



carrots onions celery potatoes

cheddar cheese

beef for stock

salt pepper garlic

windy day

keep the door open

kitchen cool

core & steam the cabbages

peel the leaves

rice & vegetables for the hollopchis

sit around the table

talk of nothing

good feeling for the job that's done

walk the fields the wind blows

blue sky above you always

pray that will be so

the maRtyRoLoGy

Books 3 & 4

Bp nichol

The Coach House Press

Toronto

THE MATYROLOGY

in its entirety is
as i said originally
for Lea
without whom

quite literally
none of it would have been written



'this is the 16th straight day of sunshine hot weather here in divineland be so have found some little spots on the west van side for lots of swimming — maybe i should have been a fish, deep breathing floating i learned all those years ago, body totally relaxed back slightly arched & just letting the ocean hold my face up to the blue sky. sweet heaven, who needs the jesus freaks, spine, which was wrenched again at work (in the valve factory, if yu can dig it, & i can't thus this is my last week & then taking a carpentry course) is feeling much better, thanks to hands of mother ocean.

i think it's becoming a good summer all in all. Pat & i going well, have much to love together, its been hard, lots of work to do. there are images we love in common, that's the most important thing i've ever sd. i don't believe in islands but our house & garden has an oasis like look abt it. the garden coming in good with the sun & all the trees around it.

*

some paradise

a slice

*

well, i tend towards the rural in my soul — never was big on sophisticated city images, we're moving right along, its our time now.

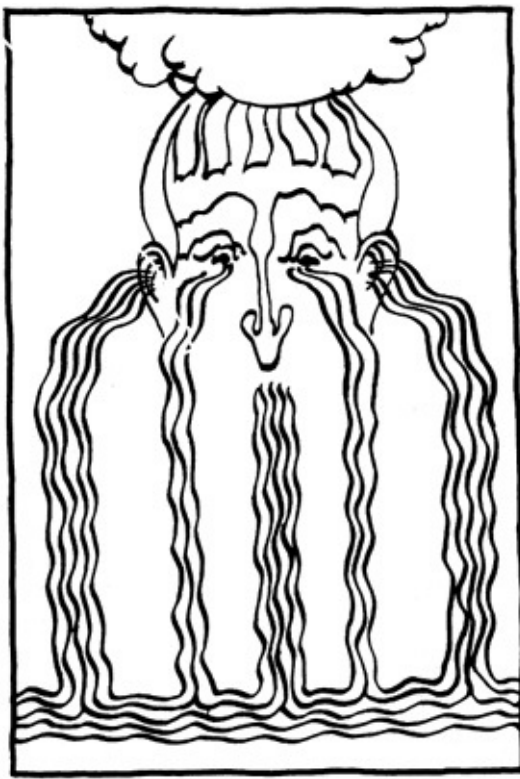
hope this letter finds yu & yours feeling fine.

perhaps less time will elapse between, i hope so & look out there for your poems & letters.

love
David

'Grant me a good dream, a beneficent dream. If I shall truly marry the daughter of poetry, if she is to be the companion of my well-being, the companion of my fortune, and if we are to grow old together, make it apparent to me, O Ancestors.'

Batak prayer
to find a bride



Book 3

I

'The road which leads through the brush to the mountains is now open, The road which leads to the tatter-heap of memories is now closed.'

Trobriand Island Pray

a voice in a cloud
a face in a storm
distant drawn
steps down from
having been where
yes

wrong moment
wrong song
urgent long breath
half dreaming in the train i saw you
visible death a scream

saint of no-names

~~free of lies~~

as in a like an if

nothing ends except pretending

your own existence blessed

ears filled with echoes

tongues with lies

overlay la lu lu

a w & a no

another year of knowing you

another life to go

this is not the moment when the writing comes

only the awareness thru another light

a choice of words moving to be said

pray god do let the consonance lead me

broken rhythm as the mind is

needing peace

to sleep in language years or weeks

white tips of mountains

grey clouds

blue sky

oh father

father



there has been that which i've been told
faces in crowds i seem to remember
dreams that are foreseen as longings
caught as the eye is an error in the sum

often i awake in trembling
nothing to be spoke of that can be seen
hands around me to lead me gladly
friends as family a kind of reckoning

there is a dance within the room
a w a g
walls on which my history's written
songs of joy

an h in the sky
an i at sea
as was foretold me

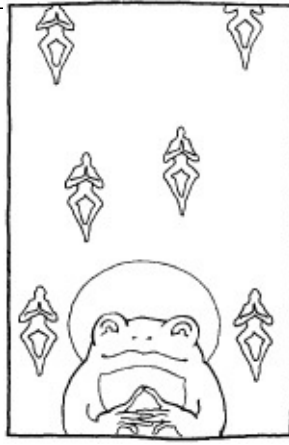


i am not what i appear
that straightness or fractioning

nothing like the face that floats above me
crying always crying

this morning in the curtained room
the fear or loneliness seemed unreal
sensing as i did the higher plane or place you'd gone to

you have no name now
only a being so alive
i know you're all still with me
linked as one
energy moving into song



i wanted an image or a metaphor
something to contain me
within the flow of language presses in
screamed so loud my father ran to save me
not knowing i needed to fall in
that place where all space holds you

dauid said of the bottle in his hand
'pouring the liquid you pour the container too gone
your skin flows out of you'
someone laughed we were all too drunk

it is disconnected

the drinks the ryme
the too many times not thinking for myself

the flower or the root
plucked from the ocean's floor
eaten by the snake or turtle

~~who knows his face~~ ~~who knows~~
what eats what sloughs his skin or shell &
walks away

suppose i had never come here

suppose i had done it that day
jumped from the old stone tower on bigwin island
pierced my body with ten stakes

i could walk the water
far as the saints would carry me
leave that skin behind & pass away

it is the full moon in the sky
the rising sun

watching from the train window
i am moved beyond it in a dream
walk the fields dumb & trembling
as in a poem i cannot remember writing
someone walks beside me whispering

thieves THIEVES

you take a man's words to use against him
twist language to such brutal ends
i'm sick with your scheming
too lost in words to ever leave them
too full with love of speech as feeling



there must be a beginning made
a starting over a writing down
times when other voices do not distract

there must be an order in all things
to be discovered not imposed

there is an invisible world opens
a heaven or a hell
filled with the men & women i have killed or
disposed of

who never made them

but that the power his

~~there is a listing or a taking of priorities~~
these things as i have noted them here
are taking place have taken
are the true & proper province of poetry & prayer

II

i wanted a portrait of a man
so perfect it was weak in his weaknesses
catch the leer the arrogant stare
of one who writes poetry as part of a power play
accumulating poems as one accumulates points on a scale
moving up towards the ultimate chair or throne
wearing the fool's cap
a black gown to cloak intention

i need to inscribe a circle in hell
my need to see a wish to find the words for being
held as i am within the limits of my vision
we hold such tension within ourselves
call it duality
we never hear the moment when the words stop or
the silence begins

lay in bed three days dreaming of this poem
wrote it down the first draft it came out wrong
the words stilted awkward
as if there were no song to sing
only the flat statement of what i'd seen
a circle in which saint ranglehold stood
holding the letter H within his hand
taunting the man i described inaccurately a poet

the confusion of parital vision
the agony of half lies
the endless catalogues
the exclamations oh

saint of no-names
king of fools
the days are spent in piecing things together
the night's strewn with pages you do not remember writing
third person to first person
am i the fool

~~sick of everything i've written~~
fascinated by my own distaste
keep placing one letter in front of another
pacing my disillusionment

it is mistaken

silence & speech
it is one

talking & listening
there is no duality

'i have nothing to say
& i am saying it'

listen to what i don't say
what i do say
listen to me



drove along the highway
nine going west to arthur
radio blaring 'don't leave me lonely tonight'
is there a road to heaven along here somewhere
a cloud-town exit before i go too far

there's a poem i should write
some sort of image of the cosmic hitch-hiker
thumb out it's a troubled life
no one wants to pick him up
he looks unclean

once he might've been saint ranglehold or reat
now there is no name to give him
only the knowledge he outlives us all
we don't stop
'all i've left is a band of gold'
growing old driving nowhere on these crumbling roads



Let it rain

Hello ???... ☺



write to me you lazy sukini!

WITH THE POWER OF SOUL
ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE !!

Jimi
Hendrix

what do you think
what do you feel?
do you know tears
and laughter
joy & sorrow
anger & love
as i do,
or under different faces?
or are they masks?



APRIL FOOL IS CAMEL

YOUR PAIN IS YOUR JOY UNMASKED - Kahlil Gibran



why am I
so scatterbrained?

love
Suzette



different faces different times
places & people remembered not recalled
'lonely days are gone i'm going home'
the roads run into one another

sometimes i'm sorry i stopped for you

sunny as today is
yesterday it rained
driving north out of toronto
circles in the sky
i saw the face of ranglehold enraged
red clouds against the blue
why?

letters from friends
joy of speech
each moment shared with someone
melting snow
fields emerge as brown
horses in the meadow
occurrences that rhyme
it is accidental or

– suddenly the sky opened –

it is all blue
(bluer than blue)
it was all blue

bluer

BLUE



more than meets the eye meets the ear
fear of that as the basic proposition
mo asked 'what if the bias were reversed'
2000 years the eye has ruled
theory that the architecture of greece & egypt was based on the ear
now every architect says there is no exact science of acoustics

the ancient gaelic poets lay with stones on their chests
pressed stale air out fresh breath
poetry springing from lungs that were pure

you in the back seat leaning forward
asking where i'm going i've no good answers
the stone on my chest won't let me breathe



the ear the ear it is all there
the mouth fitted to it with such care
there is music in every sound you make

the air here is clearer
wind in my hair
it is a moment the poem has occupied before
the words are shapes the sounds take
it is all there it is all there it is all there

breathing over & over
history's written in my body
architecture of the too tight muscles will not bend where they should
startled eyes moving in & out
aware the sound is there
occupying space i am afraid to enter



blue sky & wind
beginning green of trees
began a poem about your death ranglehold
i had not thot to write about it earlier
forgive me

standing with andy in the greenhouse
studying the seedlings for the planting
leaves so much the same cauliflower & broccoli
i wondered at first if a mistake had been made

it is hard to recall how you died
probably you were lost at sea
laughing stupidly at the irony
undertow dragging you away

sometimes now the hitch-hiker addresses me
asks me if i ever care
if i ever share with someone other than myself
this feeling of trembling

is it a selfish act to write saint ranglehold
to structure space this way for yourself

i'm trying to learn

it is hard

help me



father i have so much to say
i can't throw my pen down in the old way
when retreat was easier than continuing

i see visions or images in the sky
perhaps only in the mind's eye
faces of saints or lovers now forgotten

may my father's father bless me

may he care for me well

may his father know

my intentions are good

may the father of his father watch over me

as i would

were i he

bless this poem

this road that i have taken

bless my friends

bless me



love

we know so little of it

disconnected

it's never clear

we play a game of distances

juggle faces & positions

lost among our own intricacies

you there in the air before me

i know your name

you were saint ranglehold in that old game we played of one to one

how boring that seems

we all need so many friends

this evening the this seems too present

watching mike leave

rairi fall the open doorway

knowing the long drive to london lay ahead

fascinated by the figure moves thru this poem as dave or him

poet

friend

something of the search we share in common

as if words could save the mind

i only know it was bad weather to be driving home in

sense

let us make some of it
too little presence or
suspension of belief
that man i called a thief a poet
the one saint ranglehold tangled with
where is his place in all this

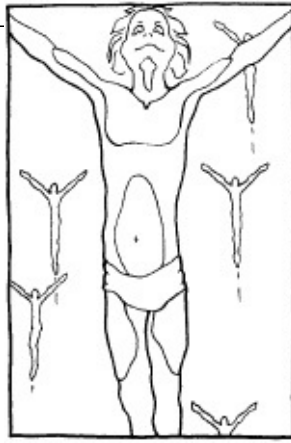
i ask questions
they are not rhetorical
expecting answers or acknowledgement at least
i've never stopped
even when you died
knowing someday you'd really hear me

father if i address you in poems it is to dress you beautifully
the body needs such sounds to live in
embodies your beauty in its form
as women are in body beautiful
breasts & belly tender to the touch
it is too much too often
we have our own ways of handling these things

an order is perceived
it is mentioned
the task is once again begun
all of us who occupy this body linked as one
an ear for an i want to talk to you

III

'you have to pay old debts
before you catch the moon'
rumours was what richard called them
states of mind
a whole geography real to me then
i cannot recall



i want to write a history of this present moment
brings me here pen in hand
late sun of a spring day
my own shadow on the dandelion
'magic words of poof poof piffles'
make me just as small as sniffles'
the saints are so much smaller than
the real worlds this poem is peopled with

move among you all
as bumbling in my mind as leo was
marmaduke always could put one over on him
the teams were all the same
the duke & the dope the dodo & the frog
you saw it all on the silver screen
stan laurel slapped down by oliver hardy
we cover ourselves in fat or longing
anything to keep the lean one in
scream when we can or laugh
sometimes it is much the same

rob crosses the yard
pauses to talk
not wanting to disturb me in the writing
i remember how we first met
me reading KULCHUR was it issue 10
'i was so much older then'

nancy later
looking for liz

julia her skirt swaying

the dandelion is not a weed
its perfect golden flower
i could sleep there always

friends

friends

friends

this is how the false 'i' ends



i do not remember what i could remember
the simplest things stick in the mind
i know there is a blindness which is hiding
do i understand

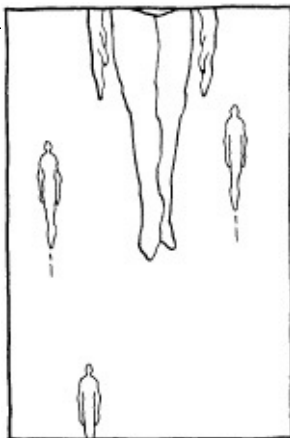
this music is one of touch
utopia as more must have seen
that necessity for a community of feeling the saints never knew
kept wandering places by themselves
the stupid fucking fools

rob keeps writing me these poems
talks to me as his mother did
spring of 63 so far from language anything
i told her of my fear of living

we all need teachers

friends

people we can talk & read to
as the buddhists saw it
no V stands alone
its base is 'we'
all the universe embodied in that term
the song the bird sings high in its tree



white clouds

tear down these wires that obstruct my ear

INTERLUDE: The Book of OZ

i have imagined a heaven which is another place
a landscape i was born in
fields i walked the saints were at my side
thru the woods a glade animals dwelt within
smiling pool where longlegs fished his breakfast with his beak
bob white rising up to sing his cheery song into the morning
cheery as everyone was cheery then
smiles freeze my lips
remembering how you died saint iff
fell from the sky
i saw you fall
thot it was a star
that day as a kid i ventured places i'd never been before
set out to find you
who were you are you anyway
we start there
write it here
yes



the river they called kaministiqua
lay beyond the tall black stack of the incinerator
at the end of the trail lead by the tiny valley we caught the garter snakes in

i remember winter nights in my room
the bed dj & i shared
i had a friend
torn as he was from the funny papers
crazy jutting jaw stupid yellow hat
i talked with him

it's not easy remembering a lost language
words i have no tongue to use

my life changed when i saw you fall
set out to find you as a son should
took the books
the maps that i could find
followed you into that country the mind recognizes
met the animals
ones i knew by name
peter rabbit reddy fox
those i did not know
faces frightened or insane or

this morning i listened for your voice
somewhere in the howling
heard only the rustle of what could be straw clink of metal
four countries that were different colours
& the centre green

green as i had never seen before

green



there are many roads to that centre
many ways to go
underground thru the valley of voices overland or
follow polychrome the rainbow's daughter
as the saints did long ago

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