

SONATA

Also by Maurice Scully:

Poetry

Love Poems & Others (Raven Arts Press, 1981)

5 Freedoms of Movement (Gallop Dog Press, 1987)

Prior (Staple Diet, 1991; tel-let, 1992)

Certain Pages (Form Books, 1992)

Over and Through (Poetical Histories, 1992)

The Basic Colours (Pig Press, 1994)

Priority (Writers Forum, 1995)

Prelude, Interlude and Postlude (all Wild Honey Press, 1997)

Steps (Reality Street Editions, 1998)

Etruscan Reader IV

(with Bob Cobbing & Carlyle Reedy: Etruscan Books, 1996, 1999)

5 Freedoms of Movement (new, revised edition, Etruscan Books, 2001)

Tree with Eggs (hardPressed poetry, 2004)

Livelihood (Wild Honey Press, 2004)

Numbers (Coracle Press, 2006)

Tig (Shearsman Books, 2006)

CD

Mouthpuller (Wild Honey Press/Coelacanth Press, 2000)

Children's

What Is The Cat Looking At? (Faber, 1995)

SONATA

Maurice Scully



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In Swahili *nyumba* means back and *mbele* front but for Swahili speakers the front of an object is its far side, facing *away* from the speaker, and the *nyumba* is the side facing the speaker.

... the money I can see
 from here
 landing on the floor
 emitting little words
is not for me
 [where's my home?
how house
 my children?]
& when the breezes shake
 the leaves a little
they all fall over
 into another country
evenly speaking
 Utopian-Glass-Box.
oh I'll be there –
 mouth wide –
interpreting off-key ...

 then I woke up.

moving from the small
 stinking hotel
arranged for us by
 the school & too
expensive anyway
 to what turned out
to be some sort of
 brothel & then on
a few days later
 on his insistence
to a colleague's place.
 & his collapsing
marriage.

/ ...

drunkenness. fights.
a television
flung to the floor.

we'd arrived – yes –
but not quite yet
to that distant spot of
sunlight where to
disport our wings over
the forest floor.

... space – air –
scattering influence
over us – a
matter of discussion –
doubt + idiocy
join the club –
a split stone
in the storm/
black white/
it glints & (click)
purrs (of) yr
properties' keys
in my pockets
index of what you
think & what
you think is
yours by right –
not omitting
that niggling
ever-present
fever to survive –
rain of dishonest

/ ...

badgerings
incessant valley
of darkness –
it dissolves
love blurs
at the edges
gestelted thalurbs
overolve in the
deep blue sea (will
I begin it?) the world.
(that's all that's in it:
blue veins/pink
vines) then what?
gis a job – & so –
down. (earth)
that.
land on it.
ignition –
back to the crannóg
for me ...

the angle of
the neck the
angle of the
bill the angle

& elevation of
the body the
ruffling of the
feathers on the

back & the di
splay of
the tail.

pipe
pip
curl
rill.

swirl.
sculpt.
split.

do-fheicithe

in braille ...

If you open a door & light hits the light on the floor
but doesn't double it or fit. If you respond to her special
look & then it. If a door closes gently its tongue clicks
shut ("shut") under-echoing along a hallway *shut*. If you
wake in the morning overjoyed before a tide of worries in the
dark. If the smell of rain in the air brings rain. If the
Seamstresses of Steel become home-makers or widows at their
windows at home in chrome & leatherette. If the war begins
& then stops & then begins again money & blood pouring through
– phase by phase – in gouts of/hey wait a minute – If peace
is a gap within a gap. If the painting falls to the floor –
then ... then ... //It should be called Cascade – ode sac –
aubade – a glint of silver in the storm then gone. Dwell. Fall.
Time. Crushed butterflies. Tapping animal in a tree.

Tell that to the police.

This is the world.

Ah.

The screen says no, says yes, says progress this way, no wait,
that ... each problem yielding a new exfoliation of information
itself ready to burst into further layers & those layers further
... Tired, a sore throat. Tell me, tell me sweetly: I had
melodies, then maladies – was it Xmas? – & accurate pieces of
language. Pip-pip. Yes, it is a blackbird across the neighbourhood
that calls, & then calls. The child's voice, the child's mind
("Will my brain *rot* when I'm asleep?") / ...

whispery verticals stab-slits tubular vivids
draw past skin cheeks knuckles o
must be in the other jacket
sshish go cars on the
wet streets
recuperating a blank
below the moon device or
something like & obliquity in water
outside the calyx *touch teach touch* staying
put my house collapsing cards on contact reaches home.

Ode sac – aubade – a glint of wisdom against the norm then gone.
Less than no use. In that frame. (*Hi, I'm Miró, wing-commander
Miró, haven't we met?*) On the other hand, you turn to her for
an explanation, & seem to get the beginning of it. A Japanese
basket peddler pulling his laden cart (a century ago) dwarfed by
the enormity of the contraption, intent under his conical woven
hat: *that's you*, she says, & laughs. On the other hand ...



the figure
I can see from here
is pegging wet underwear
to a line for drying
in the no-wind of the season
in this naïve painting clean
& warm/ing to ward off the inside/
outside good & god was taking notes

I felt
yes these things are
animals in that ground the sky
but no wait much higher
& more powerful & faster.
that's a/a pretty mark. jet. the
deity. a machine. the deity was
inventing conspicuous beauty.
praise him. & his mother.

& it's hopeless. scuffs. shreds.
but: flick through the detours
abc of ornateness depth
without tears. that thing's not
alive it's a house. those things
in it are doors & windows to go
in & look out. & from the
shopping-list in the bottle?

fear. that's my green pen. that's
my job. please a little quicker because
I am in a hurry. how much? keep
the change. stand back. please
I would like to have my hair
shampooed too. please I would
like a massage. mind my moustache.
stand back. I am a merchant. / ...

are you a manufacturer? I am
interested in yr goods. lattice-
patch. odes epodes ads.

le seinm na gcuach ar bbruach

na gcoille go sámh. my previous order
was not executed exactly. give me
a French coffee please. that's good.
have you jams?

*objects in mirror
are closer than
they appear*

is printed on my wing
mirror in white ink
& moves over what
appears there
moving

crest & swoop

a playing mantis

a host of golden
raffle-tickets

pinkish dust
landing different
ways around white –
stylus to palmleaf –

this is the life.

(had it ever will be)

+

(I'll was wont sought possible)

=

(the wallpaper)
if only we could see
reason.

/ ...

working in a corner at her desk.
let's discuss this more than/she
did say/dancing on the water-paper
surface – & – in full flight ... ah!/
a book – notebooks opening – the
concentric circles bedded in the
flowerhead. will get you a career.
next please. thank you. move along.
& it's a great laugh howling for
Injustice in the Land of the Golden
Treasury. piano-ripple from a kitchen
window over a wall. so be it/she did
say in Kikuyu no word for *thank you*
a thing given is given so what each
arriving lie gathered undiscussed
vertical to the centre of gravity
tubes bars rods a stirrup in bight
to minimize damage/fit the cup's
lip to yr lip so that you know you're
not dead. pay the bills. close the door.
don't break the surface don't shuffle
the pack. just stand back. each grass-
blade tilts either this way or that
from its tether. I've been around.
dent, pock. then something else happens.
Goodie-Two-Shoes. it's yr duty. it is
not. circles meanders blunders into a
lamp the fly hits my head. seeds shiver
then settle the sound the comma makes
being made, that message of discomfort
in yr lower back (I mean lower soul)
not this ferocious rain-drama of the
tropics slamming onto my one tin roof.
& then went down to the ship. (& put
my hands in my pockets) / ...

multiple gold-black bars
dis/ reappearing
in clear
blue-green
under a network
of small disparate water-
flashes past a ferry

is that a haiku?

dancing
singing
& playing musical instruments.
writing & drawing.
tattooing.
adorning an idol
with rice & flowers.
colouring the teeth
garments
hair
nails & body.
fixing stained glass
into a floor.
making beds
& arranging carpets
& cushions.
playing musical glasses
filled with water.
picture making
stringing garlands
& preparing perfumes.
magic or sorcery.
cooking & sewing. / ...

verse-making games.
the art of acquiring
property
by means of incantations

& shaving the white wood
smooth in the shadows

a book
is a
number of
sheets of
paper
bound or
stitched
together
a list of
horses
entered
in a race
a pack of
gold-leaf
six tricks
taken by one
side
a bundle of
tobacco leaves
cut in $\frac{1}{2}$
longitudinally
& without
the
stems
unoriginal
according
to rule
literal.

SONNET

at the Rhapsody & Squash a tankard yes & a
dog at the door: *fuck!* *fuck-fuck!*
fuck-fuck-fuck! at The Flowering Blast

a nip at The Gap In Your Understanding
a sore toe & a quick mind or that must
have been in the The Mottled Earwig who will

agree with what next? continuing on in
in a (strangely revolving) silence so send
help. to The Piebald Piglet. at The Legless

Egg a glass of diminuendo mountain cascade
in the materials the difficulty under a
cone of light scratching a history: swollen

knuckles of an old man's hand. this one did
that then & then that one did this. & then
& then. love, life, happiness-&-grabbing & a

grippingly bitter tender thought on *fuck-fuck!*
tenders lost. behind the shop at The Dank Stump
recording from across the street in The

Turning Worm in detail in impotence under
the table where I tell you
this.

/ ...

sirens brakes impact at full speed
the police keep busy bless them that's a roof
over my head not a leprachaun's inkcap

or part thereof deft steps & confident
up there atilt on broken slates to
keep the rain out & the clouds in place

posted a parcel to Berlin dreaming that
book arrived intact too out of the blue
by the way cheers I must type this up

in italics side-down because the other
daisy wheel's dandelion forsythia broom
yellow for beginning green follows through

they say but let's not swallow too many old
idylls like well they should look to their
health you know me Mary having the gods

in you isn't all that

odd

□ □ □

The first raindrop in the dust sculpts a cup-shaped hole, many such bunched merge to become tiny streamlets, in turn making little channels, loosening & carrying away earth-particles, until the run-off is concentrated first into irregularities, then rills, then gullies, then streams ... Minute crustaceans hatch from eggs that may have been blowing in the drought for half a century or more & over hundreds of miles from where they were laid by their long-dead parents in the desert. Item: crisp levels. Speleology: the study of holes in the ground.

Coming home late tired after work through the medieval centre of an Italian town, nobody about, winter, fog following through the streets, splashed lines ribbed & whorled, rhythms gapped, fluent dash thrill dash shrink into the lyrical young-plant-time in the shadows under the trees. Those were the days. These. Footsteps echoed. Everything closed. I stopped outside a bookshop on a corner. In the centre of its window tastefully arranged – a circle set in a square – on a plinth bedded in silk, the work in translation of a writer of my own country, in resplendence – busy old fool, unruly sun – lay. Oh no genius of course, shine on the wings – whatever *that* is – but a reputation & a blur of portable quotations. And green, green, a saleable country, the very colour of money.

/ ...

countless little threads
(this is known as the run-off)
thin film on smooth slopes
(this is known as sheet flow)

Now the coffin is upright in front of the tomb. Now a priest performs the ritual of the Opening of the Mouth ... Royal Scribe & Steward, Overseer of Royal Cattle, Scribe of Divine Offerings, his black heart is placed on scales & balanced against the white feather of truth while Am-mut, the Devourer, a sort of ravenous dog-god, waits hungrily for the result. Then as now, count on it, wealth & status will see you through.

that small liquid
 sound is
that wine I'd
 forgotten about
still fermenting
 in its demi-john
systole
 filled in Leitrim
in a little cottage
 on the side of a hill
diastole
 & forgotten
years ago
 while
 we
 travelled
 across
 difficult surfaces
 overground/underground
dreaming/waking life/death
 dark/light out/in
 hey!
 & years
(to take time as a map –
 fluent –
dissolving as you live –
 how then did
feathers evolve –
 anyway?)
is it
 the fly's
energetic
 zigzag

/ ...

the way the
 buzz shifts
a tone
 just before
landing
 is it
systole/diastole
 I wonder
... potable?
 [& landing the
other side
 of the web –
bab!]
 hardly.

oh look the artists
have also portrayed
themselves standing
among their cattle

sitting beside huts
hunting with bows &
arrows in their hands
dancing with masks

on their heads. it's
the outer shell of a
grass-seed not a fly's
wing a male & female

tension in the weather.
as. if. is that a sound
it makes on impact? is
that a sound it makes

on impact?

•

passing a bookshop
on a corner in fog
one night in November
late after work tired

a new prize-writer
bedded in silk caught
my/even here in this
border settlement on

/ ...

the banks of the
Styx pushed hard
by the industry –
hard – threading

us all into the
under-padding in
the doormat to
the temple of/

oh so tired after
work crossing a
piazza in fog &
about to be en-

lightened []
caught my tired
eyes but then
I woke up (this

must be) strange faces
reflected upside-
down in the liquid
in my cup/when a

door slams shut
& I was stirring
my coffee idly
thinking of

that night years ago –
this strange concertedness
of getting – *isolated* –
yes – if that's it –

/ ...

flicked aside &
suddenly pale green
palpi extend a
predatory greeting

for peace & commodious
living with names
in the black notebooks
of those bright

careers that darken
your difficult path/
my dear I / *hab!*

•

to remember memory
a map as you make
it breathing breath-
ing the co-

ordinates
corridors
rats in the tube
bi cherryjam please

yes not a word into
the fabric favours
privileges safeties
mesh & fix/not/step-

ping lightly over
the cobbles/not a
word/of the piazza
through the fog

/ ...

hovering past
closed up streets
tight & lit home
now to my wife

step by filtering
so-called inanimate
objects step tapping
the lattice where

flowers & stones flow
through their doubles
to meet you or slip
through their crystals

to *be* you twisting
at the cross-points
in silence flushing
through diamond-haze

following a sun
following them: I am
ready (& confused)
stopped over paper

fingers nimble singing
dumb: here is the weather
here is the news.
past a huddle of bribe-

inducing cheats in the
hollows. by the mantis
playing.
home now to my

wife now my child my
papers in silence in
a box godwot.

Grasp sparrow's tail

single whip

play guitar

lean forward

white crane spreads its wings

brush knee & twist – step –

play guitar

brush knee & fix – step –

step forward

deflect

downward

intercept

& punch

draw back (split) & push

SONNET

Here we are in a Photograph: arrived: the Palace of Art
Administration. Mouth-flash. Hum. Bow. Loners need not
apply to this hill station, I've been there (I think)
in this story this afternoon and know. Turn the page.
Help Wanted. She looked (to make a mistake you need
Rules in the first place) not back, but at the outside,
not inside, the slabs upside-down on the desk, sun
hitting little prisons of dark over time sliding away.

Fine. Remember you know nothing. To give noticing ghosts
back going past glass here again sideways a second (split)
into you. Remember. Angle-glancing, maybe-catching, that
irregular verb *must-do*. Nothing. And that nothing changes.
Remember that. To slip your shadow past the lake. Rememb-
ering that to slip your shadow past the lake. There. *Kak!*
goes a gull, *I quite agree! Quite quite quite quite qui ...*
Gold, Golf, Golgotha, Golly, Gondola, Gong, Good. Heart's
Gold, Golf.

I hold them to the light. I hold you to your word. You do.
It is. The past comes through. I don't know. What *are* they
building? That's a foghorn. That's a hammertap. Taptap. Life
as a file of photo opportunities. Brightness falls from
the lair. Freeze. Smile. Look Casual. Sidelong. Hand to chin.
To cheek. Turn. Stop. Surprise. "All swans are white."



ARC

snow crystals
on the skylight

snow drifting
& falling

from the black treetop
in a bright dust

snow silencing the street
& exciting the kids

when December my
father in December

falling to pass through
mystery, tired,

died. sunlit.
whiteness. whiteness

under starlight
whiteness underfoot

on the street
on the bridge

to the beach
in December moonlight

bluewhite greywhite
piling on wires

/ ...

& on the tops of cars
windowledges doorsteps

falling & gathering
my father.

who could
would

& did

swim cutting a smooth arrow outwards

to the island
& back & around
again &

won

is gone

leaving a trace.
moving through

the crystalline
world of a grain

of salt sodium
chloride sodium

chloride rank upon
rank of atoms in their

pattern, poised.
my face, his quietness.

SECTION

there it is.
this is a very
strong x-ray
source. shut

the door in
the wall & go.
face east. bow.
it is over.

tiny
flecks. flicks
of consciousness.
we named them

& we named them
good. wrong.
good. follow
yr keyboard

down to a last
attaching taut
scrap of *súgán*
caught between

forward slash
& @. haven't
you learnt any
thing at all?

/ ...

donkey tracks
 duck tracks
cat tracks
 sandal tracks
swirl-tracks
 of the fissured
bark of the tamarisk
 growth-lines
gravity tracks
 sea-print in the grain
the door
 the window
wardrobe
 floor

that a circle through
two given points may
have its centre anywhere
on the right bisector
of their joining line

& that a circle touching
two given intersecting
straight lines has its
centre anywhere on either
of the lines bisecting
the angles between them

snip go scissors where

/ ...

their blades meet/parting where
you/AND

CAN

BEING

TO

TO

BEEN

HAVE

MUST

almost forget to/to breathe yr
focus broken-broken reconstitutes

the fragments (& that again) *snip*
beginning again, again, working

at the table & the table floating.

A SONG (& A DANCE)

Remember that clematis
plant Ric brought us here to
Dublin dug in by the new
place in flower now on
a wall in spring
mindful of how it goes
in quiet radiance as all
does worth the caring for –
tag to Ric's tact and
a reminder.

•

Remember that clematis
limber through lattice
in flat ice flowers
on a wall
being spring in
this climate growing
in radiance beyond all noise
as everything does
worth the caring for –
tag to Ric's hand
and a reminder. Grace.

•

/ ...

Remember that clematis
climbing in silence
twisting limbs through
tacked lattice embered
everywhere in flat
shockflowers on a wall
being spring in this.
Yes. Stays.

•

Trembling clematis
(its crowded flowers, its
teeming greens) in a light
breeze now set out that
year Ric came to visit us
by the south-facing wall
mindful of how it shows
in quiet radiance
bits of evidence too
complex to hold still and
still not see through that
end-beginning nonsense to
the no-frame of life beyond
our lives – tag to Ric's plant.

A reminder. And a dance.

...

/ ...

left out bin
clapped hands
dog slips in

closed windows
plugged the kettle
in touched the tree

nod again decide
again negotiate
the gate

the railings
& all that inhale
exhale bus goes

by cleared up
table then around
a pebble drops in

time have you noticed
ice glass kids at
school around

then about bus
down street cross
the floor the mat

slipped off shoes
dance

angle of the house
mirror doorway stair-
well hey! around &

/ ...

then/clap hands
tap the tap the sink
step architrave

my notes yr song
quotes fall from
the air all dance

take this from that
put those there
return to begin

again gain grace by
degrees only watch
yr step there &

practise here | you
are holding yr breath
here the air gives

back its light to
spare here fear
is falling into the

past all dance glint
dancing away

/ ...

where
 is
the
 tree
bent
 severe-
ly
 to
the
 left
I
 remember
(it)
 below
me
 as
I
 write
a
 not
a
 power
a
 birch
black-
 ened
by
 traffic
gives
 small
green
 leaves
this

/ ...

slice
of
bright-
ness
in
the
just-
begun
over
the
black
rail-
ings
in
the
garden?

cars.

a
dog
bark-
ing.

sirens.

a
bus
stops

all danced

all dance away

/ ...

...

Around a loose thread and

remember that clematis
plant Ric brought us here to
Dublin dug in by the new
place in flower now on
a wall in spring –

*have a cup of tea I said.
have a cup of tea. I think
I will. I did. (the circle's
an intriguing totem.) stir it.
and start again.*

*ah-ha! they said peering
down at the specimen in a
circle round the table*

*stone circles literary circles
circles under the eyes*

– twisting through its
lattice emblems everywhere
trembling teeming in a
light breeze mindful of
how it goes when it goes
to bits our lives mistakes
radiance – a limberwort –
it is – yes, this – and

/ ...

failing tags or evidence –
mind my moustache – what's
new? – little understood.
so very little understood.

remembering that clematis
plant Ric brought us here ...

i.m.: Ric Caddel



SONNET

I was telling you
I suppose. Step by
step. It was filtering
down. (Also page 23.
As it now stands.)
He ingests the curse.
It is eating him.
Mock-scream. Children's
scenarios among sirens
through alleyways. I'm
God. How do you do.
How do you do. Let's
look over the balcony.
What's that? Brightness
falls from the air.
Events in old-time
poetry as they were
fan dazzle at the
smoot £2 @ hour
(flat rate) & watching
(close your eyes)
in this place until
the cats engage in
the Drama of Life
under a digger
swallowing worries
emphatic packages of
time everything around
the while in its
place to its own
end a friend ("Site

/ ...

normal. Nothing to
report.”) where
through silence
now that I remember
the lies take shape
quite sculptural too
sugar standing in
a garden paper &
pen contacts & that
persistent fly & the
telephone & such bits
& other miscellanea
stick like

white crane spreads its wings

brush knee & twist

stick like that
certainly

grasp sparrow's tail
 single whip
play guitar
 lean forward
white crane spreads its wings
 brush knee & twist
step
 play guitar
brush knee & fix – step –
 step forward
deflect downward
 intercept &
punch
 draw back (split) & push

cross hands

cross hands folding

SONG

On the field of beginning
a ripple hits a ripple
where the cat barks
and the dog denies it
over the other side
of a wall over there

but here you sit and listen
where Do Not Grab
is tacked to your shed
and leaves move in a light
breeze in a sideways light.
Spider: beware.

The angle of repose
and the angle of agitation
fuse together at base
to build a place from
nothing and go on.
Do not grab.

It's Istin isn't it –
for a high level of confidence
& oedema, headache, flushing,
dizziness, nausea, fatigue,
palpitations, somnolence,
abdominal pain, altered

bowel habits, arthralgia,
asthemia, dyspepsia, dyspnoea,
gingival hyperplasia,
gynaecomastia, impotence,
increased urinary frequency,
mood changes, muscle cramps,

/ ...

myalgia, pruritis, rash,
visual disturbances,
erythema multiforme,
jaundice & hepatic enzyme
elevations ...
in the field of beginning

to draw a line in the snow
melting into each side
of the argument
on the side of the mountain
before arriving where
you'd not intended to go:

a bit of lyric goes a long long way
so on our way back from
that place a glow - & a sting.

Now, Devonex for children too.
You'll like the way they like it.
Local irritative papular eruptions.

Leaves – needles – cones –
after the storm the storm's work
& birds sing.

It's Istin, isn't it?

Honey, I'm home.



SONNET

ripple-zeros on a roadside pool. crescent of shell in the sand.
they have to keep naming these places.
if.

yes yes (cloud the mirror) then inside the
world's space
hang on this hat's too tight.

pinecone in dogshit on path.

to make a table
you need a gun
filled with rhetoric.

so you're another – what?
storyteller twiddling dice
in a game called Risk? two parts

confection, one part grit.

SONNET

this three-&-a-half inch long
reddish brown/black
worm
lives year-round in
Alaskan & Pacific Northwest
glaciers
the Ice Worm
& probably eats
spores
bacteria
algae
pollen
but
no one
is
absolutely sure.

/ ...

to make a table
you need power

pierced by childhood.
then move on.

•

so you're another lyricist?
my mother
 remembers
yr brother.

SONNET

when I follow the patterns of scratches on the
surface of my desk they lead me to my little
pop-up book of knowledge in which moons – in profile,
& laughing - & ringed planets in gold dye on a gauze
curtain [verb illegible] behind which my wristwatch
pips. here we are. I tell my little ones it's the
fairies calling. we speak into the watch. once upon
a time there was a duck ...

shadow of

yes crow I across street

think gone

by on

opposite rooftop

black on black

the breeze in the ivy clicks.

SONNET

then I woke up.

paring a pencil
carefully, its
frill, its dark

dust, a fly's
shadow rubbing
its forelegs
together

by the
window

green
blue
red

(thank you for that)

bees
shad
pine-trees

rats in the tube
hi! cherryjam please

yes not a word into
the fabric favours
privileges safeties
mesh & fix/not step-

/ ...

ping lightly over
the cobbles/of the
piazza through
the fog –

& clipped my nails
with pleasure &
gathered thinking
the sharp-pointed

curves cut with
pleasure thinking
together into a
little heap

(

)

momentary picture
of birds in flight
over ocean & tipped
them into the

wastepaper basket
beside me with a
small fillagree
of ticking sound –

home now to my papers
in silence in a box
godwot _____

/ ...

foam

ice

bale

castor

blunt as that –
to live
watching
never expecting to
participate

or directly anyway
dimple a surface
tilt an
event to yr will
set the date

on the page
start
startled
shifting sideways
again where

all the little
pieces fall

SONNET

asymmetry
 in the feathers
too shows as a
 thickened axis
which lies
 closer to the leading
than to the
 trailing
 edge.

as a result
 each feather
acts like a
 tiny wing
directing air more
 quickly over its upper surface
& providing
 extra
lift
 lift
to the wing
 as a whole.

kick-flip
1/2-pipe
tail-slide
 grind
 ollie
 cannonball
pop-shove-it
kick-flip-to-indy
hand-plant / ...

drop-in
caveman
bale.

•

to make a table
you need theory-in-excelsis
pierced by groundswell.

•

so you're another
novelist?
tell me yr novelty.



*if the food source
is close the dance
is a circular pattern;
if the food source*

*is distant the dancing
indicates its direction
with respect to the sun
by the angle of the*

*straight run to the
vertical*

so:

here is the news &
weather.

peeling a little bark
to get the smell of the tree feeding.

breathing for a
time (sign here)
the watermarks
among sticky

reticula a flower
quirked & green
& stencilled with
a paler green irr

egularly across
& round the edge.
I'll write with a
pen thanks did or

move among

sense-accommodating
loops (twisting)
(garbled in the mach
ine) bumped against

black over the river
on the low bridge
along the old track
past shop garage

house pub church
past a quietness
where a tree had
been past the shallow

river down below
f(ol)lowing the trail
disconsolate past it
all step to then on

the way to my/or/in
here is ()
weather

into a brick
wall

whether little bits
of money stick out
of passing cloud
paper money shaking

catching light now &
then then losing it
lost altogether or
not. lovely moments.

o lots of lovely moments.
kin. where distinctly
rich meet distinctly
poor & drop down law

whispering gold-gold
through a polar smile
or two in the middle
ground. I don't know.

what? a kitten nibbles a twig.
& when breezes
shake

the leaves a little it pretends
amazement. mica-
glint-

s. corm. here () is the
() news.
paint

the gate. fix the hinges. prepare
the wood & the
path.

paint the wall beside it.
white. let that be
that.

black.
a dot. a
dark dot
moving

hang on
a sec a
spider
quiet in

a corner
sound of a
bee at its
abc

scraping the
nectary rain
on glass to
the side of

yr face as it
sizzles is
it & back to-
wards each tiny

towards each
tiny percussion
the word for
“word” write

/ ...

down look
up excise
you play I
play tin op

ener in yr
hand of an
evening
cook talk

sketch need
ing to rel
ax dancing
needing I

suppose I
is that a
question?

is that
Goodie-Two-
Shoes at
the door.

jaggeds.
oh sure.
a cushy
number

/ ...

for the
peccable
each mouth
moving

someone
else's
greed-
focus

snapping
neatly into
each clear
prediction.

I saw the
word *variegated*
follow the
curved

line subtle
over the
pebble's
smooth

to its cut
reservoir
at the side
there

/ ...

asper. the
word *time*
the word
pity.

that's the
end of the
argument –
a bubble

of plusses
floats pops
in the half-
dark with

a spirited
chirrup of
a sparrow in
the rain.

grey
grey-black
blue-black
black

grey-black
white.

right.
you call
that sweet?

working
day & night
for a pitt
ance for

pen & ink
& such ex
otica the
rent 2

sticks click
on a winter
appletree
odd bird

tip

this is my
favourite
time I think.

task:

press yr upper

& lower

lips

/ ...

together

ever so

gently

like this.
listen: do
questions
really exist

& melt so
well into an
other & then
another with

a straight
face h'mm well
what can *I*
teach reach

down deep
blue to black
then grey
folding

to centre
pouring
burning
bursting

/ ...

dark stain
diminishing
to its small
upstreaked &

curled to
the left
where it
thickens

white grey
fringe on
dark grey
is it on
red.

•

that blunt
instrument
yr mind
(burst of

rain on the
roof overhead)
15 to 24 or 36
by 9 my good

/ ...

neighbours
the Photo-
Copies:
Wainscot
Trellis
& Fury.

grab
that balloon
marked **Meaning**
bring back

proud flecks
proof-jiggles
or whatever's
comfortable

for you right
smack bang
in the middle

of yr Rorschach
blot Still Life
with Onion &

Sex. mà comè
mai? cosa?
si si 'pito.
it's rare-ing.

/ ...

è fatto così.
'member that?
è mio! pig &
chips. mà

perchè? beam-
sun.

•

I put the daisy
wheel in its box
CENTURA ITALIC PS
tap-tap my name

on a plate on a
door.

a
bus
stops.

idles
&
moves
on

its
plane
in
section

dividing / ...

past
glass
(*bid*
her
come
forth!)

dividing

lute
strings
that
vibrate
nick
bark
&
it
bleeds

[& working
hard now]

down
along
the
street
bow
wow
brief
glisten
of
ink
as
yr
thinking

/ ...

breathing
for
a
time
here
now
dries
behind
each
next
step
one
little
conman
two
(circles)
I am interested
in yr goods
(hi!)
(yeah!)
The
Waller
Bros
Tongue
&
Groove
dividing

[delete
some here
some there]

/ ...

two
 very
happy
 anti
clock
 wise
ideas
 that
slap
 together
in
 a
can –
 come
back
 shake
hands –
 what's
that?
 slides
so
 well
past
 windows
&
 through
fingers
 elate
 expert
moving
 so

/ ...

tip

the
author's
moral
right

that
has
been
asserted

and

the author's
moral right
that has been
asserted

a splinter in
the neck of yr
next musical
machine growing
now.
paddle.
bat.

•

/ ...

yap said
the dog.
yap-yap.
Wheel of

the Fledging
Galaxy Wheel
of the Galaxy
Cluster's

Mysterious
Centre the
Wheel of
the Law

the Wheel
of Granny's
Rabbit Stew
how do you

do (how do
you do) hack

through that
& start again.
too true.
where's my

map? to
make a table
you need a
leg to

/ ...

stand on.
so you're
another
pragmatist?

pass me that
hammer.

hang up
jacket sit
down by
the window

where books
papers search
pen rent in
its envelope

in a pot I
can hear what
must be music
on tape

blasted out
but far enough
out of the way
to be a

whisper-pattern
over traffic
paddling along
a corridor in

/ ...

a dug-out (good
morning) to yr
name on a plate
on a door.

(morning) tap.
come in. so.

Boast of women
Boast of beauty
Blanching of faces
Most difficult at night
Marrow of charcoal
Third part of a wheel
Sweetest tree

& there
meet print
Christ
it's cold

each detail
rippled at
each point

(has the moral
right of the
author) this
is how the

/ ...

world turns.
this is how
a dog barks.
(been asserted?)

bow-wow. these
the Indelible
Career Paths
through a True

& Genuine Historie
of our House
of Prizes ...
this is yr future.

that yr past.

small blue

disc-shaped eggs

rounded honeycombed

& spiky

eggs

eggs green at first

later

acquiring

a

purple

band.

CODA

In Tzuba the expression of movement downward as expressed by the stationary observer on the ground is *tlel* meaning “less up” and the movement upwards *utze*, meaning “less down”. When movement stops the object is said to be either up (*atè*) or down (*ut*) but these carry the suffix *cling* to express what is thought of as a circular journey (however small) completed. So *atècling* expresses an upward journey completed as *utcling* a journey downward. So: *Utcling na tẓaba na nabnana stlo*, “The bird has landed on the ground.”

•

I don't know. Not an act of mere will. Not sheer assertion. Downward river corrasion, mirror-decisions in limelight, selected adventures, interviews, photos, things that go pop in the ego, I put my cup down (you've been around, I see) and gaze steadily towards if not quite directly into the centre of this reconditioned limbo. Game, set. Shake hands. The forms of escape are ridiculous: I will face you and fight (said the corpse). *I've* got a Loss-of-Confidence. What have *you* got? I've got/but. *Myth, ignorance, misinformation & wishful thinking* whisper the wings of the dragonfly. I've got notes, you've got the music. (I've got an interview, you've got the job.) Chorus. *Là-bas*. In what key? Who's Willy Nilly? Some background murmur (is not the chorus). What have *you* got? A postcard. Of course you want to be happy. Of course you want peace. Of course you want to strike out on

a new path: of course. The diaphanous, pliant bubble extending, contracting easily, pat, re-asserting the set limits. Tap. That knocking he said – taptap – can you hear it? The Moroccan Woodpecker. Oh yes, I see it.

•

The first raindrop in the dust sculpts a cup-shaped hole, many such bunched merge to become tiny streamlets, in turn making little channels, loosening & carrying away earth-particles, until the run-off is concentrated first into irregularities, then rills, then gullies, then streams ... Minute crustaceans hatch from eggs that may have been blowing in the drought for half a century or more & over hundreds of miles from where they were laid by their long-dead parents in the desert. Item: pressed layers. Speleology: the study of objects beyond reach – space, air ... that should do it – the study of circular objects beyond our reach ...

SONNET

did you
 get that
money I
 sent good
for
 headache
heartache
 amor vincit
omnia that
 or
sun-dazzle
 & a quick
shoal of
 bright fish
developing
 sideways
under a
 keel or
crux of
 a window-
frame in
 the snow
a magpie
 banks &
lands
 help me
love me
 save me
help me
 save me
must that

/ ...

must be
the
help-me
help-me
the need for
flattened bark-
dwelling insects
to get away from
predators on
tree trunks may
well have
provided the
selective pressure
that led to the
evolution of
wings
be the
password.
great.

then I woke up.

the history
of truth
in faded
gold-leaf
spotlit
on its
plinth
in a window
nested in
silk &
for sale

/ ...

h'mm well
what can
 I teach?
becoming
 a brittle
shell-like
 structure
back-lit by
 Literature
with its
 primitive *L*
in neon –
 give me an
education –
 scribble all
over me - &
 back
smacks
 glass
prizes
 fall from
the air –
 Flight
Heat
 Water-
proofing
 Camouflage
Display
 trailing a
ripple of
 ribbons
a pencil
 working its

/ ...

prim
 dabbles
crystals
 & grids
under a
 bright
light cone
 in the
dark or
 by the
table
 under an
olive tree
 in the shade
(Time equals
 Energy minus
Money by
 Hope)

one & one
 is one
too many
 two & two
too-too
 too many
three &
 three
now
 let me
see ...

anyway.

•

/ ...

black.

to open
(this is
an apple)
my notebooks

to close
them again
sudden
escaped
song.

typewriter
blunt on
its desk
in front

of me em

phatically
plastic steel
rubber maybe
a copper fil

ament or two
becoming ob
solete at speed
yes is not

cannot
be my Brother.

sand

song

/ ...

Dáil

Dalí

god the linguist
making the Sign
of Examination

this street
has a tree
in it

/tilt///spin/
six tips of a single
snowflake's crystals
in the wind

black silver sparkles
in the sun I
turn to (check)
it's

gone surprise &
delight open &
write it the light
down

they can master
colours sizes &
shapes they should
be read to &

/ ...

encouraged to
watch others
write let
them scribble

on paper by all
means but try to
keep them away
from walls well

what can *I* add
pining for home
pity & revelation
the tiny pliant

hills the secret
passages that fret
& spread under a
darting pencil.

•

“in cases where single yarns are made from short fibrous materials, smooth surfaces are made by laying outstanding ends of fibres on the thread and fastening the fibres together to make them strong enough to resist the strains of weaving ...”

as if the fairytale we moved
in experimenting, a walled-in
space of small moves, grace,
watching in the pond, moves,

/ ...

cutting or vibrating or light
arriving, snapping into place,
moves, multiple as seeds in
tight array. this area, this

aria, this energy so much so
hungry does it go through waver
& product & innocent of/insistent
the tune slips through, level
or not.

then I woke up.

“up in the trees
what do you
need?”

fingers & eyes &
a fine
spine.

down on the ground
what do you
see?

it goes very quickly really
curriculum
vitae.

rosehip picked to make
a tonic for the kids
in winter

/ ...

bits of sky given back
upside-down &
rippled

a wind that turns a
leaf on the
ground.

did you get that money I sent?

SONNET

From your previous life you have brought
to this life 502 catties of sesame oil
& 100 copper coins. You are straightforward
& talented. You will be able to acquire
a lot of money from many sources but will
have a minor accident.

Dig down: root haze. Look up: blue
fibre. It's wonderful to hear the leaves
on the trees again though. To get into
bed beside you as excited as this.

Years of grinding technique roll back
to be imploded through one or two pages
of pure fire. Never thought ...

The clutter of yr shed is different
from yr English language, no? Yes.
Down on that track I definitely tried
to get a glimpse of what I thought
effable: crossing the dateline into
a clock. Rip.

Child whimpering, adept, tangible flanges
of a language that held him in: you'll
tell me, I said. Who did. You did. Nipped
in the bud. They said they might. Right.

Are nipples oak galls?

Writing, deleting, writing again, patient, persistent,
dogged to the point of/(?)/is what was reflected on
that surface leering up, magnetic & stupid, up from
whose hopelessness you could eat through to the next
depth barely.

/ ...

Site normal. As to the proportions of the cell:
yr trivia is as engaging as my trivia. And sticks.
Then palps to the paralysed hymenoptera. Busy
busy busy ...

You will suffer from diarrhoea for a while
then die on a sunny day, but it will rain
on the day of yr funeral. Your coffin will
be made in a hurry because the Lonely Star
will be approaching you. Although you will
have two sons & one daughter to carry yr
coffin to the cemetery, it will not be a
splendid funeral.

Daddy, Daddy ...

Your corpse will be
Your funeral will take place
You will die between
the ages of
You will have two sons and
one daughter to
and your funeral will be a
splendid affair

Daddy, Daddy (curious shimmer of word-haze
over a wall) *can I show you magic?*

And back to ceramics. Repeating meetings
in a windowless coop where committees
web & clog, minutes pouring – pouring
without end – down a rusty old

You will go to a relative's party
catch a disease and then die

/ ...

down a rusty old chute diagonal to
& entering the side of the building
whose irregular flecks of black &
white are once thought to have read
POISON or POSITION or PERSON or
PENSION – smoothly uncoiling from the
tube – glutinous firework English
from China – or PARA- something ...
DISE? surely not –

It will/You will/It will/on the day of
your/two old monks/carry/funeral/splendid



NOTES

gesteltd thalurbs/ overolve [p11] is not a misprint.

Similarly the *playing mantis* [p17] is there to play.

The Tzuba language exists only in the author's imagination.

The Irish Language

do-fheicithe [p12], invisible.

le seinm na gcuach ar bbruach na gcoille go sámh [p16], “with the cuckoo's peaceful singing on the edge of the wood” (Séamas Dall MacCuarta, 1650?-1733)

ARC [p35] is *sorrow* mirrored (*crá*).

Súgán: [p37] straw rope.

Dáil [p96] literally “assembly”, the Irish Parliament. And contiguous to the surreal.

Sonata is the closing vol of the trilogy *Things That Happen* comprising:

- *5 Freedoms of Movement*
- *Livelihood*
- *Sonata*

and written over the period 1981-2006*

* A coda volume, *Tig* (Shearsman Books, 2006), completes the set.



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