

The Garden of Effort

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Keith Waldrop

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for Claude Royet-Journoud

“If this castle is the soul, there can clearly be no question of our entering it. For we ourselves are the castle: and it would be absurd to tel someone to enter a room when he was in it already. But you must understand that there are many ways of being in a place.”

(Saint Theresa)

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Propositions and Between

PROPOSITION I

Sunlight—yes. I
mean yes it's
there.

+

Things
separate. My
eyes smart.

+

Dark. Indefinite
sounding.

+

Two
knowledges: (1) not to
stumble, (2) not
to move.

+

Look on tip-
toe. Listen
horizontal,
breath held.

+

Under sixty watts. Write:

+

What
can I lure
here?

Entries

I was
preceded
by
mine.

+

One interpretation among.

+

Addressed
to a certain
bearing.

+

Following
succeeds.

+

These words on
parole.

THE CHAPTERS TOGETHER

I
who a high degree

2
who am cry

3
who fruits definitely littlest

4
who head a near the

5
who hidden

6
who himself

7
who interlocking first love false

8
who I say

9
who look

10
who organized a wheel

11
who rainbow receive

12
who rapt a separate oil

13
who spiritual mountain

14
who that is thunder tribulation why

15
who the taken out go child

16
who to harvest

17
who top of

18
who when the is given

19
who who

20
who withstands fullness

THE CAKE HE TYPED

I
also in supernatural like

2
close out and dimension

3
cosmic whatever was eaten

4
eagle ultra

5
electricity his bride agrees

6
home in the leave

7
Jezebel systems

8
medical fallen thinking

9
might later before

10
next few exactly predicts

11
psychic tissue allows perfect

12
sickness can miracle

13
someday wilderness ate

14

sooner thinking moon would

15

subtle

16

this is protected for

17

to grow public touch

MUSCLE ABOVE MIND

engineering mothers
to make of
being born
question to
us all in
the end

+

in the midst
of pioneer
bulk blindness
to now and
again extravagant
strange

+

careful ferocity
priest two nuns
forestalling vulgarity and
heaven simple
Catholic imagery

+

dead at
a funeral great
trouble death
it is
clear now vanity

+

neat narcissism satisfying
lengthier mechanical
parts train naked
eager to impress

+

with exploit
in the full
sense will
but is
not quite

+

comically kicked in
his most
often for fleshly
thinking unlikely

+

great immediate
years short of
suddenly for
the whole room

+

conversations with
men and
women the story
which leaping

+

ascetic in love
with positive
response attachment lived

+

circumambient moment direct
something “and
never really is”

+

dream eyes a
head bound with
real fantastic

+

looking obsessed to
forget and
neglect could concern

+

here seated
by body mad
in my

+

house cannot
move the this
bit housing

+

nicely claustrophobic
man shedding
England soon elbow

+

changing qualifications
seated the
animal images

+

reshuffled to
recover all the
forms

+

still stuff an
occasionally sleeps

+

mistake about
the stone

+

pity coming the
finished

+

quite extensive
stretch of

PROPOSITION II

Each grain of sand has its architecture, but
a desert displays the structure of the wind.

A Hatfull of Flood

I

Outside the calendar,
werewolves and other
danger spots.

+

Almost everybody, you
know, is dead.

+

Teeth, nails and
hair—what a moving
landscape.

+

Two segments of
horizon, haggling
over a birthday.

2

Am I a prisoner?

+

Pumpkins, by
gouging, given
eyes, nose, grin.

+

Remember me only
by what I've
said in my sleep.

+

Corridors and boxes, swell
of little cells.

+

Empty? Filled?

+

Time. The fatness
of time.

A face at the
window and I forget
I'm indoors.

+

Their language, in
so many senses.

+

I, a region
of you, a
region of me.

+

Our system un-
stable—evidence
in time.

+

Enormous eyes of
Christians or
decadent pagans.

+

Some things I've
seen through and
vice versa.

+

Worth everything
but not necessarily
worth while.

+

In different
groupings, an
instant, as if it
were an instant.

+

Not bodies, but
“entities
carefully abstracted.”

+

The unlived like is
not worth examining.

4

What happens
at the exact
center?

+

Consciousness
merely the
environment.

+

Pianos, complex
as they are, not
to be considered
our rivals.

+

I remember
everything and it's
all wrong.

+

Jump ahead and
no one is alive.

+

Convergence
to a web:
nearer, farther.

+

Nearer.

Bonelike light, straining
in patterns
of a dozen arbitrary
figures.

+

Half expected.

+

Fading—I'm
dredging, between
dreams.

+

The obscurer
euphemisms. Gossip
of kindergartens.

+

My proper
doorstep, and a
shadow, face down.

6

Absence as
object of fetish.

+

History recuperating.

+

Sick with
reminiscence, unless
I remember.

+

Discovering a
dead end. Go on
and conjecture.

+

The vague
concept of
arrival.

+

In broad
daylight, there were
no more symptoms.

7

Joy and pain
rejoice the
soul, being
physical.

+

The better games the
hard ones.

+

A sense of
tricycling
through the void.

+

Or, at least, a
chance of losing.

+

And, well yes, even
if broken,
rules.

What carol, what margin
of error can compare
with the history of France?

+

From one center of
the hall even
to the other.

+

The earth—such
suspense.

+

Various more or less
recondite linguistic
problems or tea.

9

Your body poses
no problem.

+

Still on the surface.

+

This an
occasion of lucidity.

+

You reflect. You
scatter.

+

Flowing
light, your outline.

+

It takes a
moment to
see you.

+

The sunniest embrace
radiates vagueness.

+

Elementary spectre.

+

Play, our
symmetries.

+

Otherwise
clear, dark.

IO

Starting
from 'here.'

+

A look in all
directions, not—to be
sure—at once.

+

The garden of effort.

+

The damned
cannot say
'now.'

The Antichrist

for Nelson & Linda Howe & Lutes

*“...and if there were a devil it would not be one who
decided against God, but one who, in eternity, came to no
decision.”*

—Martin Buber

SECTIONS

1

I am completely in pieces.
When I am melting I have no hands.
I go into a doorway in order
to not be trampled upon. Everything is
flying away from me.
In the doorway I gather together the pieces of my body.

2

I have been sicker than I
thought I was. I dreamed that I lost all
my insides. I dreamed that my heart dropped out
and I dreamed that I lost my lungs. I dreamed
that I cracked my skull and that I was
all over like a boil. I dreamed that I had
a hot-water bottle inside of me and
every time somebody punched me gas came out. I thought
I was empty-headed.
I felt like I was a doll and
I cracked my skull open
and I scattered all over the house.

3

*The urgent need of instincts blends
with the heavy substance of the body.
The sexless angel is
out of the reach
of gravitation.*

4

We were all in a *boat*. I remember
worrying about the boat overturning and
what we would do. And I remember
the thought that we would just have to
swim to save our souls.

5

I was taking a walk with a very sensitive and hysterical gentleman. The village bells were pealing a new and very harmonious chime. My companion, who usually displayed great feeling for such chimes, suddenly began to rail at it, saying he could not bear that disgusting ringing in the major key, it sounded frightful; moreover it was a hideous church and a squalid-looking village.

(The village is famous for its charming situation.)

...then began to abuse the local parson. The reason he gave was that the parson had a repulsive beard and—wrote very bad poetry.

6

*Empty men are soaking up water like sand,
drying out right away again,
wanting more...
They can only gulp down the pure fluid,
but it does not stay with them...
and, worse, it does not DO anything...
THEY ARE COMPLETELY EMPTY.*

7

My son's illness started with a sore throat and fever. I took him to the doctor. He has a very bad throat, lost eight pounds and lay listless for a week. Last September my brother was rammed in the stomach by a tractor which tore his legs right back from his body. They removed six feet of his intestines. Thank you for your prayers, I have now complete deliverance from the cigarette habit. Thank God. My kidneys act normal now, as when I was young.

THE ANTICHRIST

This tube is blind in front
and behind. On the mountain above it
are fine remains, an
unworked concession
of copper, silver and lead. The two,
indeed, react on one another.

Then, on that
night, the
enumerator
revisits his beat. (See LADYSMITH.)

Here the inconsistency becomes
manifest. He had almost daily
intercourse with
Mirabeau. He
studied for the church, but
declined to sign a religious formula. He was
an enthusiastic admirer of J.S. Bach.

What has become
of the herds of wild oxen? A wild, fierce
people paint their
bodies and go naked.
Coleridge recommended some such method of criticism.
One dies on the average each
year, till all are gone.

NIDIFICATION

“How shall I comprehend that, since something is, something else should be?” The violet color of the light and the sharp shadows are grave disadvantages. Precious time wasted: the king still saw the piece occasionally, after he had purged himself.

The magpie surrounds its nest with a hedge of thorns. Water supply and drainage systems were introduced by the United States Government. It is a favorite health resort and tourist center. Only males are admitted to its ranks.

The pope found himself caught and struggled to escape. On the liberal ideas making for emancipation we need not dwell. All spiders possess a pair of poison glands.

God will restore them again to their own land. In 1664 the duke of York sold New Jersey; in 1708 William Penn mortgaged Pennsylvania. He urged, however, that order should be restored.

CROSSING

for Janet Sharistianian

An old sunset in a
star within a
call,

the chamber moanings
depicted all
around

with

bars of sea,
tide,
and sound and

the hurt foam. He
listens to
the deep

whose

home comes with the
twilight through the
bell

of painted dark in
leaden sadness,
bound.

He

listens and he
laughs at the fare-
well, then

writes in a bourne like
any time. He
is

the place

of the flood, who
wrote
The Pilot—

and his old face made
beautiful with
face.

And

as I read I
hear the crowing
bar.

I HAVE LEARNED WITHOUT WANTING TO

I talked a great deal about
God. At first it causes distress,
for there is no one who knows himself as
well as he is known. Oh, were we but
completely detached! Love
is a thing most evident, which, as I
say, cannot be hidden: the soul
is inwardly burning.
I dared not be careless.
I cannot think what we are coming to—I
am not yet fifty. He will not allow this
soul to be lost.

.. .. .

These last words, I think, were spoken because
I was so troubled.

DEGENERATION

He is conceited about a disease
memory makes possible.
Immeasurable vistas down the dusk
made him adherent of a vague socialism,
indistinct, faulty, obscure. The singer
proposes to go to a modest restaurant;
he does not understand his natural impulses.
No completely sound mind—vague, barren,
fraternal—feels its vital internal
processes. In higher organisms
all progress rests on this: he
does not allow the imagination the prospect
of being thrashed or kicked.
For Kant, in the small town of Königsberg,
like every other complex and highly
developed human being, has not the remotest
connection. When he makes them
speak, he must first
translate.
The capacity for attention has diminished.

LE JARDIN DU RAIFORT

Un établissement
humain, véritable création
des zootechniciens, aborde dans le vif des
questions
vitales: la chute
de la population, la
faiblesse des structures.

L'insertion du "pasteur" dans la
maison du
berger change tous
les intérêts.

Cependant, les sociétés, liées
aux enchères, à la vaine pâture,
attestent de longue
date la teinte de
la berlué.

INTRODUCING A MADMAN

He finished his speech in a
gruesome way. Ha! Ha!

I can feel it wet round
her neck, for now
both mother and daughter lay in it, more
radiant beautiful than ever.

Introducing a madman: My God!
what has happened to him?

Crush me with fear and
horror, you so
clever lady (with a
strength which seemed incredible).

A ROMANCE

The hereditary Prince of
Deutschland, as Mme. de Montespan
said in convulsions one day,
suffered in sieges, raged in
passionate wrath, was therefore
certainly the more agreeable.

After luncheon, carefully avoiding
the enormous cucumber frame, he
made her think, "Yes, one
could do it in Paris or London—we have
lost the secret in senseless
calculations to those poor
flippertygibbet inanities."

Little Dickey managed, when her
delicate loveliness, leaning against the
porch of the house, loosened
into the fair face about
five-and-forty years old:

"I could not live—poor."

All art was nothing but
little color and good teeth. It is really
quite wolgamot and all that.

PROVIDENCE

There is nothing more absurd: if I don't
like that damned tragedy of
intensely hideous, though largely unexplained
memories of childhood, the trees slope
fantastically—for I know the names change.

LOVERS

The camera's peculiar perspective
simply flicks
in thought, imagination, or
a dream.
Our sense of time struggling
in the water
can perfectly well show, quite
apart from
space, a glimpse of things to come.

The presence of death among
reels of film
suits a comedy like the sunniest
weather,
in which extraneous music seems
worse because
it is not seen. When the lovers
embrace,
the mental level will wear thin.

THE MATERIAL

It is not the consciousness of men—
man has no mind, not until
industry is developed from
imagination. Thank you very much,
but in that case the *nobles*
must, naturally, make a living far
below the bourgeoisie. (Jung
still naively believes in
journalism.) A Christian-German-patriarchal
drivel brings some devoted man
to its cheapest and indispensable
Byzantine
exaggeration.

New Veils

A FIGURE OF GROUND

No system in
stars anymore.

+

First principle of
chatter: whatever I
don't say to you
is our world.

+

The imbalance
of things, we
perceive as minutes.

+

You couldn't
want another story.
I told you
none last night.

+

Tried my
best, but
will not stop from falling.

+

Powdered light.

+

Could it
blow away?

+

Settle as
dust, darkening
surfaces.

+

Any house eventually
gushes
onto the street.

+

Great pot of
undiscriminated
flesh, divided
a hundred ways.

+

This poem needs
a car-barn in
or around it.

+

Winter
travel in a concrete
season.

+

All jabber, but
degrees
of nonsense.

+

Bullseyes
shoot back.

+

Fallen among
etymologies.

+

Degrading energy.

+

Lines of
force, probably, from
previous tenant.

+

Disoriented by
sub-equatorial
spirals.

+

The index
only.

+

Hardest
battle, empty.

+

I must have
dropped it when
I knelt.

+

The gift of few
things never
alluded to.

+

Great
penetration, however
slight.

+

Spin invisible—oh,
lots of
such tricks.

+

Raising
provisional
roof.

+

Grow, under
pressure.

+

Dream of
erecting
a word.

+

Neither magpie nor
nightingale but
steeped in their
mythologies.

+

An economy
of elephants, a
reindeer culture.

+

How utterly
pretentious, to
be.

+

Or not.

+

Lend me
your
chemistry.

+

Moving air. Some
of it formal.

INDUBITABLE CASE
OF SOMETHING

Your skin—
what

+

depth.
Field, but

+

also, counter-
field. Arrogant

+

bread
from a

+

weary stone.
Will to surface.

+

Church
roof never

+

stops spending.
Boiling

+

pitch.
Torn

+

up, on
my hands.

+

The inside
mainly

+

for balance.
Broom in

+

the flesh.
Ferocious.

+

Tired
science of

+

the important.
Twice the

+

necessary
unexpected

+

vocabulary. How
they rage.

+

Basic
dull

+

rhythm.
Speakable.

ELDRITCH

Fan
of adjectives.
Qualities

+

get
shorted. I don't
even

+

know
what kind of
substances

+

I
might be
said

+

to be supporting.
Improper
nouns.

+

Where
wrong, lonely,
curious

+

press. Brier-
bordered, dusty, curving, frequent
confront.

+

Wild, settled, barren,
scattered,
gnarled, solitary, crumbling, rock-strewn,

+

silent,
furtive,
creepily insistent.

PHENOMENOLOGY OF IGNORANCE

Unproductive
place. I'm
watching
New veins

+

may open. Com-
bustible gold.
Thinginess of
things, from

+

weariness of where. Faster
and faster towards
my last, like a
body falling.

+

Direction
is quality.
Tidbit.
Around the corner.

+

Wonder what you're
thinking, but don't
mean it as
a question. I

+

have seen
even to
the tips of your
breasts and

+

your ass-hole.
Still
horizons.
But towards

+

everything in
each glance.
History
not up to

+

our intercourse.
How
much do we
remember?

+

All the
spasms. Laugh,
sneeze, yawn, flagrant
delight or

+

only sighing.
Imaginary points.
Background for
all possible

+

transit. With
what suddenness
you
remain you.

+

Quiet so
long, then
silence.

The Concept of Through

80 Proofs

1

Read me in my darkness:

2

No notion of beginnings.

3

(Images—) vigil light
 chrisom child

4

Temptation,
to say something.

5

opaque
transcendent

6

piecemeal and successive

7

Work now. Pay later.

8

If you see things that aren't there, well, that
can get to be a problem, but when you hear
voices—then you're splitting.

9

Latency. Period.

10

(look into—) New England cacogenesis

11

game of bones

12

Things place the mind.

13

Everything in

14

continence = banal form of asceticism

15

The same “baroque” elaboration (bizarre, ingenious, and often ambiguous).

16

No point in speculating, where one is seized by a feeling of horror, over what has precisely happened on this particular spot. The whole shebang lies under a curse, from some atrocity committed at the Creation.

17

in deep? far out?

18

matter of interpretation

19

Something I didn't catch.

20

A voice carried by the wind—articulated limbs, with a mind (a meaning). Platonic speculations.

21

all preface

22

dreamer's environment built from his body

23

This is not hope, but another contrary of despair.

24

Avenues from real to play.

25

bystander
abutment

26

dreams = wish-fulfillment

But: When I wish for something, if then—
outside, in the actual world—I get it?

(A sop. Another substitute.)

27

Cosmomorphic.

not yet

28

an “emotional perspective”—Imagine that.

29

interval

cleft

defile

yawn

30

(Meister Eckhart:) “But when God acts in
lieu of thy active intellect he engenders many
images together in one point.”

31

a green carpet (for when I die—hero or vil-
lain, as the case may be)

32

Enough for a start.

33

In the midst of a dream, not mine, I dream
myself, with borrowed features.

34

Revamp terminology.

35

Ecstasy = the point of the balances.

36

The closer an object comes, the more notice-
able the remaining distance.

37

If my life were spread, as they say, before me,

38

In my field.
In my Jordan

39

the world as misrepresentation

40

Half begun, well done.

41

coherence = continuous collision

42

A.: "Under the Atlantic? Like the Alps?"
B.: "Let's not be formal."

43

The regularity of the pattern, disrupted by
consciousness.

44

A symmetrical pain.

45

at the border
snowblind

46

O to suffer *Weltschmerz!*

47

plowed land
garden
factory
marketplace
earth long since delivered, nothing much to
expect now

48

survival of the shittiest

49

Three ranks of enemies: (a) behind me, the dead; (b) in front, an aimless pulsing; (c) equivocal hosts that whisper appalling information.

50

“lavish absence”

51

furniture, forming an ellipse

52

suspension between (e.g. sleep and dream)

53

As it is written

54

Time is important if and as it presents itself spatially

55

Death not *then*, but *there*.

56

frontal view = symmetry
profile = going

57

“Atoms.” (*pause*) “Rubbish.”

58

The ultimate—elementary—particles are said to have “free will.”

59

ensorcelation (?)
Reconsider.

60

A saw (electric) that cuts its cord.

61

Q. What to do about expression.
A. Detour.

62

(Further images—) weathered parent rock
erasable
richness

63

The closing pages are lost and it remains,
therefore, knotted.

64

ASPIRING MATHEMATICIANS CONSIDER
CONFLICTING DIRECTIONS OF TRAVEL.

65

Not all materials sensitive.

66

There is something of divinity in the power
to act or the power of scandal.

67

suspicion = I am interested in you

68

as will be seen in the sequel.

69

“The light created at the very beginning is not
the same as the light emitted by the sun, the
moon, and the stars, which appeared only on
the fourth day. The light of the first day was of
a sort that would have enabled man to see the
world at a glance from one end to the other.”

70

creation *ex nihilo*
A kind of over-compensation.

71

The millstone disintegrates in its turn.

72

A case of overlap?
In any case

73

(more specifically—) As God was called
'The Place,' meaning the container, the one
who holds, so it would seem that light—not
objects lit, but pure thingless light—is the
natural symbol for eternal night.

74

Asymmetrical pain.

75

I have suffered an, as it were, miraculous
disenchantment.

76

1st Bougre: What's he moping about?
2nd Bougre: *Wertschmelz*.

77

Andréa—for it was he—

78

Look.
This is a spell.

79

illegible

80

One of these days, to begin