FAIRY TALES, DREAMS AND OTHER HERESIES
How Now Mad Cow appeared at The Cultural Society 09.20.2005, Meditations, From the White Solarium Appeared in Flashpoint 16 under the Title: "Meditations in the Window of the Pale Solarium." A Centenary for the Fragment and The Scientist Dream, also appeared in Flashpoint Issue 16, Spring 2014
INNOCENCE
The Sky Gathers All Things

The sky gathers all things

Days fall like sighs
Out of already accomplished and beatified weather

I once had a family
They were dutiful to their own

We lived miles apart, and were enveloped in our cares
When my sisters played their violins
White birds poured out
Into the afternoon
And sailed through blue skies
Only to become a nocturne

I have been so empty that at times
Those birds flew through me
As if I were air
And they were its blessing
I was as tall as I was wide and all my friends laughed
They said “We see you move and it's like
Freight offloading”

I recall the deaths of some I knew
I sat down in their memory
And read to them

I would not sigh or weep
Because the thought of my crying
Might unsettle the departed

Everyday the sun undoes my desire
And every night the spaces between the stars
Bring it back again
As such, there is only this to say: I am here, as I was there
I recall only dimly the motion that brought me

So few of those around me are willing to say their names
They are afraid
They are small
And they give awards to the ones who
Make themselves the smallest

Once a man who was very wise said

“People live lies because they are afraid the truth will devour them
The more lies we live
The more the truth irritates”

Above the houses the birds are disheveled and cry out
They float on the air but it will not remember them

Neither do I remember the person I was
At the moment I began to say these words
Memory

Her face was
Blue
With eyes of tourmaline
Her lips a red ochre, disappearing into brown
Though I knew her
As if she were a black and white photograph
As if night had appropriated her
for its own hidden need

Her face was so lit as to suffuse
The air
Dying each day and burning each night
Until the spaces that aroused her
Became expansive and bright
And she was more present
Inside them
Than even her shadow knew
Once, when I was with her at the moment of midnight,

As the firs bent down to the long gray grass

I saw a picture of my death before she averted her eyes

And suddenly I knew, how it feels to rise
When in The Dark

When
In the dark
I am able to remember
I see a small white mark
At the center of the stage

A woman is walking
Across the floor
As I am sitting
Behind a curtain
In a play about the corpses
Behind benevolent smiles
And the light that
Falls daily on the ruins
Where desire must finally pay

In the background doves careen into smokestacks, pulling out of their dives at the very last moment. One of them is on fire and falls as it rises, and the western horizon is lit with its flames.
Then suddenly I can see that in reality the old hierarchies are not gone at all. That in fact they are more rigid than ever before, and that only the innocent, and those with great guile, can successfully inhabit the traces between them, or poke their noses from under their carapaces to smile.
What He Said

Against the stiffness
That was our saraband:

Ash on my tongue
The taste of copper on my tongue

In one hundred years the land will be hungry
And we will be feeding off it like the monstrosities
That animated Bosch

I love you and I want you. I will appropriate you
If you appropriate me.

As little candies wrapped in cellophane
Or a can of tuna and a loaf of rye

You are the emptiness inside all memory
And I would die far away to keep you alive

In two hundred years there will be plastic houses
plastic airplanes and plastic intestines

Such a future is without a past
Its story subsumed
In the history of darkness
Fairy Tale

The red drops on the white snow
Will find the blackness of the water
The dark blue of the waves
Will find the depth that turns them darker

I have been in love
Too many times
I’m desiccated, thin
I need a shower
Night is my best teacher now
And those earthen flames that we call flowers

**

These are the most remarkable things:
That the personal is the most impersonal in the end
That the sighs of the drowned
Live forever on the water
And that “all psychological difficulties
Are the result of an improper relationship with the dead “
Imaginal

In absolute darkness

There is a rose

Of perfect red

Only the eye

Of the heart

Can see
Sleep Song

Sleep
And you will see
Silence has
A form of mind
That kisses a radiance
You cannot understand
While you’re sleeping

So sorrow comes
To sorrow
And joy to joy alone
The winter sighs
Against the sea
And turns our sighs
To whispers

Sleep
And you will know
The effort in the tree

And the rocking horse

Inside the water

Surging blue, white and green

Where breakers shine and waver
The Life

Here is the life of women
And here is the life of men
This is the life of animals
And the life of rocks and twigs

The pigs lie down in the trough
The people lie down on the bed
The plants lie down on the earth
And stones mark the dead

(The men are divorcing
The women are sleeping
The pigs are snorting
The soil is leaching

The stars are winking
The planets whirring
The wind is sighing
The insects chirring)
And the children cry
As the dolls reply
With a red rouge
And silence
A Boat Trip

I went to visit the shining ones
The quiet ones, who have no names
And live undeclared
Inside the silence of our determined answers

It was a night so imminent
So black with silver
That the boat that crossed the water
Lit a lamp to avoid disaster

When I reached the island
That had been hidden inside the air
They came to meet me shyly
As if my arrival had brought them
An anxious pleasure

And we talked until the sun
Spilled light onto the lake
And returning I could see
From across the waves
The dead leaving for work
From their open graves
A Metamorphosis

“The earth is the imagination’s home”

He heard the ocean whisper

Saying "Desire must be transformed

Through experience

If intellect is to be finally won"

He listened a moment

And resolved that such a pronouncement

Must be celebrated,

If it is

To be understood

So he performed his own version

Of Calder’s Circus--

The wire mesh figures

Throwing knives

And turning tricks
In Plain Air

The wind tickles the kapok tree
As the dawn's red blister
Approaches with its heat

The earth turns heavily
Like a rotisserie
Of fragrant meat
In His Head

In his head
There was a bed
On it a fool
Wrestled
A homunculus
"Oh god, god, god, he said"
Noting with pleasure
He was nearly dead
But no one came
And no one went
The wrestlers
Wrestled

Even as he slept
This Morning

An earwig
Writhes in curlicue
Beside the little green pea
That has rolled onto
My pillow
A Fly

A poet
Lay on the couch
All alone in his home
And at that moment a fruit fly
Burrowed up his nose
And bored
Into his sinuses

"Oh no"
He cried out
(As green walls
Defied his erudite
Ignominy)

“This is unforgivable
A tell tale travail
Inside an aesthetic tragedy”

“One must write
Of great laughter
To mitigate
Such
Misery
One must speak
Of another
If one is ever to make up
For being divided
By their words’

And at that moment
He conceived an epic
About the gaps
Inside beauty
Migraine

To have a migraine is to ache with aspirin
To listen to a migraine is to suckle the ocean inside your head
Get up and go down to the sea in a ship
And drown there in dolor and mentholyptus
A migraine is a sign of something gone that is present
It is ten thousand troops marching in waves
A hoard of lemmings coming down to greet them
It is sinking into fever and drowning in meat
The meat of the head versus the meat in the refrigerator
God is a Mouse

The fixed stars burn above the streets
The galaxy whirls as the diners are seated
The planets go around as the carolers sing
The moon makes its orbit while the clouds appall
The earth turns blindly as the enemy bellows
The wind moves in currents while the engine stalls
And the deep plates turn at the sea floor shelf
As the sediment flows from the head to the mouth
Through all our intensity and greatest folderol
A Man

A man is embarrassed
At the foolishness of his pose
He shifts his hands, his feet
His buttocks restlessly
Yet every way he turns
He remains exposed
The emphatic red cheeks
The brass of his nostrils
The Lyricism Inherent

The lyricism inherent in
The illumination of these trees
By the moon’s dead eye
Inlaid with silver

Is the old way
The fading path
The empty carafe
The withered hand

So let us bury the old music
That implicates us
With gravity and ceremony
And not like little children
Who fight each other
Because they feel as if
They've been abandoned
Such a squabble
Makes one foolish
To anyone who can see
And turns us from
A witness
Into an apparatchik
Or the servant of a gilded
And tawdry
Sublime
To One Gone

Someday far away
The living will hear the dead when they whisper their names
A long time from now
when the sun is closer
People will ache over the troubles of strangers
Thousands of years into the future,
Women will understand men and men will understand women
An eternity from now, when the earth is less dense, love will be a source of nourishment

Outside in the fields, the crows rise and fall like anguished light
The telephone wires slouch above the road
The clouds have the odd orange glow of chemicals

I feel what I think, and think on what I feel
I do not apologize for this at all
But I think that you should apologize to me
If you don’t do it also

A little humility is at least a beginning
Song of the Dead

Pain is our science

Love is our bread

The light swells inside us

The light bursts inside us

We are burning memory

As memories are burning women and men

We paint your death’s head

But you can't see us
Poetry Is

To build effortlessly
The horse of speech
That when the speech dies
The horse will live
Rats

Little rats
In bright red pants
Ran up the stairs
And down again

“What are you reading?”
A sleepy man asked
And the rats said
"We are not reading
The Chemical Wedding
And we laugh into the dark
For all the nights
We’ve spent
Avoiding Mr Rosenkreuz"

The man looked at them
And they looked
Back at him
"Why not read it then?" he asked

“Or others
Like Dante
Blake
Or Dickinson
Eliot
David Jones
Martin Buber
Or Pound?”

But the rats were
Tearing newspapers
Into little strips
For the black and white beds
That would cushion their acts
Of rat communion

The man was puzzled
At this
And went to bed

Dreaming

Of a day

In which

Gray-blue fur balls

Assumed the shapes of women and men

Who then decreed with great conviction

That “ALL RATS MUST READ”

And soon

Quite soon

Perhaps sooner than soon

The world was neon and dire

And almost entirely covered

With learned rodents

And in the few people still alive

Inside that obsidian misery

There was dread
Of a kind no one had ever known
With great electrical configurations
In the shapes of angels
And furry scholars walking nowhere
With texts for eyes
Another Moon Poem

It has been
A long time
Since I have permitted myself
To speak of the moon
In my poems

There is so much
That's more important
That I have not allowed myself to include
The rye grin of the idiot
Who appears to praise us still
Out of its half-blind
Gouged head

There is so much sorrow in the world!
We hand it out like candy
And the children
Take it without thinking
And stuff it into their
Gaunt, cadaverous faces

So it has been a very long time

Since I have allowed myself

To speak of the moon

In my poems
The Scientist Dream

"What is love?"

I ask the beautiful scientist
And she answers
That it is only a physiological symptom
She shows me her symptoms
And I show her mine
And we play roulette
As the numbers go around
And the stars fall from the sky

When I ask her to save me
She looks away
"There are limits" she says. . .
"Procedures
Ethics"

I beg her to save me
And she refuses me again
Saying

"We cannot save you from your desire
anymore than we can save you from
your aspirations
These are the most intractable of all
The meta-diseases”

So I kiss her and tell her
That she will be my savior
That I only need
Her assurance
That she will do what she can

Then I nuzzle her
Vaguely antiseptic breasts
As she lies down beside me
With a long steel needle
And we sleep together in a dream
Of infinite revision
Once As I Walked

Once as I walked along the railroad tracks
A freight train came
Inside a rush of wind
With a sound that grew and pushed its way past
As if ten thousand horses had
Come running
Out of silence
And then somehow I could hear
Not the mechanics of
The wheels
Or my imagination of them as animals
But the train’s own music as it brushed the field

It was a music I had never heard
A sound like a torrent
Of golden bells
Communion

The red earth shines
In the ditch
Like a clean cut
Lined with jellied blood

For a moment
The highway is empty
Blackbirds drink
The vermilion mud
At the End of a Good Life, Death is Rich

The orange rooster
Scratches at the yellow corn
A dandelion seed drifts
Into the eye
Of the blue manx
Didactic Poem

In the city the sky is often obscured
Though I can still sense its blue
As it's a stain of some permanence
And it stains me too

No matter what comes each day
There's always more knowledge than pain
No matter what we go through
There's always more blue than sorrow

It's not the pale blue of institutions
Or the candy blue of the
Glib

It's the sky in the sunfish
And the murdered hero
Who remember
Well beyond our amnesias
The terrible bright horses

That wait for us in joy
A Memory

I remember waking one morning
Under a red-gold linden tree
That spread out its leaves
Against the powdery pink light

While I could not help but sigh

As I told my favorite joke
To the ashes of the stars
Laughing

I am laughing said the sun
We are chuckling said the stars
We are nodding said the trees
We are smiling said the waters

The red bird said there is silence
And the deer said there are leaves
Slime is easy said the snail
There is honey said the bee

I do not exist the woman said
Nor do I the man chimed in
My tears are useless said the woman
My tears are bullets sighed the man

I am turning said the gear
I am hissing said the wire
There is suction said the pump
I drive pistons said the fire
I go nowhere said the road
I eat countries said the map
I am silent said the truth
I am gorged said the rat
As We Lie Down

Every shadow is a harrier of days
As pie is sweet
Strawberry rhubarb

And the gray sea
Wears a dark blue hood
Or one of white
Or red
Or executioner’s gray

Nothing comes to those who wait
Except more waiting

As if a golden turtle
with watermarks on its carapace
Had wandered away
To the edge of the waves

Where every resistance to its story
Tells the story
And we know as we lie down
It's always been that way
Hope

Only a fool could say
The world is made of love
It takes an idiot
One filled with the pathos
Of bright blue eyes
To assert there is hope
In this anti-paradise

A terrible foolish
Sickness must inhabit
Such a person
A romantic
Pining away
For something gone
Irretrievable

But there is no greater hope

Than the hope of the desperate
Who Has No Friends

Who has no love
Will have no friends

Who has no friends
Will die early

Time is a culture
Of amenities

That sustains itself
Through our languishing

Where the loss of desire
Is the loss of hope

And the loss of hope
Is the beginning of nothing

Time is a culture
Of amenities

That sustains itself
Through our misery

Where we do what we will
To become what we want
Dream

Inside the great city
So well televised
I grumble as I wake
And turn to reading
For distraction
From the guns that line
The walls

My life inside the city
Is as a life inside translation

Though I remember you beautifully

Who were once my desire
As I turn to the sky
And count the pixels
And read the graffiti
Inscribed

On the monitors:
When you were young and supple
And I was young and tall

When you were lithe
And good

And I was
Stiff with sorrow

The city hummed around us
And the summer brought the fall

And I looked out
My window
At the hill
Of reds and yellows
Beyond the walls
Dream of the Oracle

The blue gel of the sky
Glistened
Like a man o’ war

Little clay-daubed figures
In white tie and tails
Spoke gibberish as they struggled
Tossing the books he loved
Into a dark green fire

Great machines augmented their speeches
As tiny pistoliers
Made of broken words
Drank toasts with his tears
Under a string of black flags
And thick lead tinsel

Sighing into the golden mask of a fool
He scrawled the symbols of his gnosis in a secret cave

The walls were red and glassy there
With empty glosses and abandoned manifestos.
With Thanks to Blake

1

Little violet
Shining up
The sky faces you
And pours you
Into its blue

2

Little rose,
So very new
The blood assumes you
And the earth is
Your wound

3

Little lamb
Against the hill
Your form is sleeping
Your body is sleeping

Turn and take the
Road that kills
That is your choice
The world is ill
How Now Mad Cow

A farmer poured cow dust
Down the throat of a cow

And inside that cow
Poured a further
Cow still,
As inside another

A meal of cows hid
In smaller cows
Milled

Into Chinese boxes
Of bovine pills
Reduced

With exactitude
And removed
From the granary

On the distant hill

We remember
As quiddity
Inside memory's
Veil

As the mild cows
Stilled

From their quivering
Bells
Are shrink-wrapped
& placed
On the grocer's
Shelf

While elsewhere
Against a green, green hill

A calf
Of white
With spots
Of brown

(A construct,

Linguistic
Moment

In a language
Laden tear)

Lies down
In the dirt

To get up again
Dear,

Mere hunger's
Syllable

Under cloud rills

Collection
Of shudders

Against reduction
Gearing
That feeds
The grind

And turns the years
The Sun

The sun is great. Let us thank it.

The sun is small. As are we all.

A little ant Went out to drink.

A bee found pollen On a stamen

And the sheep In the meadow

Ate and knelt down
A Centenary For The Fragment

1

Knowing where
We are

It’s no surprise
there are no stars

A diffuse light
Has brought us here

To this blue sward
Where animals blanche

And casual nude
Figures

Recline
In their tonnage

Their wishes set
Toward fulfillment

In a land of sighs
And pink rosettes
He remembers the dead
Who were his friends

Their little fingers
That grasped at laws

Who ate and drank
And stunk as him

Their constant moaning
Like a night of strange

Where lies
Conjoin to make amends

And dusk-blue accents
Morph the furniture

Into tangled blue apes
That blur the mirrors
One way to see it
Is that everything means

There is no other
Than the one we make

Of ruined grins
And pale imperatives

The desires we bring
To the desire they are.
There are only three sources of beauty left:
Nature, art and the human figure
We have lost antiquity in a century
Only to gain a new impermanence
There is little choice but to experiment then
Or wind our way back to classicism
As Goethe did and Eliot
But a classicism formed
From some kind of *future-sense*
In the blue collage
Of the man

Pinned in wreckage

Circe weeps magisterial
Tears

Behind her
Pink pigs
Traverse a vanishing trail

Their sighs
Floating upwards
Like white lufik

Waving
Above the darkened firs
Meditations From the White Solarium

1.

In the dream
Pouting shades
Were ferried
To their end

On blue boats decked
With languid dahlias

Staring
Through darkness
Toward the sunlit edge

Having fallen
From the forms
They inhabited . . .
2.

The white book on the sill
Could be a history
Of tenderness,
And the promises we make
When we are too full of love

A description of Tristan’s
Honeyed gaze,
The sighs of Heloise,
Ophelia’s tears

Their pale breaths rising
Against a range of beige hills,

In the blue tunnel to the sun

Above Budapest’s white shades.
In the window
There was reflected
A mountain
Of blue leaves

The depth of a landscape
Is the depth of desire

He was
A death’s head

Propped
Against an interminable choir

Untouched by absence
As by sorrow

Half-notes pouring blue
From her mouth and its parables
Inside her pain
Was a tiny fountain

Angels pared down
To a glossy blue

Water poured
From nothing
And then returned

But hers was a silence that could
Not be moved

A stillness
An emulsion
With a face like solace

In parentheses
The world
Is

A semblance

Where we float
In the air

Little dolls
Of distraction

That dine in rouge

Where the days are numerous

And beauty unmoored
The horses cadillacs

And chandeliers
Suspended

From a ceiling
Of unintended blue
Death is to thought
As winter to water

As a blue piano
To the sighs

That make an atmosphere

If there is a case for joy
It cannot be structured

It is
A habitat

An aviary

A land of csokalade
And sunlit birds
The Book

Inside those too-often circumnavigated pages

That took him from where he was
Into the whiteness that had always
Surrounded his name

There was a fog, a curtain,
Out of which, and through which,
His determined frontal lobe

Came to him as a picture of
The prison where he wandered,
Unable to gauge the circumference

Of its demesne

**

In the center of his room: a ceramic teapot.

Inside it: a great violence of water and air.

Underneath it: a volatility of iron and electricity.

Above it: a turbulence of steam and atmosphere.

And in the afterimage of that destruction:
A mirror of water infused with jasmine,
Tisane reflecting the pink of her hair.

**

And the air was the ocean
Of a causal silence
A means by way of which
Certain delicate, or perhaps
Indelicate, perfumes

Infused the space around them
Kissing, and caressing
Its tenderest tufts

A way inside a sagacity
Of apprehension
The science of which
Compels an intricate
And minute study
Of the laws of annihilation

Their history
Their means
And the practices and purposes for which
They are intended
Those Who Cannot Keep Up

Those who cannot keep up
With the speed of their own heads

Or the bubbles that pour
From their accelerating mouths
To billow their shirts,
Or puff their dresses

Those who feel
A trillion pictures burning
Their brows

Unable to think
Able only to disavow

. . .Too often speak as if they know,
Then trace an arc into the sky

That leaves the crowd
Lumbering below

Staring at their screens
Examining their phones
The Cliche that Prefaces Nearly Everything

(Because there is a science of the brain,
Only secretions exist

These thoughts for instance
Are secretions

Whispering
To an accident

A vast transience
Where chemicals can hear

Compounds can speak

And atoms can organize themselves
As the consciousness

Of their own accidental,
Infinitely complex

Irrelevance)