

Water, cool, bright
sluicing through the fingers.
The intoxication of hope and
desire, of the travel by touch
fading. . . [pause]

e n
c o
u n
t e
r s



e x
e g
e s
i s

In bed
I drank
coffee and
read newspapers
handed to me
by the lift boy
(6)

Over the mantel piece
in place of the mirror
there was an escalator
leading, I know, to a room
set high above others
(7)

This, at least, I understand:
I am alone.
(8)

As sleepers #####
mark each step.....
I see
with extraordinary distinctness
a fly
running up a chair leg
(11)
sleepers are the best agents!

It's only just occurred to me
that you cannot lean. Can you?
And I read your words
well, they do not belong to you (anymore)
but they were written by your hand

let us sit and watch
the days softly falling.

(the words remain)

These are unprecedented times
all times are unprecedented times
and again. . .

you know.

And maybe it's not such a tragedy that you cannot lean
because leaning happens in space and time and perhaps
outside of that. . .

What?

And then there is the line
or a circle.



Actually, I think of each line
as an edge of a circle.
A conviction that helps with nothing
and so it goes unchallenged.

Unprecedented, he says.
Said.

no hedgerows
no radio plays
no motorways
no language
no moraines

like a drawing on water
(an ex-glacier, maybe)

Sustenance. There's another one.
I don't understand it though my body seems to.

You had quit.

There is a lot of stopping.
A lot.
I say.
Said.

The crack between worlds.
Also a circle.

not started
in progress
completed
no longer relevant⁴

or maybe a bubble
that may curl or spin
with or without motion
and with great precision
towards the event
horizon.

I am speaking
of something I don't understand
and I cannot let it go.
The more I do this, the more hopeless it is. Good. That's progress, well, for lack of a better word.

[Can you lean when you dream?
And how long for?
Our meeting place. Convergence.
Edges of two circles crossing. Sleep.]

I think so.
I stole that.

I only ever start and then...

So I take you with me
to read you in the mornings
and I take a few minutes,
a few lines in - I am saturated, overwhelmed.
Mind wanders. . .
Then I return, but to something else,
so not to return to the same place.
Invariably. . .
I do this and it used to
(still does on bad days) mix with a feeling
of narrowness.
Meanwhile you grow in numbers and volumes.
Enriching and impoverishing, both
conversations
letters
diaries
only ever one or two pages in and. . .
I can stay but I don't.
Even though I can lean.

dying is boring.⁵
Socrates didn't say that though I'm sure he thought it.

Ex-pelled-iled-plorers-alted⁶

. . . not unlike Edgar Allen Poe, wandering the streets in clothes that weren't his,
before he curled towards the event horizon. I remember that landscape which
was staged for you and I watched every stage of your dissolution.

(the words remain)

Notes:


1. "In Aristotle's view, sleep requires a 'daimonic but not divine' kind of reading. Kant refers to sleep's content as 'involuntary poetry in a healthy state².'" [AC]
2. "In his essay *On Prophecy in Sleep*, Aristotle reads sleep as part of nature and dreams as messages from the realm of the daimonic, which lies between divine and human being: Aristotle, *Parva Naturalia*."³ [AC]
3. extract from *Antropology from a Pragmatic View*, Immanuel Kant, in *Every Exit is an Entrance* notes section, *Creative Criticism an Anthology and Guide*.
4. if the machine was a cat, this would be its furball.
5. words uttered by a friend as she was dying.
6. "Cosmic voyager dimension..." [HC] in *Encounters: Conversations on Life and Writing*.

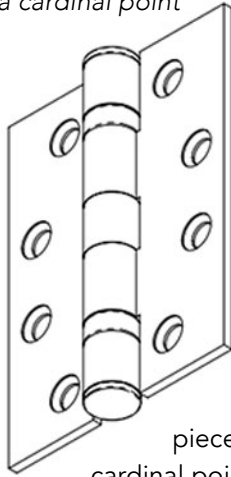
More notes:

- () Text Extracts from *The Memoirs of a Ghost* have the corresponding page number in round brackets below.
[] Author's initials after direct quotations in notes have square brackets.

Bibliography:

- A. Carson, *Every Exit is an Entrance*, in *Creative Criticism an Anthology and Guide* pp.82-102
H. Cixous, *Without End, No, State of Drawingness*, in *Creative Criticism an Anthology and Guide* pp.103-115
H. Cixous & F. Y. Jeannet, *Encounters: Conversations on Life and Writing* p.48
A. Smith, *How to be Both*
G. W. Stonier, *The Memoirs of a Ghost*

also a cardinal point  the point of a fold or a swivel



there are four of these – north, south, east and west - when one lands on a square piece of cloth that is spread out. If that cloth gets scrunched up in a pocket, however, two cardinal points may suddenly become close, even super-imposed.^A

1. EXPELLED

If expulsion had an assigned cardinal point, I think it would have to be either north or south. It is an up-and-down thing, not a side-to-side thing (there are further options but those would turn the whole idea into a revolving door - which it on some level is too). I once said I don't know where north is, so maybe this is it – “the room high above others”. In literal sense, one who is expelled is not so by choice. There is an agent – it may even be the whole of the rest of existence that does the expelling. Or...?

I know that is how it felt to me as I watched on.
Bystander.

If parachuted, then the landing place would be south, most probably. But would such a gentle gesture - a parachute - be offered to the expelled? Or would that even be kind? Maybe it's better to crash-land.

“des hélices ou des ailes?”^B

Then, brought onto the sea shore, contemplating on the practicalities of the next segment of existence.

2. EXILED

I took off into an unknown land, not by choice (not by choice). It's freezing here, even in the heat of the summer's arrival. This time last year, I...

This time last year
it was that time
that time, that year.

Not everything happens in the same orbit, I've learned.

I don't know what intersection this is but I know my compass will be of no use here.

I put it in my pocket.

I know that throwing things into the sea is not always wise.

You say the exiled need to practice patience.

I try this.

Staring at the sea, the image of a piano, silent, is behind me
and the clock, by the door as always, is chiming to its own orbit.

I am clutching at the compass in my pocket, knowing, were I to look at it now, I'd still not know where North is.

3. EXPLORERS

Edgar Allan Poe's final exploration between July and October 1849:

a trip from New York to Richmond, Virginia
were he to make the journey on foot, it would have taken him 122 hours

an intended return trip from Richmond to New York via Baltimore and Philadelphia
by boat

only, he left his luggage behind at the Swan Tavern in Richmond

nonetheless, he still went as far as Baltimore

" *Friday, Sept. 28*

Poe arrived in Baltimore, although his whereabouts and activities in Baltimore are unknown for several days. Some have speculated that Poe may have travelled to Philadelphia and then mistakenly back to Baltimore rather than New York as planned. He never kept his appointment in Philadelphia.^c

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there, on the third of October he was

found

delirious

and

the delirium continued till the end

the explorers explore till the end.

4. EXALTED

I.

In layers

or in their removal (probably)

is how exaltation happens

if it happens at all.

delirium can be a joyous place; where a recognition of a face goes beyond what an ordinary recognition of a face would have been – more ordinary than ordinary.

II.

It's not quite to do with destin/y/ation/ed; but close. Neighbours.

Suggests two points. Coming from and arriving at.

From A or any other beginning, to The/A second [B-Z or all the way back to A] point

It's like an ex-halation. Sigh. Relief? Got there. 'Aaaah'.

No, the onlookers celebrate. You don't celebrate.

I may have misunderstood entirely.

I read a little Blake. I know so little about him.

So little; but I cannot know more because I don't have room.

The little I know, fits here.

Like a sleeping child at the back of the car. Actually, not like that at all.

Another word that begins with ex- I refer to Blake as the excess/wisdom man, a habit which may change.

Blake's thoughts, so ready for misinterpretation. I read them in a context no-one would believe.

[I quit reading and searching; seading, rearching]. The context doesn't matter here.

For me, Blake (the little I know of him) has changed. And will change again, I'm sure. Time.

To measure one's understanding objectively – how?

At this juncture, and maybe at all of them, only less obviously so, it is philosophically incompatible with any other cognition, because each cognition is contingent to the mind and I only have one.

I quit Blake. Not just because I don't have room.

I don't want to know where North is; here is fine.

Now

[here]

-

"I had an immediate impression of being inside a thought-chamber, everything in this chamber had to do with thought, once inside it, one had to think, being in the chamber presupposed incessant thinking, no one could have endured it for a minute without thinking incessantly 'Is it raining? Yes!' ^D, whoever enters [here], enters into thinking about [here] and must continue to think these thoughts as long as one remains [here], if one breaks off these thoughts one is instantly crazy or dead, I think. Whoever enters [here] has to give up everything they ever thought prior to entering, one must make a clean break with all of the past thinking and start completely afresh, at once, thinking only [here] thoughts, to stay alive even for a moment in [here], it's not enough merely to keep on thinking, it must be [here] thoughts, thinking solely about everything to do with [here]. As I stood looking around [here], it was instantly clear to me that my thinking would now have to conform to [here], to think other than [here] thoughts in [here] was simply impossible, and so I decided to familiarise myself gradually with the prescribed mode of thinking in this place, to study it so as to learn to think along these lines, entering [here] unprepared and learning to adjust, to entrust and subject oneself to these mandatory lines of thought and make some progress in them is not easy."^E

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5. EMMANUEL

"I have a friend named, Emmanuel

He is a spook, a being of light that has dropped his body

Emmanuel shares a lot of great wisdom

He is like an uncle to me

I once said to him, 'Emmanuel, what should I tell people who are dying?'

Emmanuel said, 'Tell them dying is perfectly safe'. He said, 'It's like taking off a tight shoe'."^F



I used to skate as a child
when you are small, the skates are that much more heavy
the blades are like meat cleavers
you suddenly double in weight
with these things strapped to your legs

before you get to the ice, you walk on rubber floors and steps
you dig the meat cleaver blades into the floor with each step
leaving a slash
it's quite nice
you step really quietly
and violently at the same time

you reach the ice
just ice

the meat cleavers are serrated at the heel
so you can change direction
or stop if you wish to
you dig into the ice
and stop

after a while
some hours maybe
you step off the ice
back onto the rubber floor
you sit on a bench and
slowly
unstrap
each
blade

you stand up

there aren't adequate words to describe the feeling
it's a somatic experience of being

taller
lighter
and
free

it's over in a moment

but what it leaves behind is
a path to

the possibility of that moment's recall
for a lifetime

-
- A - from An Introduction in Five Acts, Act 1: an unfolding - referencing Serres and "his assertion that time is more like the crumbled handkerchief than an ironed-out one." *The Creative Critic, Writing as/about Practice* p.2-19.
- B - a French subtitled translation of "propellers or wings" in *A Matter of Life and Death*.
- C - news cutting from The Baltimore Sun, September 1849.
- D - "We might very well also write every statement in the form of a question followed by 'Yes'; for instance: 'Is it raining? Yes!' [...] [R]eading the written sentence loud and soft is indeed comparable with singing from a musical score, but meaning (thinking) the sentence that is read is not."^G
- E - adapted text from Thomas Bernhard's *Correction*, p.12.
[here] replaces *Hoeller's Garret*, a fictional place in which the novel's character, Roithamer (based on Wittgenstein), spent periods of time purely dedicated to thought - obsessively.
The possessive pronouns have been changed and names removed.
- F - extract from Ram Dass's lecture *Dying Into What Is*, 1981.
- G - extracts from Wittgenstein's *Philosophical investigations*, p.n>>.

Bibliography :

- R. Alpert (Ram Dass), *Dying Into What Is*
T. Bernhard, *Correction*
K. Hilevaara, E. Orley, *The Creative Critic, Writing as/about Practice*
M. Powell, E. Pressburger, *A Matter of Life and Death*
L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*