Amalgam
Collection of Poems and Writings 2000 – 2010

FABIAN PEAKE

Publishing the Unpublishable
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… and what emerges from the tunnel is …
.. Harris tweed, worthy, well made … a seed
pearl necklace, pinchbeck brooch …..
… a grey suit, the subject of play … what
did you dream? ….. I did but can’t think …
… that the bandsmen are playing … some of …
… fackletrap … huh, huh, swipped … quickly,
for the notes to be … it makes them … in the vast
flow country where common scoters breed …
… do you, do you love their jet black
plumage? ……… at safeway navel oranges
are cheaper … work hard to even start
at the white belt level …… I’ve seen it …
.. orange is a-movin’ on … yes, I cooked it …
and I now face a huge knobbled bill, a yellow
line this week ……… say they don’t need to …
that’s where I spend winters … this is near
the mark, the place giving the greatest
pleasure … you can touch it tomorrow …
… waiting for the warm blood of … the first
rare raptor quartering … I definitely prefer
the value products, packaged as they …
… shadows write fathoms on the feint … I’ll
dodge the dictionary which geysers
from the well … we share
our lives with mountains ………..
approximate (2)

... I've tried to write about you
and the pirates ... we are twenty
minutes late ... that's a book
I wouldn't read ... still looking
... it's the way to do it, be bold ...
all the oils, sesame, olive ... dried
pigs' ears bagged in plastic ...
see her hands holding the red book
... he makes a tank stop in its tracks
after a tango shuffle ... they go salsa
my daughters ... a great crack, stop,
look, nothing ... could've been ...
but the embankment sloped to
vast open fields ... perhaps vandals
... scuba trip to the red sea, red
with blood ... still smoking? I
thought you'd ... we went again
to the vaulted jazz room ... it
can be done by a cockroach, just
pick up a stick ... or pick up
a skewer ... draw a line in toast dust
... or scrapings ... what can we
expect to see in the desert? ... furrows
in his forehead below the silver
sunrise ... riches of thought
interrupted by the edge of the page
... I never liked him ...
approximate (3)

… standing halfway between myself and myself … slowly pumping … attempted to comprehend a problem which … a figment, certainly of my imagination … stems from reading and listening … are separate from objects … thoughts born, then nurtured … it doesn’t really matter what … case they are a tree, again, and a golden tower … is almost straight ahead of me … right of my field … is slightly obscured by atmosphere bulging in … whose bole is wide and dark … passive as it might be, colludes unwittingly … I’ve invented the scheming presence … representations of certainty … they stand for clarity … the topic or subject … between them there is open ground … but not necessarily sunny …
Changes.

She spoke about plurals
and where to use apostrophes –
between or after an s.
What if the plural is plural?
Men’s trousers; the storeys’ stories.
(What is the plural of plural?)

e etc., etc., etc., etc., etc., etc.,
e etc., etc., etc., etc., etc., etc.,
e etc., etc., etc., etc., etc., etc.,
e etc., etc., etc., etc., etc., etc.,
e etc., etc., etc., etc., etc., etc.,
e etc., etc., etc., etc., etc., etc.,
e etc., etc., etc., etc., etc., etc.,

Easytobasteonamachinewithalongstitchbuteasierbyhand.

Hiding in the small mauve cloud
an indulgent mind. Chinese
stands in for naked wood.

Bloody Julian – Alfred’s flying.
There’s only a dusting of snow. If
You cannot go further, appreciate
the sky blue sky blue sky blue sky.

mine is not an introduction
but an ending at the start; the gantries
pass by like sentries and my closed
lids flood red and green

Slowly: any rubbish? any rubbish? rustle, any rubbish?
any rubbish? any rubbish? any rubbish? rustle,
rustle, any rubbish? any rubbish?

Weekly, maybe monthly.

The milk chose to boil over
as he walked round the table
to get the whisk. The milk
rose and boiled over
as he walked round the table.
The man keeps making jackets.  
Hand stitched, the buttonholes. But BL5  
with the lever halfway up is a good  
substitute. Or: if the machine is used.

evenintheeyelessor:earthy,sandy,waterylandscapesofprehistorywecould  
seethetree-edgedbluff.theproblemisnow.nowthatalandscapesareshort.maybe  
therewere(notwas)alwaysfootprintsoftherails.it’smoreobvious  
ownthatthere’stnothingleft.agreencross,agalvanisedbox.

If  
I  
was  
to  
baste  
yarns  
about  
court  
painters  
and  
old  
cricketers  
I  
would  
need  
a  
rake  
and  
a  
lie  
detector

Nestled in the plastic shopping bag, a pink  
bar of soap presents an idea for reproduction.  
White, with dark lines of explanation, swirls  
round in a yellow cell. Cockatoo; cockatoo.

when they race, are they running away from  
or towards something? Do they arrive?

Incidentally, a heart-shaped leaf  
sperries at the corner of my eye  
were a tear oils a passing thought.

Sweet pain stabs the back of the cloud.  
......................................... !
The footballers’ shouts
ricochet off the wall
to fall
on the railway line like louts.

Get length of wood for plait.
Get paper for the drawing of a plait.
Continue with ‘R. of A. M.’ writing.
Get weedkiller.
Get something for the bay tree.
Buy a clematis or suchlike.

It’s not only
my head that
drifts across hard
fawn plastic and
newspaper nets; the
No Smoking sign
squares across too.
Tracks foxtrot, teasing
the sun, and
we, the passengers,
the windows and
the dressed-up
rebel rousers cut
the grass triangle
at its edge.

words (on the page) move into dusk

He was still; high on a ledge. A pitta bread fungus.
Thought of the fallen oak. The gales. The gales.
Diatonics. Are they less difficult to play?
No. No. More difficult.

inadequate curtaining harried a boat of daylight in the window’s
corner greek bread leans on the curb the gulls stood in a
pack on the ice the sun and I think I saw a fieldfare
before the bloody photos start yes there they go near the freshly
cut limbs

How could I tell you to do it?
How would I tell myself?

On the 18th February 2003 I drew a bush, I drew a circular flash and I drew a bowl. I
drew a landscape in ink and all supported by a grid with forty eight cells. Fancy!
It feels like travelling at speed
round the London ring main
or that atom thing in Switzerland.
Except that I have a curly tail
twisted at a naughty angle.

If you don’t know
I can tell you. You are
familiar with manipulating
cloth anyway, aren’t you?
First you cut two lengths.
Press. Lay flat.

And now we come to the scribbles that everybody is infatuated by.
It amounts to hawthorn, and the black sun, in or out of the grid. Some
landscapes must feel hurt by the scratches. Is landscape an idea
that has only existed in Martin Pthanet’s mind? I hear
a guffaw from Texas. The thought of it draws me
to the first grackles, acting a little like starlings.

From the bus
I could see
the reclining nude
and the two
arguing builders, but
I might have
laid that on
them like a
blanket on fire.
Shiny shoes, new
trainers, and I’m
turning slightly away
on my way
to the red
car. I can
say I want
to make, but
not to produce
those fancy things.

Alamo, Alamas, Alamat, Alamamus, Alamatis, Alamant.
Caravan. Fairfield Hall, 1950s.
A flute, rhythm. Go on, my son.
And they go. But then, the bar
fills and empties. This is alright.
All the blocks have been kicked
away. Even the even even even so
so so called smart telly orders
of nothingness.

You must continue to the edge
of the world. But Dexie, yes,
do you beyond the cricket? Of course
you do in the vein of ………

twok the thing was a ha ha ha rattle
seem vibrations loud shriek shriek how to
hee shree shree tank ha ha sistings wantifar
gabber hee hee ha impatter sorley calugabat
go water kapsellus atta atta atta oonitaz
sock or tell come on exams natura ha ha huh
zaker zaktloo lattera pototto sacker stragem
stratagem life expectancy sot sot a pattern
zop zop zop zopper lindapellem ordinary acorn
sat sat zorum zorumamary tillotit zorkalawy
ha hee hah haw hah eeh eh haw katafalk
mornitall frum forge phyporphry so called
pansy pansy seeeee saw sore torque talk all in
cacca cacca cacca cacca cacca korlosophyky
drink port and live longer if you want to stay
longer come earlier how to how to how to how to how to
sagger hyawan just to give sometimes diarrobovious
plus shout about never ask a lot of blokes pester
I never liked talking to girls just ignore the plus of it
eight oo form of itself genevieve a film of the
pretelly really era not really sot another

I tell you what – I’ll
see you soon,
when Pericles and Janet
are walking on the moon.

The sun will up
and sink down later,
when the fires of Raeburn
compute all their data.
I’ll tell you what –
insurance plus
is bought for shadows
with a minimum of fuss.

I’ll see you soon
in green Kentucky,
where the stallions snort
and their riders get lucky.

Four pages of panic.
and then the mixer taps.
The cleaner is Hispanic;
her husband wears the chaps.
Encountered is the limescale
but nothing yet ensues
concerning all those nuclear tales
when winter comes in twos.

A kind of imprisonment where vertical lines
stand their ground over and under the drawing.

Pretty Polly, Pretty Polly!

Windy, up there, with the monstrous canopy ready to do its job. The rain, forecast
earlier, held off and the only flaw was a bad back the next day. Days should wear a
multitude of fashions where the inside of a man’s brain can enjoy a Yorkshire
moment. Bubble, bubble, the stream is supposed to say. Green with mud tears, the
rectangle that we pray over and cheer over, throws its hands up in a Mexican wave.
Wave, the sea, or wave the greeting? Necks of muscle and fat walk away clutching no-
choice pints. Unfamiliarity throws the eyes desperate inevitabilities and the angles
and italics fight for the six nations. Sit down, Leicester!

Is Bradley around? If you set up a time and then ……
we can meet next week. One theory is that
if we relocate all the archive – all that sort of stuff.

Strings of brambles.
Well, yeah. Let me
think about it. A rather
new white football
was lodged in the following
summer’s blackberries.
Number two option. Can ladybirds that large walk up walls? Seven spot on the pebbledash. If I hadn’t turned my head ………… 75.

If you don’t pay for this, you don’t pay for that.

we’ll not put our heads above the parapet we’ll make nests with down and dropped sticks. why have they cut the birch but left the gorse? it’s enveloped in plastic but the dart fords are downsouth!

The day shuts the door. They go to war with the poor. A twelve-bore double barrelled rifle Wouldn’t stand a chance anymore. An eyeful of this, an eyeful of that. Rhyme occurs after, not before. You say your say with nothing more And source the numbers one to four. Then nuns chastise, but they break the law.

A coat piece. Oh, yes, I saw a grey wagtail look at itself in the window. Not coloured in. On the other side it was scribbled in, neatly.

The ring formerly clamped malachite. It was his father’s. Unwatched in the drawer, now blushing, it may be taken back to green.

Art is the experience, not the object. An object is the go-between. The jacket is the emotion. If you just say stone ……………… Simple, as I said, ‘a black circle growing another’.

If, as a mother, I conceive you in advance, and then you say, I’m ready to take my chance, I will enter the hard-floored room with fiery intent And brush your life in black – it’ll pay the rent.
A queue of eyes walk towards
the camera on the dusty road. Telegraph
poles stand at the edge. The men raise
their hands above their heads.

Bites a dolphin’s snout head on.
What can be done with grey generators?
What can be done with cooling towers?
They’ve cut back the reeds from the inlet.
I got so far with the pocket.

She said she would like to talk to you, but you were gone.
She searched the streets for blood, yet no stain appeared.
She said she needed your body to bring to life her claim
that your odour was missing from home – your footprint lost.

Sing, sing, your rhapsody’s long overdue,
for the tanks are coming to take care of you.

And now you follow the coffin, Monsieur Coffin,
a mourner amongst mourners. Inside, his hat
would not fit on his ghost-skin head. His spirit
would not be heard through four layers – tin,
mahogany, lead, more mahogany. And there were
the willow thieves when his feet had been placed
facing east. The crowd; and the women. The storyteller
had returned from America by then. Has so little
been done to protect the manuscript? Debatable.

it will be always  it will always be  it will be, always, always  always, it will be
will it be always?  it will always  it will always it will be  be always it will be  it
will always  and always  it is going to be  to be going always  to always be going
be going  be going always  always be going  to be going, going to always, always,
always  be, be going  will it be?  will it?  always, always  there will never be a
time  never  never will there be a time, a time  always and never  there will always
be a  never a never  it will never be  never will it be here  there and here it  hear it
it will always  and never  be always it will never be here  or there  never will
there be  always  here and there  there always and here going  never will there be
it will always be  the same  there the same  here and the same  going there
coming always  and always the same  the same here  the same there  coming and
going  never and always
disturbance (in the oaks)

can’t see what it’s the sound
(of falling) acorns
jaws of the dog heavy (breathing/snorting) wrecked
branch branch
pounding runners on the boards say bollocks
and as if (shouts behind trees)
and the voices of actually quite good
OR old enough noches the tap is where the lamp is not
he likes that place in the sentence auk (auxiliary)
surprising then, that the baby fox fox baby was a kitten and the mother our dog
nevertheless, inside the drum, the steps of heat stood dormant

swarm wasp on ivy recumbent
wasp swarm on recumbent ivy
ivy recumbent on wasp storm fur pavement the walks
pale blue a touch smoky

sloping pocket (containing) sudden autumn
fell today wrinkled skin uttered disease autumn (again) walked the gap
between summer and doubleyou
lay on a bed of autumn (the)
height of himself the beautiful building prospect buried in
cement not the concrete palace of drama where look-alikes try their luck
on façade (ugly) 9 ugly 0 RAINTEARS open space ahead
expects a tunnelling animal shouting woman loops the sloping meadow
we fill the dog’s journey with concrete (SHOUT) good god, it’s feathers
almost a wing time of being on the bench he would’ve been
enveloped in your mood on the bench on the bench the pen trails off

being in a tense sitting on the bench in the pluperfect driving in the
imperfect (breathing in the present) sky, then
different days d. in tense, mood,
m. in loveliness t. in quasi-moderation

autumn settled on London like an albatross on its young

solid surfaces (do you agree?) the dog trots through a tunnel of its own making
what, spelt like this? (and he showed him the arabic)
arrive, unnoticed, noticed or swirl down like a twister they end and

are self-contained I guessed seven the shoe on the acorn must make a
difference change the (world) they only employ their sting once
atoms (some) don’t tell the truth and only when the next idea down
lights up do they ….. was that seven food?
what was that seven?

his fingernail dislodged the number cobalt elbow
Fixed.

My brain freeze-frames the barn
remembered from previous drawings.
Cameras are history. History
photographs the past. We photograph
history. We will discover
who murdered whom. We will see
how rivers were diverted, how
trousers split or water drowned
the polluted delta where innocent men
with swimming, dark brown eyeballs,
were hanged from the greedy oil rigs.
We take leading words at random.
We take our personal possessions with us.
I close my eyes to set the shot.

gibbon

four horses pull north, east, south, west
in the cold light of the new year
arms and legs akimbo the gibbon strains
I see now it’s just a junction of branches
tangles hold your space intact. did you know?
from edge to dribbled edge. it sent me back
the long cage, the concrete floor. arms,
long arms swung in loops, yes, and arcs
between tower blocks dawn is stabbing its back
it’s unaware I’m looking. can’t succeed
seven yellow windows the only exception
the towers sail east, and they sail west
it’s on the rack, long limbs stretched to breaking
everything is grey: trees, sky, blocks, gibbon, grass
we all use tangles, it’s a fad.
we say them with different tongues
he pulls the buildings together, they tug him apart
macabre, the struggle is always there in winter
the flats are its torturer, its torturer
wrists, ankles tethered, it rails at the ropes of reason
I believe in dragons

I will (and the lime seed falls on my coat) believe in dragons There’s no question and never was. What are those holes in its belly? Other side could be a backbone. They submit. The sword of the saint is raised.

What I cannot see, is true. Only what I touch is real. Open the door: let in the ghost of Byzantium. Life will be like this if I say so. Little mountains at his feet. He says they are big. I’ll raise one in my hand. Robes stand golden red at the cave entrance. Twenty languages on the island of contention.

Nuthatch. Wind in the lime. Slay, slay the dragon. More and more he writes backwards in recognition of medieval personages with names swallowed in haste. And always he searches for bins in which to chuck a witch or a rhyme. Her name goes first, glued to a facet a painted portrait ( ) and tacit. Drawings. Which will it be? A few years ago, little mountains found their way into the picture. We believe in His hand. His hand in the corner, directing the sword. Black fan doubled. Shine the beams of torches in the room of spider webs partly obscuring the silly showing methods. Warming in the sun, the birds fit neatly into top corners above a red arch. Green and yellow pass on wheels. By accident we move faster or quicker. Writing on the edges of icons to be seen.


Little monsters turn up the volume.

A hundred penises. A hundred vaginas. A million fingers – grimy fingernails. Describe monster – quilted skin follicles at each hair, pus oozing surface covered in eyes seeping blood nostrils putrid smell twenty five orifices sprouting hair caked with excrement embedded in leathered hide hundreds of radio buttons, speakers, digital dials with music screaming out. So many hands – uncountable food pushed into a hundred mouths small versions of the monster/dragon bring food todos las dias. Radios clogged with muck. I believe. I do not believe. The dragon changes colour como a chameleon. Banshee howling. Why do I believe in monsters that I don’t believe in? It’s not difficult. They’re true because they are not true because they are true. Rain droplets covered its green tarmac hide. Its arms were top quality Irish linen. Dust lay on its cuerpo.
And once, in Scotland, issuing forth/out into the rented landscape, we found, in the aged cage, a siskin. The monster was invisible, although there. It was the air. horned, nails protruding from palms, it lumbers through fields, cities and bathrooms, a thousand orifices pumping, seeping, weeping, bleeding, oozing, leaking. the soldier saint is clad in armour; grey brush strokes, highlights caught for a breath in the sun’s stare waves, blue as themselves, boil in the red corner David throws the stone blue chain mail shield drawn confused by perspective a sideways glance from the king fixes history in the red background of then its volume filling the stone to the clerestory windows I want it to be 12th century siglo the dragon is the water it is the air and the sea and the night, in tiny circles presses through near her ankles swords, swords in every eye-story red pig I can write the white birds and pen the sky, blue as impossible I believe in dragons; never forget sword drawn, shield drawn, before the hand’s knowledge keep returning, keep returning; return, return low sound persistently sounding a sound sound pages hiding the monster read then, and you will understand moreover, the jambs have 12 apostles crouching under an umbrella of stone his hands extended to grasp white branches mending your emotions emptiness encases someone in a rubicund cloud of matter raised knobs of indefinite threat spikes, nodules, pus encrusted aplomb, golden chalices topped up with excrement rotten love savage gentleness rotting understanding dragon secrets blue strawberries waiting at the bus stop

All that can be seen of the lines is faint, directions (manifesting) .... Apostle they breathe when you turn your head and you know they are there whip you round to catch them out you’ll never see them I believe in dragons I believe in minotaurs I don’t believe in ghosts Ghosts are the trees of the dead, swinging in a mild zephyr and alive in a sense I am in charge of the truth of my truth that which I know to be false is immeasurably true. I have seen it when he spoke last night on the goggle box, I was not of his nationality. He spoke dragon language his tongue undulated with a tongue heated by the fire of knowledge he was not true ‘but they are true’ a friend retorted in defiance I know them not to be, but I believe slowly we pace through an English wood, a lake of bluebells lapping at our ankles like a cliché We sort out the veracity (just write it and shut your gob) of what we don’t know it should be a story, spilling over the glass lip of time raise the pitcher high enough to dispel the dribble factor they are true; you are real Deep smelling exhalations bulge behind my back, birthing fear and temerity it can only be said in ways I know I believe in dragons I believe in the lion and the dog peering through my window at night the curtains were closed and my father rushed roaring at the empty window that flash of brilliance expelled for all time the animals of my nightmare they roar, they bark, in silence but close the window; they will still be there

17
The words swim in shoals in the deep, shoving ocean, their meanings wet with disbelief.  Disoriented but I know their meanings I know one word, one word at a time, to be true as untruth I believe in rats and dragons I believe in guitars, porcelain and mercy even the objects of ignorance, ignorant for me ignorant of me try, like hades, to close the doors I will push them open violently I will see the dragon and the man I hate I am the dragon Laid out on the table – the ideas rebellion – ideas to believe in and to refute they are all in the realms of belief I pick the third body, rotting, green, maggot ridden (this is) a story of intuition but it will not provide solace Do I dispel the nightmare or dwell on it with envy and passion or love? I touch that soft thought on your arm dunlopillo of comfort cushions my body in and outside the air of myself Influence of the object outside itself the dragon is in the space between my skin and the beginning of the blur they are invisible before depiction by artists ecclesiastics pay them to paint them as subjects they believe in dragons my tongue is lashed to the stanchion, held by the force of fire he that breathes fire, he that is famous on the panels and canvases of Europe I believe in St. George there is no sound from his lips he is alone, silent, arm raised against the green evil confidence in tranquil, taciturn emptiness you are false and I believe your tongue you are true and I shun your presence my eyes turn in your direction I see you I believe my eyes turn away you are still true as pressing fingertips they are solid his sword frozen in the violent air target thrashing Green target not an iguana, komodo, but an idea iguanas are not true the truth is false if I say so there is no apple

To truncate your …. I shouldn’t think you’d see it anyway in the shot and ironing it out

All that can be seen of the lines
Is faint directions (manifesting) …….. apostle

And of course, claro, there are (hay) possibly, utensils and wrestlers. Let’s not forget the wrestlers (three falls or a knockout to decide the winner) Jacky Pallo, Mick McManus, Giant Haystacks; but not like in the brackets – him.

wrestlers in utensils utensils in wrestlers
utensils and wrestlers wrestlers and utensils
utensils or utensils wrestlers or wrestlers

a utensil in the ring I believe in dragons the wings on their crusty backs and the fronts of their crusty wings I believe in all dragons, any you can throw at me when watching, shouting, baying, an audience ….

you look unhealthy Mr. Oak; your lungs are outside your body. Your body is inside your lungs and heart and all those things unmentioned
I will not say the key point. The point is in my head. I know what I am thinking. You
don’t. I want to convey my line without telling you. You know, by me not telling you. I
will not tell you. You will know.

Physical description of dragons: green, winged, snorting steam and fire from their nostrils. they roar, they howl, they rage.

deep russets and tongue tied yellows swarmed over the wall like pirates

he is held by only three nails in that holy picture

Does that mean that I don’t believe in things that I know to be true?

I don’t believe in trees and the vomiting of fresh green sprouts in the primvera. It is not true

I don’t believe in clouds, black with vivid edges lit by the sun from behind.

Rhombic triacontahedron I don’t believe in the …. The shadow of the lamppost fell down the flank of the lorry at Trafalgar Square where a ….

I believe in wyverns, two legged and tired from the chase

I believe in the gods both died a smashing film

I don’t believe in tarmac boiling in the vat, melting in the sun I don’t believe in blood oranges squirting juice in a beetle’s eye I don’t believe in floorboards They are under our soles and stop us falling to the next level I don’t believe in the maroon blanket covering the dog and my raised knees

Crackles sound in the sombre bedroom of today’s date fecha it is the pills I believe in the three daughters and their counterparts in real life He stared at the water’s surface out in the countryside, kneeling like the dead man at the hotel mini bar
A Chameleon in the Valley.

black sun rises up one end    medieval grille    mausoleum
smooth wood blocks    my father drew the hand that painted the
coming of day    and the lady sits reading    a snake was under the
written stone    and in the dark place the lines undulate    voices
against voice    looks out from curls of ink    the soul breathes in the
voice of a believer    the point was touched    I make bags with
holes    you’re offset    the soul is behind the box    the woods
people look behind the box    sort of toy crowns for giants    these
flags don’t flap in the wind    Narcissus looks at Korea    could be a
wind sock    basin    drone    not a Scottish air but a thing about a
mistaken heartache    while you look at blue and yellow snow voices
return    roll round in a hamster’s wheel    an unfinished what?
ffour vvoice bboxes    rolled up voices    the camera goes round and I
see I am a man    we saw them in Scotland on their leck    frayed
hairstyles without a clutch of turquoise eggs    dragonfly’s wings cut
twice

... ardour .... ardour .... ... ardour ...
.. ardour .... ardour ...... ardour ..
ardour ..... ardent .... ardour ....... ardour
... ardent .... ardour ...... ardour ..... 
.. ardour .... ardour .... ardour ....
.... ardour ...... ardour ........ ardour ...
.. ardour ... ardour .... ardour ...
ardour .... ardent ..... ardour ....ardour m
... ardent ..... ardour ...... ardour ......

John washed his body from head to coccyx when he awoke on the first day of his sojourn in Gibraltar. It was demanded that he be odourless for the task he was to perform. His orders were plain – he should search the shoreline for shells bearing a text in miniature handwriting on their inner surfaces. The script would be indecipherable to John; it was necessary only that he should find the shells. When seven prime examples had been gathered, he should return to the base with them, wrapped carefully in seaweed. His commander would reward him with a kiss. c

{Just take the word ‘yellow’ and add water}
risotto
bread
salad
washing up liquid
washing powder
Guardian
oranges
onions
lavatory cleaner
tuna
blackmail

The Old Masters had only the very poisonous a
orpiment, yellow sulphide of arsenic, and realgar, arsenic
orange (arsenic disulphide), to work with. It was
very coarsely ground and applied with tempera. In
oil painting it was used pure without admixtures
between layers of varnish. In Pompeii it has
frequently been discovered in ochres, but it has
also been traced in present-day cadmiums.

A few popes.

St. Linus: 67 – 76
St. Hyginus: 136 – 140
St. Soter: 166 – 175
St. Eutychian: 275 – 283
St. Hilarius: 461 – 468
St. Hormisdas: 514 – 523
Boniface II: 530 – 532

There was a time when we boys
ran round the field for ‘chocolate’.
Quick runners had none; they
always laughed at the lack.

Would the great traveller, St. X.,
have swung the stick at the end
of the race if he’d been there?

A few kings.

Egbert: 827 – 830
Ethelwulf: 839 – 857
Ethelbald: 857 – 860
Ethelbert: 860 – 866
Ethelred: 866 – 871
Alfred the Great: 871 – 899
Edward the Elder: 899 - 925

Are you asking me to sprinkle lime
in his coffin; pinch his left leg; shave
his ever-fruitful beard?

His blood still flowed three months
later, but before that he’d rolled up
his sleeves and cured the plague.
Such stories are gospel in Goa.
The moorland exhaled a fresh mauve breath as the summer dawn rose. On the horizon, a figure became visible, striding purposefully in my direction. Although several hundred yards off, I guessed it to be a man. The chill mist, which clung here and there to the bracken, occasionally enveloped him. As he advanced, he swiped restlessly at the vegetation with his stick, and I wondered whether I would know him when our paths crossed.

Momentarily, I became distracted by a loose lace on one of my walking boots and stooped to tie it up. When I resumed an upright position the walker had evaporated, as though swallowed whole by some vaporous hell-hound.

Why had Frank Boscombe’s name muscled into my consciousness? He’d been a friend from my days on the island with whom I’d lost contact. But I knew him to be dead. A cold ripple ran up my legs as I …

The very shadows assumed the colours of their mothers.

Describing the nutritional requirements for the weekend fishing trip when he returned, Michel surprised everybody, even his ageing mother, by divulging the extraordinary patterns of thought expounded by the rest of the group when questions were put to them challenging their outlook on piscatorial death.
He was known as an awkward man, *Contrary to popular opinion,*
The Painter; even his daughter told us so. *the farmer rose from his bed*
(You are not needed; don’t expect smiles). *at five o’clock in the morning.*
While the world celebrates D-Day *He was a man of routine and could not rest*
he languishes where someone has placed *until he had counted every last one*
him, behind the sink’s knobbled tap. *of his decorated porcelain eggs.*

There, he dreams himself in Cadmium red; in bed *His was the only comprehensive set*
as usual, smoking as usual, naked bulb burning. If *of Calitrant de Mercy’s stupendous*
piled boots were part of his dream and the plate *inventions.* *The farmer kept*
of biscuits a snack for now, nobody would know. *the de Mercy collection secreted*
All that can be said is that they are there, and *in the depths of his cellar.* *Each egg was*
his midnight story re-told at the corner of time. *elaborately documented in a*

She sailed this side
of the ancient stone wall,
tacking back and forth
in her fibreglass dinghy.

There were no thoughts
for the walled-up country

of her own ignorance.
Over that ivy-festooned barrier

scurrilous mumblings failed
to reach her muffled ears – ‘She
doesn’t know of red romans,
those hairy, ten legged creatures’.

The bursting rooms of velvet
obliquely held their tongues.

It was on one such occasion that Bernard Turnstope began his consideration of
Ignorance. A shift in his outlook had brought him to the realisation that it was an
unusually variable and absorbing subject. He surmised, “All people are incapable of
knowing everything and ignorance is only the deficit of knowledge”.

e. A vast tract of cerebral countryside was opened for Bernard as he began to
compare himself to Leonardo da Vinci, Sappho, the stocktaker at Tesco’s and the
oldest man in the world, Dmitri Sholakovsky. “All their knowledges are different but
their ignorance is the same! In that respect, I must be Albert Einstein’s equal”.

Real Moon.

The moon, laid back against the superstore
thought nothing about the wrappings that men impose
on all the moments and weathers of its path, nor
whether it felt itself as itself, or chose
to be oblivious. For oblivious
was what it was, gazing at the neon
night which threatened her night. Lascivious
poets’ eyes eyed the leaning half-circle, a peon.
She felt; did she feel? She knelt; did she kneel? And she knew,
did she know, that capabilities were stuck
on her by those masters of bluff - with superglue?
Mysterious meanings could fill a dumper truck
and the moon will never know the wars she causes
when men dream their filtered dreams without pause.
one everyday morning and some minutes

above the white a red mesh
prowls it will never pounce

he has said yclept three times now
he’s quite, no, awfully good perch

perch on frailty
perch on warmth
perch on your fear

pelf he says too aumbry could be similar
stuck up there on the stone
sacristy wall

inside there will be an object of such offensive beauty
that that that that that

now listen to this tongue
spiders on the strings there was a one on the peeling paint
hopping actually hopping
I stared it sprung

Moggerhanger lies a golden circle on a red line

almost horizontal I’d say it’s near Bedford

spiders forcing music
it is it is it is gratifying
to be able to look at hands
worrying the keys
without within eye strain

and here’s one from bee
I can hear the pink shirt approaching

sreening
wheels
timing
the
clock

the spirit
the spirit
remember!
phrases for use in paintings:

the weeping songs and the chalk lined hole deeper down, and longer gone
a tonal conflict with July spotted out of the corner, grey creased skin
interlocutor in a sense hiding round the corner from red
tears away from its monochrome twin of layered glass I melt
sky switches off the sun harries the back side of vapour
a field forbidden on my map wouldn’t have seen real Sumatran fish, until
and dodge the wind’s deep, organ voice ago it foundered on a sandbank
by sundown, the big room had swallowed the dead
comedians and the cardboard streets cut out a hurricane, leave it incomplete
but an ending at the start swirls round in a yellow cell
baste yarns about court nowthatlandscapesareshort
sperries at the corner of my eye sweet pain stabs the back of the cloud
he was still; high on a ledge and now we come to the scribbles
and the dressed up rebel-rousers cut the grass triangle that on them like a
day shuts the door and source the numbers one to four an eyeful
brush your life in black hard-floored room with fiery intent
as a mother, I conceive you in advance to bring to life her claim
and there were the willow thieves his feet had been placed facing East
what can be done with grey generators? got so far with the pocket
slow-burning temperatures; blue, grey who loves you, whinchat?
tear up now the pop star geometry your upturned palm cradling tailor’s pins
wrote a postcard to the duffle coat it travels like a turquoise bullet
words recline, showing me their backs as a pencil pushed by a cat
Notes

I’m walking through pages; across paper, stopping and starting. They halt or allow my progress, the commas, colons, capitals, fullstops. Turn round. I am the dash.

_I am a noun. I have lost myself in the storage cage._
_Truly, you are an adjective._

There will never be an owl as there was in 1978. Twice maybe; maybe twice, they have given London the slip.

_He ran out of rust for his story. Now, if the squares change colour it should not matter. Look at the wall; take it in. Spread your gaze left, right and down. Blink at the appropriate moment._

And he cursed the electricity, but allowed it a rectangle through which to peer, like a seaside stall. Be the Mona Lisa; be the Fat Lady. Ha, ha!

_A lung is a tennis court. Match it._
_So what is your skin? Eh, eh?_

They came from Laredo – the lines on the land. If land can be folded, why not drawings? Creased, the drawings talk to themselves. His fingers fold the morning.

_Run your thumb along the crease of a balmy afternoon._

What time of day is it when the segmented shape floats pale as a photograph? And what time is blue? At 3.37 p.m. I touch neon.

_Words are the building. You sniff the armpits of the box you’re given. A new box of dreams. You will not hear them._

Along of a mystery can see the lodge. We fold the truth.

_Flakes peel incessantly from the bark,_
_It could be in Hyde or Victoria Park._

Krac wondered about the meaning of ‘thumb bucket’ or ‘coppersedge’.

_Sixteen words: the ninth in the sentence contains power,_
_the fourth only sugar, showing clearly that if ……_

Jarzy refuses to listen to the circle but shudders at the sight of angled facets.

_When he shoots, the bullet will miss unless you stand in the way._

2.48. Afternoon. Terse comments aggregate in mountains where the courses of rivers change from habitual to temporary and cause the grammar of the chain.

_You say ‘el tenedor’, I say ‘the fork’. We both eat._
sidestep

last night the noise, the din,
the racket and of course, claro,
the O stored in my memory
peeps round the rectangle …..
should the sun persist in keeping us
warm, I will engage it in conversation
about ……

there’s that girl again
grey grey laugh laugh
I want to tell you this –
there are twenty four items
needed for the morning cup

of coffee and glass of fresh orange juice including the fluted breast of shining metal

what is an altar? I need you to know
about bits about the energy
black wood, gold circles, like in the book
he speaks, a soft black egg at his mouth
it could be ovals obscure, the infamous
crooner another body has pressed

skin on the inside of silk the O hung on by a string

grey dog grey
a brain in flower,
mind blooming
and then there are
the actions. side
in the tabernacle
idea, a segmented
object, polished
by a delicate hand

like, the half tomato spins at the touch of a fork …… and then you imagine
behind your hand (for nests) the mixed hedge waiting. another tabernacle
another (no monstrance), doors open he had no knowledge
brain deplete no electric pulse
the green zig-zag line is straight.
did it matter if a blade of grass bent to the right? maybe
Kidderminster is an evil place.

he knew nothing of this. he
was not here and the sun warmed
his feet five days later
a word a painted not-light
dipped into a cup como
little lines of life, blackthorn
(Perkin Warbeck) counterfeit duke. and
even keep the drawing implement busy

black metal girl faces
the sluggard. he only
stretches the humours
like the objects and cry they cry

eyes wet heads, more heads
y3qewk j943 y3qew the voice of
a table jetted, nay, coughed, tracked
from a third floor window

what do I call your shadow, when
you are a shadow yourself? you are
not you. I call you, you. I call you
all the species. you may be 89.

the large gate teeth tear at the coral,
spied on by the ‘has to be there’. I
must find (that unusual thing). I have
no myth in my waistcoat pocket. you

grew up swaddled tight in stories. a
dog looks up, skin flap pulled across
her nose. are the times peculiar?
we sit nine, quizas ocho, round the table

and … I don’t know the Greek. his books were burned and the drummer
sought un-knowledge. say and forget forget, to know
steaming
the giant clam ironing in the deep
the clothes of the sea

this is where the lining lies undisturbed, soon
to be active and paw pads upwards, echoing
the radio’s mention of leather mache. torn
from itself it knows what leaves to grow.
song thrush
song thrush

all I can say is that I want
(to make them)
(your cat has the meissen sign)

all I can say
all I can say is that I
(to make them)

he stands on the bobble
(a page, you know, of stylized shadows)
stands on the bobble. he stands

he stood, to change tense
I want to make them. I
(he no longer grasps the palette)

thrips is singular
(the definition)

he swallows a library
smoke. he swallows
(hirundine)
is that I want to make
(dropped, by chance, the digit fell akimbo)
to make them. to
make them. to make
(other traffic)

eye’ve cleared the table; not a scrap
(left)
eye’ve cleared the formica table
the blue formica
(it’s always been there)

eye’ve cleared the table;
not a scrap left; a scrap
(not a scrap)
not (they shiver ….)
(they shiver. not a scrap)
to make them

to make them
(distance)
to make …..
(others, putting their oars in)

but I’m waiting for a red nape
for a red nape. red. nape.
(head bobbed on the mesh)

there’s one back from the dead

seen it in the swamps
seen it. seen it in the swamps.

there’s one
(back from the dead)

there’s the square type

the square type, square type
square type, the square type
(just look, that’s all, at the pocket)
Statements.

Music lies over the book.

Don Davis Dodge. Dodge in red.
Stop, will you, at the red hand.

Up Reagan, parallel with Oak.

A slab of forcaccio. Eat with the grackles.
Laughing in the kitchen as we wait.

White patch on its nape the scoter surfs.

I will hold you with my yellow hand
feel your scorched body. You come out
of the woods where we walked.

We saw fins and its red shoulders on Route One.

Nine o'clock lies buried under the growl of engines.

A little jug faces the wall.

It's like forcing a water melon into a thimble.

You let the air in; you let in the noise.

She's been awake all night, knee hurting like crazy.

The wide pavement laughs at itself. Is that my name?

And inside the big band the clock's golden chime.

Little chocolate rabbits, Ralph's perfume. T shirts
wait for us in Macy's.

A lot have line beards.

… was only taking stock of …

This mud is bordered by hawthorn,
a wood in the making.

An accordion, filled with rain
prostrate on the green blades.

And the fat pigeon balances on wire while
wedges of sky stand on their feet.
woodcock

I say it flew over London making for another
  green place a place to hide its bill
wood park forest chase

I had never seen one I had never seen a woodcock
  but I knew it when I saw it dead
the stripes running crossways on its head

the species of death a riddle
no blood on the plate glass it lay still
on concrete wing feathers lifted

by the wind (like he said about his verbs
  and sheet rubber) but
how, how, how, and when, when, when

  she guessed, it hit a pane above and
plummeted to modern earth long bill
still pointing long bill killed by invisibility

I am the man of leaves look in the black window

it got bagged up nobody wept we stared
a week later, another crashed the tower
  not flushed stopped in air

don’t come near me wild is wild

I’d never nunca never seen one
  alive I knew it I knew it from
from from from from the books
and the butcher’s

  the books: flat
  the butcher’s: solid to the feel

  and the eyes inside the saucer
and the eyes
  and the eyes glass
and the eyes

haloes like pressed flowers held their own in a thin publication
and of course the words (las palabras)

I say it flew over London
more statements

but the red, wrecked car is gone

and in its place, pink faded doors

up on the scaffolding their heads are cut out

green interrupted by white house

commas and rising birds striped tape, striped tape

park your botty here, on the red plastic seat

not far from the two empty hoardings

the stupid triangle does not work

lorry tyre puddles in long grass are alright

funny, the river being put on the wall

after the villages, not before. they're not villages really, but I think of them as such

we can't fly but we do

duck towards the park, plane over the city

and trapped skies, tall and wide, stand on the bottom line

not to speak of apostrophes, facing the dawn walls, foreseeing their downfall

minutes or so, but otherwise

tied to nevertheless, tied to trousers

the largest femur found would never know us

these people are peddling melancholy

if it's moving it's tidal

blue painted patches on the clinkers. only one there, burning green

12 M.P.H. on the lollypop

why, although we met yesterday, don't you look me in the eye?
true north and grackles.

a straight line kinked at the glacier
why the ring of frost on each port hole?

common, boat tailed.
brewer's and rusty blackbird are smaller

your name lights up in green and a wolf walks in. masquerade
I will write it on plastic, maybe metal

and the cream lies on the black night
I slide the fireplace into my jacket pocket, fresh from the arts

and crafts daisy bank opening. edgar wood's church housed
the christian scientists.

in the town the streets are filling up. one corner is empty
a lapel may occupy that moment.

, yet, tearing notes from …
… banning the sale of …

… and turning a cartwheel on the …
polished floorboards …

on along Loampit Lane
he whistled like a whinchat

drogon, thrasher, cream coloured courser
only one white bag stood against the wall

it does not matter if a statement is not understood
let it exist in its own right. privet hedge reaching

you can't sit here. the sofa is upside down
he stepped out of himself, turned, and chose weapons

we didn't know the palm trees would wave goodbye
nobody goes there. the birches crowd the rusted wagon

not a grackle, a blackbird. I'm home now
let's just say that the little damaged building

looked like a shopping bag. how did she move
from that seat and change colour? perhaps she drew on gloves

swaying concrete ramp,
freshly laid
you can try to see the lion through the mist
if you didn't know, you'd never know where to look

I am an anti-expressionist {I am an expressionist}
… had thought that, partly open, it had resembled a Handel song

was saying ( ……… ) I'm the song thrush round here
it's a procession of sounds - trains, birdsong, scraping, beeping

trees growing where they shouldn't be
flat on its back, the shadow

in the front garden it's mobbed by crows
maybe I should map the ….  

that was a young one, this is expected
I've already put grass on the wall (blue though)

and he was found dead, kneeling
she turns the page, the sun shines on black eggs

Lady M passes in the opposite direction, chugging
chased away, and what is a real meadow?

inevitably, vermiculations feature in our
oh, it'll be finished, alright

skirting round the paper river, he squeezes between commas
sight of a black redstart in an Andalucian grove

his diary makes no mention of
is somewhere between a wind and a breeze

could've been a dummy, with his yellow hair,
fishing line cast

ten of millions of miles of beam
haloes on the other side
Story on the wall.

Thomas Urquhart moved stealthily between blue buildings bordering a hastily placed river, planning his route across the town. The remaining unfilled corner was his goal. There was a haphazard quality about the town planning and nobody in authority had considered grid systems; even the river had been added after the objects. Thomas paused by a black flash made from mounting card, taking refuge from imagined dangers, in one of the angular indentations. Round each spike of the flash there were vantage points from which he could make decisions about his journey. Maps of this town had not been drawn up and Thomas had to proceed instinctively through the maze of cut-outs. He didn't know the enemy but felt that there must be one. He inhaled slowly. All was quiet.

He, that is, Thomas, had given birth to orange and black things that needed arranging; that was all. Of course, it mattered what the things were, but the density of population here augered another place of invention. What, he thought, would change if I made the two hues two blocks? He knew that to be invited to sing was to be freed from indecision. It was clear that the wall where most things happened on most days of most months of most years provided opportunities which would not be available in Redcar. Thomas, Thomas, keep it simple! Today for instance, everything got coloured grey and the sun came out accordingly. Erstwhile, red fog, yellow fog, landscape fog, speed bump fog and fogs with quincunxes in mind fogged his brain. He turned off the radio and listened. All was quiet.

And even now, Thomas Urquhart hovered in mid air with his fantasies swimming round his head. There were shunters and there were blue shunters and of course wooden shunters incapable of providing enough spittle to re-launch a pastry cook’s career after a life in brickwork. The thing on the wall, cruciforms and indecision, merited more attention than he was giving but nevertheless, when Thomas finally opened the tin and the mist turned to diamond he felt clear about who to thank. Mrs. Terse-Comment. But things have to wait until the moment is right. Is orange a colour that mourns its origins? It’s on its way to yellow; it’s on its way from red. And yet its heart is a blue parakeet invading walls of walls of walls of walls of concrete. But Thomas will never return to a pool lost in that lake in Spratburst Hill. All was quiet.
Story with colour in mind.

Sitting on a park bench by a lake in the depth of winter, two artists swapped stories about colour.

“One of the most beautiful colours I know”, said Pulbury, “is a warm grey (of sorts) mixed by means of magenta and emerald green. The amount of each colour will obviously sway the mood in one direction or another. Mixing thoroughly and sensitively is the key point. In my view, a modest amount of ash white can add a unique subtlety.

Pulbury’s friend, a ceramic marsupial of elegant proportions, glazed in Chinese turquoise, responded enthusiastically, saying, “Well, that’s extraordinary, Pul, because I have a mixture that is somewhat like that, in theory if not in practice. Here is the recipe.

“When you have had a hard day’s painting at the rock face and all your fancy colours have been on the palette – vermilion, Spanish hate blue, rocinante yellow, purple black and breathless green – well, you finish for the day without cleaning your palette and go to bed in a vivid orange boiler suit stitched down the edge in alternating blues. The next day you return to your pose at the easel and go into a dream.

Splanteck, for that was the marsupial’s name, made up his mind to adopt a fresh approach to the problem of colour. He had never liked wasting paint, and always scraped up the unusable leftovers, mixing small mounds before adding them to a mud-coloured pile that had built up over the years at one corner of his palette. Because of this habit he’d become more and more alert to the beauty of those mixings. All colour returns to mud, he surmised, but some is biased towards blue, some to rose.

“There’s mud and there’s mud”, he barked. “If, with an alert brain, you mix the disparate leftovers on your palette, fantastic hues (and cries) are born. They are all different. They are as potent in psychological and mystic qualities as the reds, cadmiums and cobalts of one’s more emotionally motivated choices. These muddy slops mumble or scream, according to the company they keep.”

Pulbury shook his long, leaf-green beard and was silent. He speculated for four and a half minutes with pink eyelids lowered. He’d not thought of colour as mud. It sounded disrespectful. “What about marriages of mud and king colour?” he said to himself. “Alizarin and black mud, coeruleum and mud; talisman primrose? Mars black and viridian combine surprisingly well. The viridian warms up the black. I know, because I read it in a book. If good mixing is all there is to it, then it follows that any combinations must be right and will tell a story.”

He and his amigo linked arms and turned grey.
Are you sure you will be?

I’ll wear my beautiful grey jacket
tailored in magenta and emerald thread.
Such lovely mud. Leftovers mix well.

A blue attitude and a red outlook.
Spanish yellow sings Gershwin.
Pink over mid tone terre verte. Then

you will get flesh. Renaissance, don’t you see?
Lemon yellow opens its eyes in the gloomy kitchen. And umber, raw as billio, surrounds

the upstairs object. On the table,
ultramarine, a mouthpiece for music.
Red, rojo, cloaks the wheels.

A smaller yellow thinks of its red neighbour. Black, prostrate.
Writing is impossible - no ink, man.

Plastic. Orange, red, yellow, stacked up
under a ginger cat. Brushing vermilion.
Brushing blue on the sky. Climb up there.

All the colours on the shelf hiss - a red mood in his hand, burning.
White on white on white on white.

A monster of green decay sighs
in a calm afternoon. Emerald,
emerald pursues his argument.

Hooker’s green tied its shoelaces
and headed for the sky. His brushes spoke in yellow whispers.
The Studio (unborn poem)

When I read, the words wear black.
Clouds send SCUD I said clouds send themselves
to my to wrap my consciousness. They wrap
my understanding in grey cloth.

Sometimes a cow brings the fog to a stop. But
cows are slow to come. I put them in my pocket
and wrap them; and wrap them again.

Keep the cow knowledge. What
are the clouds of ignorance
if the clouds are so real? Every
tenth word (the tentet played a riff) puts its head
on the rails. My understanding crushes its life.

I dry between the fingers, dry between the words.
The word, at first, is alone
another appears in the fog
barely discernible, its blush increasing.

Join the other. Join in my brain. Link, open the door.
Train of words. Concentrate. String of sausages.
Syntax. They order words differently. I understand
a sip of coffee; grit in the eye; in the cloud; in
the brain; and all I want to do is read
words formed by particles. Build
a brain from bricks. Bricks of the brain.
Cement between words. Electric gaps.
Spark jumps between words, the
full sentence. Words and gaps voice a phrase.
Tongue in the brain. Soft palate forms words. Words
grate in the air of the brain. Air gun shoots words
in order. It goes back. The meaning is wrong.
Say it again. Linkage. The sentence. Say a film,
say a book, say a train track, hold your tongue
at the signal. The bell of the bonnet sees nothing
in that century. Not so long ago the fog…. emotion…
cloaked. Links as large as a man snake hang HANG
against an iron flank. Plant redwoods between words;
gaps are the meat; gaps are the blancmange. Silence
is the iron link. The white sound is where grows an eye.
The empty room fills with aircraft. Ponds between words
are skimmed with mist. Niagara plunges into the silences.
A noisy silence; a clattering void; void of plenty.

Flames burst from space between breaths
Space. The between. Fill
with an edifice. A skyscraper.
to fill gaps with blancmange
with tea    with ball bearings
foam    belligerence    lemon curd    tortillas    water
pens    piles of newspapers    porridge    wood chippings    lapels
bellies    tomahawks    personalities    a crowd
between words    between letters

the form is stopped    before it obtains smoothness
chiselled so far; no more

what the hell are they dressed in    if they can deposit their cold selves in the
steppes?    is this about the ice ghosts?

I will have the altars like this, or maybe like that.

Get a bowl and mix the beautiful grey.    I'll wear my beautiful grey – magenta
and emerald.    The beautiful mud. All leftovers mix well. Always beautiful.

A blue attitude, a red outlook    A Spanish yellow.    Black and viridian.
Pink over dried mid-tone terre verte. Renaissance.    Skin is born, veins and all.

yellow opens its eyes in the gloomy kitchen    raw umber, surrounding
the object is upstairs    ultramarine, a mouthpiece for music
red, red cloaks the wheels    a smaller yellow nexts the van
black lies prostrate, writing is impossible.    No ink.

orange, red, yellow, stack up under the ginger cat    brushing red, brushing
azure    all the colours on the shelf hiss    red in his hand burning
he spoke raw umber    emerald, emerald inside the argument
paynes grey resents its relatives    hooker's green tied its shoelaces and headed for
the sky    raw sienna grips naples yellow in a pale black carapace

Vpi;f nr s es;;/    Could be a wall    head of wood

of all the gates of sky    I choose you to commit to paper    you will receive darkness
though you are paler than your constringing shoulders    belts of mortar, black as
mines    standing to attention your cousins are larger, wider, longer    on alert
and these have no cars dipping through, speeding between their admired gaps, as in a
northern city    when I chose you in the bright January your infinity was
trapped and dangerous

I raise your shadow to my lips    and under the bridges his silhouette passes by

an alternative (to death in all its forms) could be slow evaporation
the body melts away over the decades
but no pain would be felt
a peacock neck (no, peacock, no) jerks behind the frame
a feeding station an idea of mirrored ears has just fallen (perfect) from grey
whether convex (or convent) or the cave where money is counted and fingers are unearthed

You can hear by the sound of the wood when it will give birth.

And the question of the ears attempts to set alarms whispering in heaven.
Heaven is on the first page. His friend stopped stopped his nonsense.

rabbit run rabbit run rabbit quick across the alarm shop van
sergeant at arms (on his arms, the sign)
he lifts the bags of sand

The lost words

A black cat’s soul stepped into fire.
The remarks of garden birds
penetrate yellow London stock
(I will keep you away; this is my place).
To the back, no, side wall
at right angles, the hands, the rain,
the cars, the dots rib into the cold space.
Solidified snot makes pretence at dripping.

Flat as paper the tabernacle
Where the golden memory
From which the golden memory is absent.

Now, anyway, it’s only cardboard.
Holy cardboard, sometimes placed
on a sloping table top, built to
imitate one in a Cubist painting.

A generator is the difference between ‘a’ and ‘the’.
It’s flat as a pancake. In its blackened bulk, an
unimagined volume, a leaf thin cousin drifts into view.

(The word ‘a’ seems to leave some room for manoeuvre in a statement, as opposed to the word ‘the’ which freezes the sentence).

Yesterday, I pulled an attitude of carelessness into this brick and concrete ideas factory. It’s forced on me when building bridges from air, mud, cotton wool.

The shadow on the white door may be a clue. Two scientists worked out the mental version. Perhaps the sticks should be equal lengths. My thinking needs are of similar divisions.
Wood chippings ricochet off the paper and disappear into an idea. Someone else might use a wand. There is nowhere to put this head of ink now, except pinned to a map of Spain. It faces away from the plains where the great bustard is reputed to hold on by a thread.

On the wall, a row of pipes sparked off by those fashioned by hogshair and positioned in a white bearded mind.

I’ve got his. A new pipe. No sign of use, of mouth residue.

(Can it be that starting with a title for a poem can make one think more clearly and sustain ideas? The cursed cutting off of thoughts is arrested for a while.)

Close the back door. Steps down. Open the blue garage-type door. Enter an obligation. Walk into necessity. Follow hunger. Eat ideas.

Cardboard glues the correct angle. 20 degrees of mixed certainties. A black cam.

Aristotle’s ‘moments’ – what are they? Am I thinking that there is something called that when there isn’t? The idea is mentioned in ‘The Museum of Innocence’ by Orhan Pamuk (page 397)

Write ideas about ‘moments’in connection to ‘The Studio’. The wooden head – what is it thinking about? The writing rabbit; broken wooden hair.

Moments of wood. 3.48 p.m. as I stare at carved cheeks.

You are black smoke. Jetting water spurts (in your direction).

My way/journey/development encircles the earth/world. There is no goal. No stop.

Aristotle;

You, bearded elder, query/suggest your animals have imaginations. Or not.
The obvious thing is that I pick your wooden hair for comment. 
It was what I’d talked about before coming in here.

But I’d forgotten I’d moved your disembodied head 
and now I can see only the spikes. One broken.

If I start another way, I’ll lock on to creases in a white, plastic bag. No logo. 
Though when its tongue refuses my prompt, I’ll hurl it from Victoria Falls.

Gloves, garden gloves, mud skin may present a …. 
No, but no.

And the cam; and the cam; and the…. 
Should be more forceful, more black, there on the wall.

Through closed-eyed ears (big as mutton) 
he listens to sheets, or should I say veils 
of sound, bedding down or wafting past one another – 
the plane ignores the café’s generator. All Purpose.

I am in a clearing. 
If the surface slopes, things fall off. 
It’s only meant to be Cezanne’s table. The 
other one accommodates heads 
of scored lines. Black dab.

You must walk, my son, and refuse 
to look left or right. 
I am in the body among swallowed things. 
Dustpan and brush. A screw. COARSE. Yet 
I can breathe. The water vole drops 
into the snow white egret’s belly. Does he 
look about or close down shop?

Here I am the water vole. Dabber; UHU. 
Jaunty, the green man radio.

There’s quilted skin stapled to hardwood deep down in the lines. 
There are wooden thoughts inside that wooden head. What? 
There’s a lime wood pipe not here yet, still to be made.

Something must be done. And all night long they drink. 
It’s how alert you are. How sharp your powers of separation are.

Worms dug up today look fat and healthy, but sad, oh sad was the one 
on the black background, skin bubbling like haemorrhoids. Bleach.

This stomach is not full.
can I set up (artificially) conditions
for rising dough words as loaves?
beauty comes/arrives without asking

I’ll enter this body again; this time more determined
peeling paint closes behind me

where you sit matters it could be here what you say
will be determined by position it could be here
my horizon is higher but I cannot see the facets only
cardboard not gold leaf as I planned

determined stay with the plan you go in there – the brick gut
you stay in the thought tunnel inside the body thinking
time changes the geography of intuition

the ideas come already expanded
no room for movement the idea
is the redoubt a block of refusal
the cast iron, riveted carcase of a shunning
tanker where is the pea? where the pea
for the pod? the pod is completion
I need the pea the bean and the means
for growth the means
for rapid cell division

A first try with the (what?) lime maybe,
from the scouts’ camp. When shocking
other boys by sitting in a mud puddle …
This one, the prototype head, is not what it seems
but kitch to its pink sock roots.

The object is born easily, but there’s no house for it.
As yet unmade, a dolls house loiters in his brain
waiting to give a bed to the object. The easy object.
The object that swims in shoals – north sea or Indian Ocean.
It’s always easy.

The difficulty is in the sea, the desert, the high Andes
squeezing their skeletons down a continent. And of course,
an opinion. Opinion about the object. Hearing
twice on one side of a wooden head. And don’t you dare
to explain. Words like ‘bird’ a maelstrom of easy pickings.
Perhaps there are no opinions. There’s nothing to say. The faceted memory, the tabernacle, the accordion (unplayable), clamps, cams, brush – all like intransigent agents of frustration. Don’t tell me, poet!

The pipes are him. Of course, Cézanne played a part in it, but just as she pointed to the links (Isambard’s were 18” high) to that clown picture and the oversize jacket, so his miles of frayed boy-memories don his father’s tweeds.

Arm sleeves drag on the gravel.

And what of the head, full of qués, cuals and blueish spinach dead in the snow of the Caucasus? Wooden thoughts pass through with difficulty. Constipated. Oh for a filou pastry of thought leaves! Through splits (headache?) invisibility probes with five dots blushing.

These altars curve at their edges. An idea of curving to confuse the onlooker who bites his tongue. A hyena cannot be a carnation. Where would be its warehouse, where its roadmap?

And, but, what, although, tearing, could be made. Do you want to make a cross? And where would that place you on your scale of belief? The chart is visual.

He planned an encyclopaedia No words came forward First, he entered the commas, the colons and full stops – A nine hundred page edifice beautiful in punctuation. Semi-colons kept distant from dashes, hyphens from inverted commas. Each page a life of punctuation with no story. Yet no story. And so, in that year, with his art.

We are all ciphers through which they pass. All the men, all the women trample, leaving footprints

Where the light is dull for photography, constellations litter the breeze block bricks

Lines of a guessed dimension zoom from left to right, right to left.
And the wooden head listens,
growing dowels for hair and wedges for nothing,
splitting the skin of limewood.

I draw on your face in blue
and leaning, a calculation tells
yellow lies while a pigeon’s footsteps
patter on the roof.

The rain threatens a promise
of warmer blood. His mouth is open

There’s a rope which connects. One
bowl of bile, one voice, one neck, one
multi-coloured grey sun with Vincent marks.
The rain wets all hatred and the tastes
of soft under belly shadows.

No smoke curls from the smoking pipes.
The mouths are elsewhere. The mouths
were never there; only in raiments.

Are the voices in the wet? Will
the words become damp from spring rain?
Her voice was just as moist as the profligate bindweed.

Try as he would, he could find no thread.
He had only the objects of childhood,
the this, the that.

Between the memories there is open landscape.
There is no umbrella yet, but when the crucifix
fell, the smoking pipes also fell from the wall.

There’s a possibility of the little mountain
showing him the way.

There is no wind in here; no rain,
except the leakings either side
of a wasp’s nest. No moaning sun.

I move the cam from table to floor.
The river meanders down the wall from the equator, touching, whispering on his wooden haircut.

A measured line – pencil – paces left to right right to left left to right left to left to right right. It’s its right.

If you follow, its path dips under the cross; the feared, now innocuous cross. The cross with the unliked edges, corners.

Out of the corner of the devil’s eye a white cam leans on a Wednesday afternoon, ghost legs crossed.

He’d planned, the man, to deal with the corners. Rounded and irritating.

Small saw cuts of different depths would provide blue lines of satisfaction in a Spanish prairie.

Every morning his brain lies on the wide bed craving milk and honey. So he opens a book; he opens his head; he opens his heart and his lungs and peels away his skin.

His skin, laughing and aching, speaking and breathing, wraps his bones preventing escape.

All the islands remain, since the last pipe was lit. That angel, known in the purple forest but not now in the tarmac field, never used the pipe received last year.

He will paint little mountains. And now it’s here, the cross, other things can undress.

Stripped naked, a crown of thorns

The shadow ran away from the crow skidding across tarmac and grass.

He clambers on the morning and on my pink neck biting
in the studio when alluding to things consider those things from the punto de vista of the senses Aristotle asks why there are only five senses which senses are most dominant for any given object sense-objects as they are called subjectivity in the frame subjectivity in regard to perception the soul fertile tension the thinking about ‘the things that exist’ perception understanding they are not the same the little mountain is nowhere how can I know how it touches the holy air under its feet? he, in this case, is not there does he see, the little mountain? forty years to find a sound in the cold and it may not be it could say, the little mountain, “I feel red and black today”. He says, the bearded one, “They cannot think for themselves”. And what is thinking?

It wears shadows, blushing at angles, the little mountain And is not feeling a sense?

What does the island say, drawn so finely and representing history? The man imposes the emotions on the stone. The stone flares its nostrils And tastes the night, hears the dark sky.

The stone is me I taste the sound I look at the taste I smell the noise Eyes ears feel touch sight sound taste smell Where to? The ears ears are saddened by the news

The mouth wraps its lips round the odour in the forest

But sits to comprehend

Two chairs side by side set at a precise/random angle, one displaying its superiority, are the audience for the airport runway thing.

Numbers come from a time ago lawned spaces inappropriate yet right All day they watch passengers Lungs, feet and hearts taking off, landing Reading matter Tolstoy goes to London in a bag Hamlet climbs the sky in a felt pocket

Reds, greens, nacines are grey in here
I stand at the door when I perceive the white metal (radiator)
I retreat in cynicism walk again, gingerly/robustly stand there again
and look and understand the nature of opening doors
the thing moves the door opens the thinking radiator. It’s still.
Contemplating. It knows nothing in its metal clothes

If it knew, if it could say. But it does say. It speaks steel words.

Changes in mental perception no, he changes when confronted by knowledge
of the senses

No, when a particular sense speaks to him. Vision speaks to me. Hearing allows a
blackcap into my head

Alteration to my knowledge by a sensual experience

I am the object which sees, tastes etc.

The seeing object
The hearing object a thermos flask
The tasting object
The feeling object a dog
The smelling object

The sense object - the perception
The thing to be perceived reciprocation The thing being looked at
senses being looked at (or not)

tethered to ….

A body stands inert and naked
Its name is Molean
Later today it will be Blatt
In potential. In possibility
He will change hourly.

In darkness, the red girl will disappear
The golden sheep will fail to excite its progenitors
The thought is frightening, that the soul
Is here in the light for seconds

I am a cubist painting.

We, the boys, stopped with our mother
Where the man painted the cigarettes
On the wall
Things which have touch also have desire.  Aristotle

I am central, spinning while still.
A lighthouse – the weather comes to me and I blow it back.
You are what I look at.

If my fancy changes the object
You are my then subject

Are you the devil,
or just cardboard?

I want to be with you
There’s a need for you to be wider.

Meanwhile, the moustachioed one hovers,
Sedentary as a brick.

Do you like being drawn on, tattooed?
Spring cobalts, backed by the bar code for winter.

Piel de becerro – calf skin

Don’t be too near  don’t be so far

Her hair had grown too long
Or the wood was excessively wide
Cut back – reduce the plenitude
Talking too much

Concord  the object of desire  the devil
Drawings of the back of the devil

drawing of chair
chair to make, as though cubist

if I make it thicker, the oval,
it may not stand up to scrutiny  (or sentimentality if read wrongly)

for now, it leans like a mirror
on the cubist chair

on the wall the devils waltz, shadows
intact, cams looking on
if I make you gold, it’ll be  
because this month I can afford it  

you seem to be sucking me into  
your swirling current; black and yellow  

the runway sign has come out well  
29 and A1 and the grey cam the grey  

so, the shouting voices come round again,  
another year of the red striped cones  

blade shadows drawn on  

She could smell the words on the page  
(and on his mouth)  
‘There it is, that odour’  
(the authors line up with their slants)  
His sentence smells faint,  
a conveyor belt of words, each with a separate aroma.  
Her nose detects ‘road’.  

Write about memory  
the smell of memory  
the smell of love  
the smell of that walking  

Would the trapped spaces overlap?  
The strange girder in the attic baffles the doll  

The lines lived under glass  
Glass flattened the lines, the etched visage,  
The bleeding emotions.  

Hurl off myself  
this drawing is between me and the idea  
Don’t include the nineteen year old  
He is in his coloured jumper in black and white  
black colours wrapping his frame with small squares  
Photographic paper zooms to a memory of an avoided room where once a copy of a  
Gauguin group lay not stood behind his head  

Sawdust itches his throat  
he can’t breathe in the bigger picture  

The devil is only in development on the floor. The concrete floor, laid those years ago.  

He can’t get out of his voice. The language is fixed. He senses anemones but they are  
smelt not seen. He tastes the periwinkle with eyes shut.  

All the while, the lines chattered under a sheet of invisible glass.  

He put on his false cloak and spoke in tongues.  
A demonstration for you. It’s like this.
CARPETS    BEDS    VINYL    RUGS

Over there, I’d forgotten, in the concrete corner, stood the large pear tree which dropped its crop each year on the cast iron stove.

Requirements: screws, hacksaw plus spare blades, sandpaper. Also, shopping.

The early angle of the sun
swallowed the railings. As
the eucalyptus peeped round
the window frame they reemerged
resurfaced reiterated their skin …
……………………………………

You must have flown, peregrine – one day.  
You’ve always been still and staring
out of your box, cutting quite a figure.  
You’re in the house, not the studio. Shall I
let you in to the great work?

Shedding, no, growing babies,
the pear tree looms magnificent
in the concrete corner.

I am silent while talking.  
That girl chose to say nothing.

I had not thought of the pear tree
till now. It’s in my studio

blooming and growing its young
each year in soft tissue.

The stove was removed and placed
outside – say that in Spanish.

But the pear tree can’t talk –
if it could it would say
“Couldn’t you build round me
so I could live apart from your
imaginings? I am only a ghost.”
That’s not good enough for me.

Pillowed in the soft folds of your brain.
only being there doing nothing but imagining fluorescent bag tethered
to a lamppost while a youth posts notices I’ll give you more later it will
come from hell or beneath a boulder or somewhere in the A-Z
in the interview he said it comes from the unconscious the unconscious of 1950
where does it come from? I think from the slime

camera lens 16 -35 or 17 - 40 wide angle

I claim this as an idea as a challenge to tomorrow it is alive in this place,
this studio, this ideas factory where thoughts come and go and are watered
for the potential the drawn thought fears the jaws of snails before reaching
manhood requisitioned from the brain an idea wishing to escape shackled
for use nevertheless in here

I claim yellow and the marks the idea was rooted in the concrete floor
of this studio screaming into space to find its soul, its bellowing soul

a tree of imaginings – shouting, whispering, singing a brushstroke

I want the brush laden with my red soul a rocking chair laughs quietly, low,
knowing growth of a thought. the constituent parts. they come in, the people. they react. I show
them my incomplete body. only the kidneys and the lungs, the fingers and the moles,
the breaths and toenails. hair.

greasy dust on lamps of enlightenment life from one spot, place, lugar.
we have our heritage

We have our heritage. Our’s is in the world, unquestioned.
We are bound to Mozart. We are here.
You and you and you and you and you
are there, there, there, there, there and over there
in that land of rocks and golden shawls.
It grows out of the moist earth,
pressing feet ..........

the thoughts sprout green buds
inside each bud is elaboration
imagination development

kinds of knowledge I know something (algo) most valuable
nature nature nature nature nature nature nature nature

the flight from the object;
what is between the posts;
the invisible is the beautiful.

(cut your fingernails!)

You know that blue is dust
And that cellophane holds
The button; but do you care?

It is readying itself for the shadow
The counterfeit ones. Tubs, vats, jars,
Suitcases, brains of shadows.

Finishing ........
yet silver is a golden diamond – a jet opal
in between is time and the mood of a paragraph

To be wet is not an object
To scream is not an object
To look across the room is not an object
To smile at night is not an object
To pull your hair is not an object

To meet is an object
Swooning is an object
A noisome storm is an objectively objective object objecting to objectivity
Its fingers rip up houses

The rope (another object) is thrown
Between aluminium posts
A balloon (another object) of emptiness
Will swallow the thrush’s utterances, shred
Each phrase and scatter those loving offerings.

I offer you this: hwhyohtahlozone It’s not an object; it’s fading breath

The A the a the a the the a a the a
Smart sound of Huddersfield washing in the ditch
things with a soul
things without a soul

why does not the radiator
have a soul. or the hole punch?

who says it is true?

movement and perception

the soul of a car
the mind of a machine

an automaton’s soul

the mind of the man with the pipe
a cubist painting

write about figures in paintings
abstract-type paintings

cubist head
Jackson Pollock’s ‘Male and Female’

It’s quiet in here, it’s quiet
out there. They’re talking –
“There’s a load of people out there”.

The young man with the black shirt
stands and leaves his ears on the page.

Grease coats his little finger. “In case
The people fucking turn against them!”
“Stop moanin’”.

Divisible Indivisible Moves – sweetness
Planks move the mind Split it can only be
The split itself separate Black and white

Can black be white? It can on the page not in an object
A white object is black

What is moving? Thinking?

Definition of an object and the mood surrounding it.
Talking about how ideas form themselves in the studio. One imagines all the variations on an idea before settling on a particular one or several, to develop.

I feel the future. I make the future. I sculpt the idea.

The box will be this wide; no, perhaps like this. All
decisions are nailed together beforehand. The
future is a box this long. (continue)

There may be mails on top.
There may be gloss paint.
There may be a cameo portrait.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a bad head</th>
<th>turned from object to subject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a dishonest mouth</td>
<td>under one car’s crushing tyres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>harpoon the idea, the future</td>
<td>a rolling tin is flattened in the road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lampoon</td>
<td>lampoon mercurial</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Is that red the same red as that red?

That red is more intense than that one.
The cloth is redder than the paint.

I will draw your attention to this red. This
red is the fire in one’s eyes; it burns brains.

This red is the bleeding vein of passion.
It shouts with passive emotion.

The heart of painting is flat
pinioned beneath the glass
Lungs expand and contract
A statement of breath
the state of the flat

it beats under the carpet
under the frame
with red decision
It is the flat condition
Flatness moves
Disfrazado some shunters turned from object to subject under one car’s crushing tyres a tin rolling in the road

Actually, it’s just because I’ll cut a couple of cams I regret not seeing your inwards to see your ribs

Now you have on your make-up and clothes of white I, as God, would make three of you so as to command alternatives

Emblazon your body, wooden as it is, with diamonds, mud and me The water round the thing The air round the wardrobe

A cloud is the object and the space it’s dressed in

tseb wodaem sti dekool htaeh eht

the heath looked its meadow best

A couple more shunters, sandwiched in feint and two more

cutting here and in those places will improve matters I will be able to lift the idea the awkward nature of weight has (of course) to be contended with, but if only muscle and only one muscle (albeit cheap pine) has responsibility, then it is better to cut then there are the parts that result everything has a result all actions add to the painted mountain, and its mind is changed his eye watches the changes three quarter angle focuses a cut back, lifting the idea to pour on the dead earth seepage this other ruse spilt on the concrete floor got lost got found didn’t remember conversation held in metal boxes dead ones ones to occur ones spinning behind the mesh
some locked forever in tin foil trying to break free pull it out of stone the
great one knew, tapping his broken nose shunter can they be drawn, put on
paper? they have to move but the thick paper will not contain, or rather, include
them toys, today, are not needed by junior or a signature in the corner
over the waves the doctor tells the women “look to your husbands’ backs”
there, will be the sign what kind of changes? in here the winds blow dry or
ragged on tuesday moisture fills every corner and the colours gush sticking to my
cheeks and knees on friday amalgamaglama is chef’s plot a cook-up cook,
cook, cook let’s pretend we’re secretaries no, let’s pretend we’re not time
cuts through the cat’s yowl and the hanging pink tie the books to read on a spanish
plain that with an eye in profile I live in a date box I live in a desert of
arabesques I live in my entrails and in the mahogany unread books in stacks
and two shunters a walk across slabs it was not like the quicksand on dixcart
beach where yesterday’s brain left its cells I am something like me a kind of a
copy of an idea of those tomorrows there are many great ones their achievements
now bolted from both sides when living, the bolts were still in the corner shop,
wrapped in packets of patience still shopped, still still on the still shelves
thirty shunters on one page that page is heavy anyway (we always have trouble
with that word) groanin’ under the weight of beauty you are a thing of
wondrous beauty, shunter

while the flint stands angular and upright on a layer of safety (maple) the house is
filled from ear to ear with music life is musak every and all day he walks through
a forest of yawning pianos smeared in sound liked an oiled pelican I don’t
know what those things that go round are called entelechy pellucidity I peeled
the apple on the table, sweet I peeled the apple on the table sweet he says,
my son, ‘sweet’ he gives you the damaged auk you work it out it’s your info
it, it, it, it, it, it, it, it, it it and it our lives are full everyday with its it is plural it are singular we just call them chair, hair and bracken
embroidered histories, frilly underwear, prance through the days, not as rich far east
floral bodice landscapes but as parsimonious stridings in grey sackcloth minute by
minute the singing calico bypasses the shirt shop adding significantly to the world’s
experience
they talk about colours slow
magenta there, is there d
when there are none

their's is in small flat
i or blow softly

two it's not the same ys in a word
sound as spoon tick love t h

or tone or tone

boxes gut their colour stays
they just press their fingers
the other colour, my colour, is colour y

their colour, not being there, is more mysterious
could you go and fetch my pen

if I touched colour b
they reach hearts
or plucked tone out of bridged r

not the dog food the rhythm
when pressing the valve

u (lamb) crossed out a a different emotion
listen, then cheddar crossed out bang on the dot

he, of the organ and the birdsong
do not see apostrophe o k in g

m washing up liquid t
tomatoes crossed out

it's not (lamb)
salad i with a y between
dog biscuits tectonicplates
rice

iambs all crossed out squeeze dramas
s in matter grey

o early dark in the (fish cakes)

b no, to then they note dinnerplates
numberplates misplaced
just appears have juice
or or bonnet l
to equate tongue room

they feel what they ( ............ ) because
dog they're not in this he

blow (says) mysterious
y l o
Three Dogs.

In the centre of a large, almost square room of beautiful proportions, stood a triangular table. At each edge a black and white mongrel dog sat upon its haunches, perched on a satin-covered stool, high enough to allow conversation. The table was made of walnut. The intricate whorls which are characteristic of that wood were dominant over the structural form of the table and the three dogs felt very much at ease in their places.

The walls of the room were painted a shade of pale lilac, which was warmed considerably by the evening sun which flooded through the huge framed window behind them. Outside, a garden which had evidently had much care and attention spent on it, lay still and peaceful. Nothing moved.

"We know why we are here", said one of the dogs.

"To discuss 'Finnegan's Wake'", replied the dog to the left of the first speaker.

"Let us begin", said the third.

"When I was young", began the first dog, "I picked up a copy of the book from a shelf in my parents' house. I was with a friend. We looked through the pages at random and read passages to each other. We laughed a lot and tried to speak in a similar way to the texts in the book. We didn't really understand it but felt an intuitive affinity with it. I instinctively knew that it was not a book I could read at the time, but I felt that my life would be incomplete if I died before reading it from cover to cover. As you both know, it was over thirty five years before I felt ready for the challenge. A couple of years earlier, I had read 'Ullysses' and found that I could understand how to read it once a method of reading had been adopted. This method is mechanical and involves reading the words regardless of their meaning. I could even think of other things while I read. I think there is probably a method for every reader. Mine is to read through the book, not worrying if I don't comprehend what Joyce is saying; rather, I aim at finishing the book so that I have an over all feeling at the end. I then re-read the book as many times as it takes for the poetry and meaning to emerge. If I was to concentrate on each sentence and only progress when I had fully understood the implied meaning of the abstract words, I would have no conception of the whole book, would I? This method of reading was used for 'Ullysses' and proved successful. Now I am applying the same method to 'Finnegan's Wake' which is of course a much more problemmatical undertaking. Pass me the lamb hot-pot will you?"
"Yes, that is very interesting", the second dog interjected, stifling a yawn, "I found that when I began reading the book I tried to get a picture in my mind of characters in places and certain events occurring in an order that might be sequential or disjointed, but would appear to have a shape, one could say. It was quite a shock when I realised that there appeared to be nothing whatever happening. No story, no shape; nothing but language. I found that extremely disconcerting and felt that I'd been cheated. Of course, that was something that was difficult to admit to, because I'd built James Joyce into a colossal artist in my mind, whose poetry would blast one with its power, however abstract it appeared on the page! Yes, give me some hot-pot too".

It must be said here that the three dogs had decided to read 'Finnegan's Wake' at the same time as each other and to discuss their feelings about it, with thoughts, misgivings, criticisms and any other issues that were deemed appropriate. It was their choice to have these meetings in the room described and at the triangular table, at fortnightly intervals. Only one requirement was asked. All three should read at least four pages a day so that for each meeting there would be a substantial amount of content to discuss.
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