





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**

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**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.

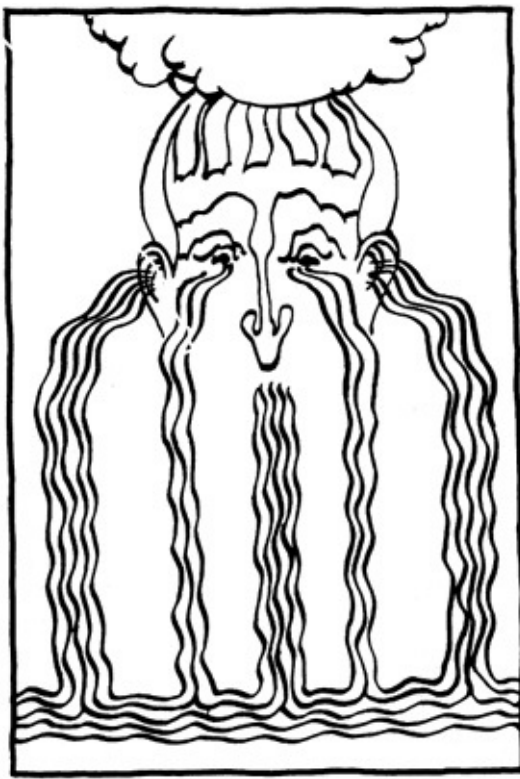
hope this letter finds yu & yours feeling fine.

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

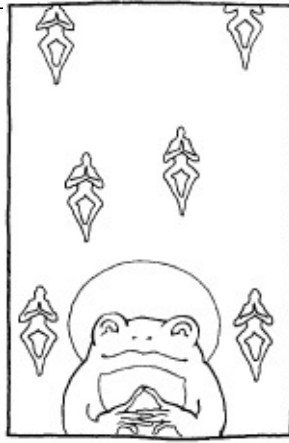


i am not what i appear  
that straightness or fractioning

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

david 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

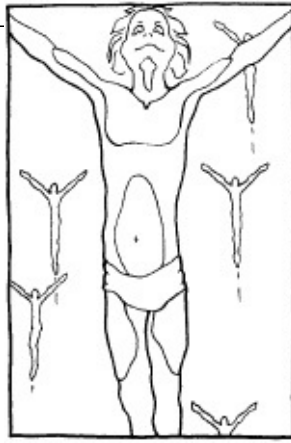
i ask questions  
they are not rhetorical  
expecting answers or acknowledgement at least  
i've never stopped  
even when you died  
knowing someday you'd really hear me

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

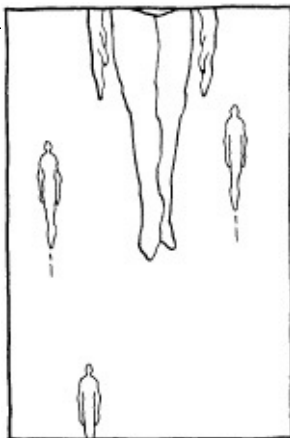
this music is one of touch  
utopia as more must have seen  
that necessity for a community of feeling the saints never knew  
kept wandering places by themselves  
the stupid fucking fools

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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