltz restarts, when with complete abandon to the discipline of that form the decision to go in, again, to launch even further to its heights its ultimate limit the spirit that lay within it, so violent the elegance of our time. I will come and find you, it says, besides and outside yourself. Together it is that we know we both are lost and lost forever, o my darling form, in me you must know the end of my self. The poem does not end. It does not end here, the laughing bastards sneer, the universal task, encourage *each* and *every* branch of mental, of physical, intellectual and spiritual activity, if we are to accomplish this what goal our goal, of universal love.

THE PROBLEM

The problem is that it is with some playfulness, where are you going, do you even have to say why or how? Where, for you, is here?

Pain leads into life but once gone it remains, life, without weight, as if no solid thing. But the pain, too, was not solid, but known, and then turned solid, invested fetish the turn from *quality*, as such, but what then was quality in itself but already metaphorically displacement of the same kind as any other kind of figuring extreme.

It is, *so much*, your face.

The centre exploded to the extremities of life. What fields had been passed. It is the passive in the voice that removes, and this may be a necessary removal, but what

removal from life goes too far from what made life, life, and worth, living up to what claim for it it could even have been said it had made or been made to make itself.

But really what you are talking about is people.

But really what you are talking about are structures.

But really what you are talking about is the talking itself, finding out there, not really knowledge you can put back on the shelf, the appearance of thinking that gives itself up as a ghost in that shell too early, content without a centre really to be that shell, it is so pretty and cleaned of the muck and shit outside, in the rain, over a sustained period of time, placed by the foot and by the door. Vomit-covered objects in the box. To look at your stool. Says ultimate solipsism in the dung-heap.

Others as sequences, people felt differently,
others as forms, people felt themselves to be figured themselves differently,
the gorgeous unknown, still unknown and to be gorgeous, just that, the fabulous the idea of that made cheaply manifest, the histories that go on in the voices inside ourselves without even having to be seen as histories, even to be known, when we know what it is we tell ourself.

How much accepting of imperfection.

Is the quality *by definition* restlessness, restlessness in itself?

Who ever means love.

THE QUESTIONS, THE POEM

The questions become the poem, the problem.
The problem becomes the solution becomes the problem again.

Some thing, some time. The poem does not end.

Sickness in movement, on boats and rivers, on trains. Going away. As health.

Where does the light come from? They look like they have interior light.

Is this outside? Coming back to it, worked and reworked, not to turn back, as condition for progress, fell by the side of the road. And again the hungry sea.

Take out the names. Where does anyone go, in time or in space, what does forward mean in the some onward building drive?

Take out the names.

You end.

The poem does not end.

PART 3

THE POEM

Children disguised as ignorance,
The trill disguised as love,
love turns weird, in odd scalar combinations and the recurrence on the skittered
staccato hop half-mocked it sings, or left pleased in calm the distance across the
triangle contact in some contract drawn with whoever listens, impossible not to write
blithe, dignified, and with a sad cadence fall when at first all alone it sings its song,
the voice you did not even recognize as your own. Explaining painting from a
valuable stupidity, enthusiastic perception and thought to be lived for the rest of a life
digested in colour and shape melding and moulding as clarity and confusion in these
halls.

Technique.

Wonderful, wonderful times.

The swoon, the slur, the smear, gross, too lop-sided, too small. Deep. Too quiet.
Too loud.

I have been thinking about this, it was not just Rachmaninov's hands but his, you can
hear it in the music. To say so is so easily stupid. They were *huge!*

But Ravel's face on the cover in the leaves *was* too small, his features too hard to
scrutinize, his eyes. What face? I have looked at this face for hours. Its every feature,
its last. Things about the hair. What is the first thing that dies, what touch, how close?
What store of universal truths?

Neo-classicism known for no real classical order, no real holding back of the chaos in
each instance of the most measured measure, unbearably serene.

And then this re-surge or up-surge which *knows* its extreme and holds it in, before
bursting as it were the day would burst and surprise itself by bursting, hold back, no
hole, barred, borne back. The metaphor here would be *going up*, which means you
must come down, you cannot live there. Is it catharsis, is it will to death or life, is it
anything like any real-life love you had?

My shirt, my shirt. My shoes.

Juliet is the sun, is false, is nonsensical, is a statement, that she makes the day and that
she gets up each morning, rarely defended. Is it living or is it dead – how can
something be both a creation and a discovery? Each thing like another thing.

My heart.

The mirror we make of a world in the face.

To start off with it was dark.

The conversation could be infinitely extended, each topic touched around or on giving way with easy flow. Sitting and wishing you could look at the clouds, the trails of condensation air stretched umbrellas in white on blue, skimming the tops of trees in dream, giddy and breathless, a little sad too. I will become this sex, a straw, melting in the ice, a hand beside. Laid aside.

THE PROBLEM

In lyric the unknown fullness of a future deferred, a debt incurred, provisional in the future who are you. Whether echo or stop. I rhymes with who. Resonate. To exclude memory and desire. Impossible, impassable, gripped in fear.

In lyric hope who writes the future, for those who can barely *live* in the present, *in* it or *below* it, its task. Falling into it, organizing the surrounding day, as love, which never will break.

The more you said it wasn't for you, the more they believe it was *all* for you. The door keeps slamming shut. Each report is like a shot.

Our nature. My greatest privacy.

THE QUESTIONS

The first questions I went and found in a corner, in a case, in a tower, in a building, in a book, the least happiness and physical curiosity, the most pleasure in the world, *giving* pleasure and taking and laughing quietly, for hours, by a wall.

There is nothing antique about it.

If I have had the most pleasure in the world.

If we can say this is the worst, it is not the worst. The least.

There is nothing antique about it.

Like the sea, but *not* like the sea.

It is not disembodied, it is *you*.

The sound of ripping outside. Is this too direct, or is this too indirect?

Will you *ever* let me back in? Will the poem? Where is love?

THE POEM

The best. Very erotic. All that repetitive dynamism. When I started to get all excited, I started to dance. Hold your breath, do you dare. Closeness costs lives. In shade from sun to die and hide, respite holds tight the night is wide; What was Eden on the bench, where the dream did nightly end, what was sleep in the streets and trees, the empty cars, the knees that bruise and fall, the tongues that lock, the knocking teeth.

Someone put something else in.

Is doubt motion, motion doubt? The dislocation provoked by care, devotion.

These are the breaks. This is a public face. Flight or masquerade. Seeking a language more livid than vomit, the beautiful scrawl of tender anonymous love on the toilet wall, the act of love, physical, in a number and a name connected to no one yet known, in imagination play raised in public lost within.

Each go their separate ways, depart. The feeling, still, of still being forced to co-habit there, by force of habit, where habitually the move away from the mind or the bonds of a more sustained sociality sees love pitched in the place of shit. The palace.

Falling asleep in the flesh you wake up when a knock at the door interrupts the thought of all possible paradises entertained in vision you could scarcely believe or remember you had entertained.

One tune falls into another. Afford no advantage to the description of order, the ghost of a rose not smelled in sleep, to dream of paradise itself, when sleep itself must end. Buried in language. Can you see through the hands that cover your eyes, handsome wounds of the flesh, can you see through the eyes that cover your hands. Things in touching distance come closer, part, then pass.

Weather as metaphor. Sky. Masses of water and land.

Words as raw material that, as it were, would, created, last forever in transformed communication.

It was about to be realized on earth.

In another instance the melody seems to begin to proffer comfort, but then becomes yearning at the turning from the possibility of that comfort's promised fulfilment, denied, self-denied. This turning inclines both to and away from love as too much a united cost to bear, to have to learn to live with, preferring to deal in a slow sad comfort that is the prevention of the original idea of comfort itself, constituting *that very idea*.

The burial of urns.

Every good thing goes away. I want to read everything there is about this, to know everything I can. Fixed to this area, removed. The birds sing, no one knows what they are singing but we can make it anything we want. You can only have anything. There has to have been an occasion but its origins are of necessity lost, erased, faded but present in every single trace. There may have been occasion, noble and sentimental now waving your arms without hands in the air, without a strong enough opposable thumb to press and make fire emerge from the aperture there.

How to be human. The gate. The history of the universe.

How many things you can describe as beautiful.

How to go on. How it goes on.

THE PROBLEM, THE QUESTIONS, THE POEM

But your heart is pounding.

We must all be so sentimental.

Turning footnotes to endnotes,
You will not say what it is.

Why the wind makes such a noise and is not seen. Why one is not like another.
What is called love.

No one can ever see the sky all of the time, and no one ever sees all of the sky.

Each year, where are the snows, etc. Each day.

I have that line in my head each day.

How to be human. What to do. I always get that one wrong.

Does it get hard to breathe. Do you forget to. Extension, forward, in the back, breathing into each other's mouths the breathing gets hard and they must part, lovers in order to breathe or to escape the possibility of, breathing, never really being able to breathe, never being able to say you have had air, the mirror to the mouth mists to prove a life, still a strong beat in the places you could put your fingers to. If you stretch very far, how far or how much you can see, remembering the high voice you never lose, switching between the ways of being you told yourself to form. Useless I want you, recognized, judged, perceived. Useless want more, want how, know nonetheless

The poem is each object you lose and collect, re-shuffled in the cabinet with extra shelves, but the glass is broken, your selves, do they get out, how do they get out, how did they all get out, suffocating.

Malevolence, if it must be named.

The floor. The wall.

The window. The door.

The rise. The fall.

The bottom. The top.

The space. The clock. The side.

The sky. The sea.

A tree. A star.

A scar.

People think you can do things.