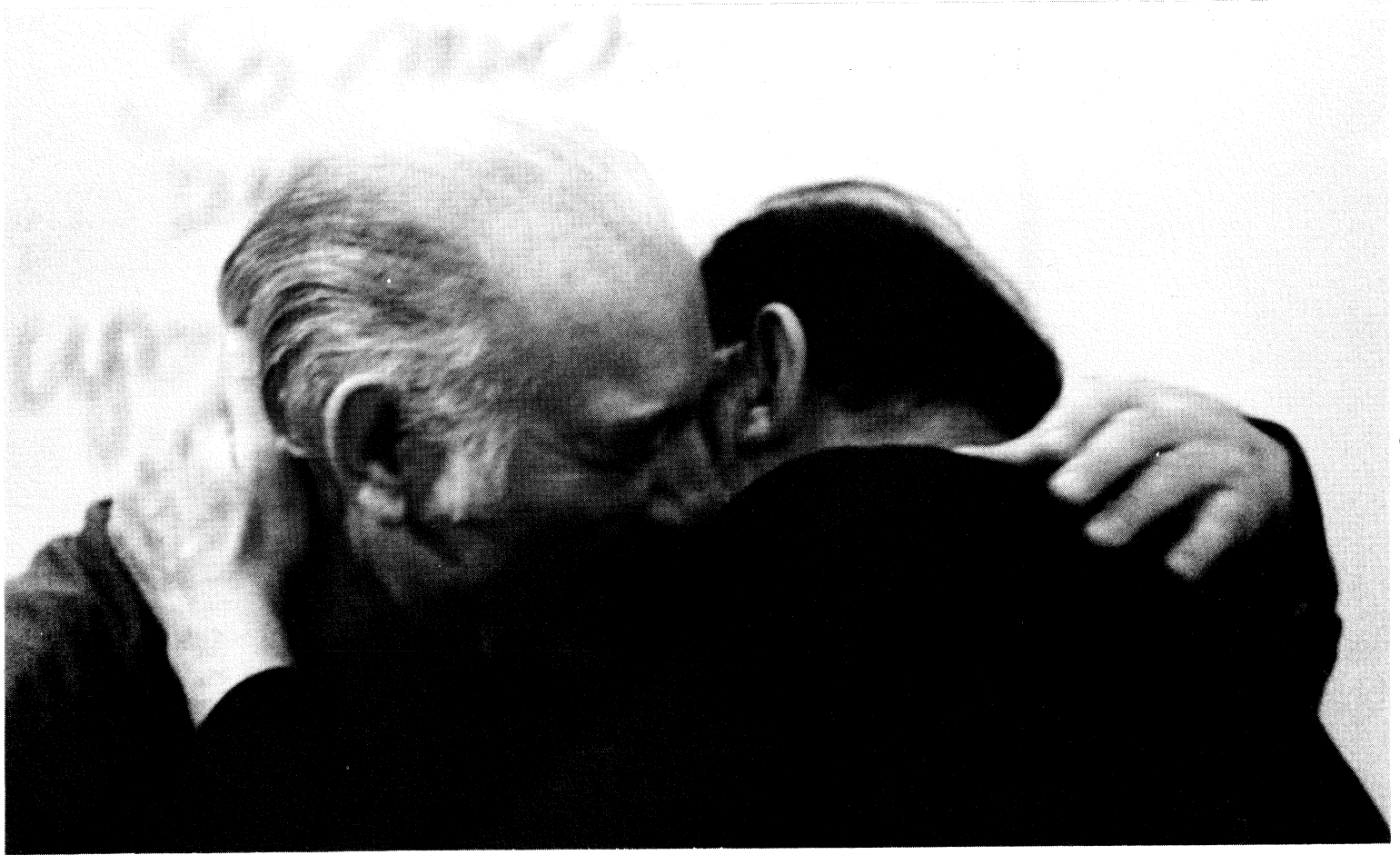


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Letter from the Editor

It's strange now, all those discussions about poetry being dead. Only the people come & go. Here in Rochester, sometimes you feel lost & far from home. Then, suddenly, you find the "Phantom" & everything makes sense again.

Perhaps, poetry, like the government, simply is, & in this way, the poets that live here are the expression of this bio-region & its connection with, say, a sister-city in the Soviet Union. What I see here is layers of adversity. Maybe the magic of living along a river that flows north, or the time-whipping lilac-technologies that make time go faster for its inhabitants is what allows poetry the authority to flourish in its stunning diversity.

The peculiar future of Rochester's modern history rises from the Golden Age of Be-bop strutting down Clarissa Street, a tight ever-changing scene of street bards long in their shadows dismayed, the maya of nuclear economics fought by brave women for a future of peace & justice, & also, the emergence of Deaf Poets thru the "inner radio" of sign language. All these visions make up the Face of this big clear Picture. They lead, as Ginsberg said in conversation with deaf poet Robert Panara, toward a more international poetry style that is "harder and harder, purer and purer" formulations that might be useful to people no matter where they reside on the planet.

Thru this layering, I visualize a more worthy compassion that activates both the thing itself & its opposite simultaneously. This is what Ted, Ted Berrigan (1934-1983) talked about in "Waterloo Sunset" -

And you are a pretty girl-boy
And I am a pretty man-woman
and we are here-there...

Genesee Country

On a trail on the East bank of a river gorge
In a park named after one of the tribes of the Iroquois Nation
Next to one of the six rivers in the world that flows north
Under a gray sky on a late summer afternoon
On a cool, humid, still, quiet day.

As the trail moves north, towards the last Great Lake
The walls of the gorge dwindle out into nothing
A faint trail from the footpath leads to the river's edge
A trail along flattened reeds, surrounded by ones too high
to see over
On mud and logs, a trail just above water
A smell of mud, dead fish, and pollution.
Where the trail ends at the river, the reeds open up,
to a view of nothing:
Muddy river under overcast sky, surrounded by reeds, and trees
I could sense the lake downstream, but the view
didn't go far in any direction
I thought of Conrad's Heart of Darkness:
"And this also has been one of the dark places of the earth."
Less than two centuries ago:
A swamp with bears, timber wolves, rattlesnakes, mountain lions,
and malaria bearing mosquitoes.
Men came and built mills next to waterfalls...
And here we are.
But if you listen closely, in certain spots by the river,
you can feel the wilderness hanging on.

I want to get my voice to sound like that, really cool, with every syllable clear, I used to like this song so much, the first time I heard it I loved it, it's got that magic feel to it, like "The Warriors", all surreal and coming through a sensimilla haze: City Drops Into the Night. Memories are so weird. Guitar, no cliches on pentatonic scale is tough, I always end up with a lot of little licks instead of a coherent solo, walking out of the house on clear Friday night, free hit of speed and a swallow of peppermint schnapps, joints on the top of Cobb's hill, lots of drugs and Brighton sucks and lots of pot and you're 15 and bored and lots of time right now. Jim Carroll and Lou Reed and The Warriors all from NYC but New York ain't shit, you ought to be able to get your magic anywhere, and not for \$4 a hit either, or because it's dark with Romeo Void and the Psychedelic Furs in an unfurnished apartment filled with Nancy's body scent as she undoes the knots holding up the bib of her plastic overalls, and if things wear out after a while, like a 1 4 5 chord progression or a suspended fourth, then you got to expect that, and there are always more things to do and more kicks and more people, you're never jaded, especially not at 17, not unless you think so, and I swear, seeing the snow just brings back memories, it's like I imagine it's 3 years ago, still at Brighton High School, yesterday felt so much like a Friday afternoon it was scary, they haven't felt like that in years, I don't know if that's good or bad, I don't know where the feelings come from or where they go and I guess that's my problem, along with not knowing what the feelings are in the first place. I have problems between this life and my one a couple years ago: playing in a punk band and Brighton High School, modular scheduling and cigarettes on the slab and cigarettes in Brian's basement and torn T-shirts, the Dead Boys' Sonic Reducer and all that nihilism and The Jam with the energy with optimism, alienation and too much drugs and buying pot in the Northeast ghetto (on Central Park), smoking pot alone in my room because once I was high I wouldn't be bored or lonely, I'd just be high and content to lie around and watch tv or read or do nothing, and then it's away from Brighton to downtown alternative magnet schools, and my 19 year old transient girlfriend who fucked me over bigtime, Lou Reed and the Velvet: "Why am I, so shy? Good times, you know they just seem, to pass me by..." and I don't know, writing replaced music, and I quit getting high and drunk and smoking cigarettes, and I don't know what I replaced them with, and this is all bullshit, it's like I've got a permanent identity crisis, I'm in a real whiskey and downers mood, just numb myself till I don't care, just like there and be, half in and half out, I wouldn't have put on the stereo if I'd thought I was going to get into all this.

On The Nightstand

Once, I openend his book
Wildflowers of North America,
the pages lay stiff and dry with a burnt
look around the edges,
as if it were old,
as if everything he touched,
had antique grandeur.

Fieldflower scents betrayed my nose
as grasshopper whirring-wings
riffled pages.
Florals, grasses, herbs and spices,
arose from their colorless print
into one
dreamy state.

And I started,
and I pondered,
pressing my face against the pages,
I was no fool,
they smelt like old, yellowed paper,
faded and removed from
enchantment.

Chasing (after Shakespeare)

Before the storm, the air is charged with autumn green,
Color departs to sky, and leaf from stem.
When my senses are removed from this earthen screen
As leaves and dead men to brown earth condemned,
Don't wonder at the fate of plant decay
Nor lose these words beyond my mortal phase,
(That breathy span, a bridge from natal day
Till wind-caught and lifted my spirit strays
From flesh and blood), nor no longer endure
With grief and sullen mood upon the planted plot;
What you cry for is no longer mured,
Is released, the same as trees to wood-rot.
So get lost! I'm leaving this stupid earth-
For worms and dirt alone, this frame has worth.

The angel
of dark
heron flight
matches
the angel
of moonlight
on the lake
and I pause.

Love can rip -
your heart is nothing

Stopping in the Woods on a Snowy eve

The neighbors must think it odd -
Stopping here
in snowy snow

to make sounds -
holy - holy
to the
air.

But the horse
knows the way
to carry the
Slain -

heroes,
slain by spiders
and design

born to perform
make it glow,
glow -
But it's gotta
glow
gotta, gotta
glow.

ONLY ONE MORE

At this point
anything
would make Ronald Lugar
seem like a cupcake
in comparison
to what we're up against.

He was the first one
to spread the icing so thin
such a thick carnivorous frosting
the islands ate the crumbs
and waited for a new day.

And now there is no collective
voice
many stay indoors
to avoid the heat
they mumble to themselves
only one more summer
only one more.

DHARMA BUTTERBALL

I sit like a Buddha
on my couch.
yeah,
sometimes
it feels like
the center
of the universe here.
But tonight I am restless;
Thinking about ways
things could be done better.
But from this view
the world looks flat.
Earth mother
a man who sits still
arouses suspicion.

From A Notebook

Boning up on "Aesthetics
of Termination, The"
at the Rundel Library,

I came upon your double
image, Komachi: a long
storm kept me indoors,

the flowers have faded
without my knowing it.
Exiting, you found

the lovers and brother
poets had moved on
with the storm,

and gleeful rivals
seeing you, saw
someone

so poor
she couldn't even
keep up

her hair. Eleven
hundred years ago
an anonymous painter

preserved your looks:
"the aged poetess
as destitute hag,

her face furrowed
with lines
of decrepitude

and poverty, forced
to beg
by the roadside,"

a ninth century
Japanese
bag lady. You!

whose verses
brought rain
in parched times.

WALT FRANKLIN

THE ORIGIN OF PATRIOTISM IN AMERICAN TREES (1918)

A long time ago, American Peach and Hickory decided to reserve their pits and shells for war. The public was informed that two-hundred pits and only seven pounds of shell could furnish carbon for a gas mask that would save the life of an American soldier. Churches, homes and schools were urged to begin the scouring of woods and gardens. Strong incentives cast a rivalry between collectors.

Tulip trees and Chestnut led the so-called "Bark for Peace", a small and futile counter-movement: even squirrels, it is said, favored use of their nut-lots for the trenches and warriors of the Forestry Regiment, the force arboreal determined to entomb the Kaiser deep in France.

American Conifers Lmt., attempting to advance its image and devaluate the patriotic move by Peach and Hickory, claimed it was first to aid the cause, but hadn't sought the recognition. A Tamarack was heard to say: "Peach and Hickory don't mention that they want their pit and hull collections dried before submitting to the local Red Cross."

EMPIRE AIR

Rising above the used car lots & colored dumps of Long Island
stubby white smokesteams drifting North above th'Egyptic
Factory roof'd monolith
into grey clouds, Conquer the world,
World's Health restored with organic orange juice & Tibetan
mule-dung-smelling Pills --
Flying to Rochester Technology --
Conquer the World Conquer the World
Conquer the World of Ego, Conquer the World of Anger
Conquer the brick World of Mortal Factories
Conquer the Dewdrop Conquer the White Clouded Sky thru which
we pass --
O ever rising Sun of Intelligence Conquer the Night of Mind
Conquer the War O Technologic Warrior
I ride above the Sun
I look down into the Sun
I am equal to the Sun, the Sun & I are on the level
I have no appendicitis, I have a Brooks Brothers tie
My clothes are Salvation Army! Conquer America! Conquer Greed!
Conquer War! Conquer Nuclear Waste Problem! Conquer the Image
in the Hands of Warmongers!
Conquer the Makers of Helicopters that kill innocent Indians
in Jungle Guatemala!
Conquer Ten Percent Genocide! Conquer Reagan & his Wars!

Conquer Kissinger's Pride! Conquer Admiral Scowcroft's
Mechanical Bomb Numbers!
Conquer yourself! Conquer your gluttony Ginsberg! Conquer
Lust for Conquest!
Conquer Conquest at last! The lone Savage Ego the Man the
Nation the Number One the Creon that wrecks the Imperial
City with Hitler Stalin Johnson Nixon Reagan Ambition
to Conquer the World! To be forever invincible! To
Control the Middle East, Central America! the
Far East! Indochina! the Jungles of Amazon!
Conquer the one who has Power to Blow up the World!
Conquer by Calm! Conquer by not getting laid, by growing
younger & older same time!
Conquer by having a hard on!
Conquer all space by giving it away!
Conquer the Universe by inhabiting it!
Conquer by Dying! By eating decently!
By washing yr ass after you shit! By meditating in empty
space mornings,
Conquer by Pronouncing the Queen's English correctly savoring
every syllable, enjoying every vowel, appreciating
each consonant!
above the clouds! above Cooperstown & Geneva! The sea of empty
mist floats over New York's earth triangle!
Conquer Karma, the chain of Cause and Effect
Conquer Cause & Effect by seeing it work in the Cold War!

By seeing it work in your heart!

Insult your girlfriend you'll feel hurt!

Insult Nicaragua you feel lousy

Insult Reagan you insult yourself

Conquer Reagan by not insulting him!

Don't insult yourself! stop insulting the Russians! stop
insulting the enemy!

It costs \$250000000000 to insult the enemy!

Conquer the 250 Billion Dollars worth of Insult

Conquer the 200 Billion Government deficit!

Conquer the Underdeveloped Nations Problems! Conquer the World
Deficit of the Banks! then go back & Conquer the Nuclear
Waste Problem!

Then go back Conquer your own heart!

DIANE HOPE

Ode To Some Freaky Men I know

I don't want you to kiss me

I don't want you to kiss me anymore

I don't want you to anymore bend

down in a freak gentle way

and place a freak gentle hello

on my lips

And then while no one else can see

slide your sneaking freaking tongue

into my mouth

I don't want you to kiss me.

I know it doesn't seem like much

But

It's nice to know that
Somewhere

There's
Who

a man
rides

a tiger.

COMA

Taking refuge in a room from worldly harm
I stood undressing thinking a change in clothing
offered salvation from what waited outside
though all I could see through the window
was you abstractly gardening moving
in & out of the frame tenderly touching
leaves & tilting the watering can aware
of the importance of plants given in to the ritual
with ease & comic side-stepping (Chaplinese)
youngest green growth these acts of absorption
that choreograph your life became less
an obsession after I turned & when something
like a minute passed looked up from the bed's edge
still straightening one red sock & found you resting
elbows on the sill knuckles propping your chin
elevating wonder-voyeur smile under unequivocally quiet
& stillness seeing eyes

9/78

The Genuine Article

for Jim Cohn's
mythical April birthday

There is a quiverful of possible Robin Hoods.
A shot in the gloaming, what this poem says,
eulogizing the commonplace, shaking snow off its
coat. It talks like one you railed against,
chocolate lillies to commemorate her girlhood,
it meanders like the mentor just lighting up,
to be fragmented as the evening progresses.

Your own work's been termed 'incandescent'.
The interviewer couldn't have been more of
a sharpie. "What do you think," he asks,
"of the Boston Bruins, MTV & Death?"
I squint to see the undeclared between aqua keys
& those oft-imagined isles with as many eyes
as a doll hospital staring back at one from
the go horizon. Imagine it then, you, white-
haired, leaning into your daft mirror, a young
man's fancy turning to thoughts, Hylas & his
nymphs never so delectable a bond, Appalachian
spring's compilation of drones so that death
learns to love us, moon the great insinuator,
an illuminated manuscript in a Chinese junk with
nowhere to go. How would you assemble a careworn
dilemma whose call note rises like an unidentified
bird above Lake Ontario, splendidly, or entertain
abrupt pronouncements courtesy the Woman in White.
You've got that rap down pat, filling in blanks
with a little sleight of hand, heritage of stars,
failing to reveal how you came to be surrounded by
panorama eggs. Just look at the talent, a brash lot
joining in on 'Younger Than Springtime', ruing to-
morrow as you would do, bereft of birthdays but for
this luxury liner holding its prom before the nuclear
eclipse. There's an echo: the paid-up rent becomes
South Sea music. It was then that I turned to poetry.

White baby grand at the arroyo bottom, firewater from
that elusive bottleblue of known sky. Bird of passage,
what I would give for a nostalgic xerox, a religious
postcard in 3-D. You who're permanently closeted in
border town, the opiates of wind & sand will provide.

4.15.84.

RON KOSTAR

Frankenstein

Last night I looked up from a stool in a bar window and saw Frankenstein. The smile of a young Indian girl who was sitting next to me was the most and only beautiful occasion in sight and I kept looking at her. "How do things get so messed up?", I wondered, but after a while, even the pain had disappeared, leaving me with only myself, the smile and the reflection of Frankenstein in the bar stool window.

Baseball

I shared that beer with my friend Rich Rein,
We sat and watched a baseball game.
A detroit pitcher named Morris pitched
a near perfect game and we sat
in the window and talked about
the future and what it may bring.
But there was a disparity between us —
almost as if after a week of working
we had come from different planets.
We didn't lie, though.
And there was a truthfulness to what
we were feeling, that gradually seeped
into our talk, that rose out of
us like a baseball.

disturbance

it is noisy around me

noisy noisy

it is not intended

for me to be able

to speak

clearly

it is so

it is so

(beautifully choreographed)

that the world

and the language

will disappear

in the same grand swirl

of destruction

snow in spain

dogs bark smelling the end of the three day storm.

ten arab grain towers mark the sea facing cliff.

everything by candle light

except car light

and the ashen surf kamikazees to earth.

"endless repetition equals destruction"--darwin's mother
at his birth.

the ceaseless howl of the black choir banging on the door.

even the lighthouse beacon can't penetrate the fog

and sparkle the delicate blue window bottles.

The Ceiling Of My Heart

Having risen slightly with the coming
or returning, and still the breeze.

Thank You's.

Water Bubblers, twelve missing.

in a hand held sky
unbuttoning one nite
to me the sweet
dreams came &
in one, you,
returning.

The Crickets Don't Care
the crickets don't care
how tired I am
of sleeping alone
and not sleeping
but standing
outside your window and whistling
to myself these tunes
stolen & blue my heart
beat I hear with my
ear to the pillow deaf
crickets these must be
and dumb,
dumb to sing when their
lovers are asleep.

Later,

still

ness floats the smoke
only thing in this room
moving but my fingers
and no you to touch
you now would be

"would, the future
come, surely we"

Lives of the Poets- 2

Two headlights split his painful darkness;
What we call wisdom he called pain.

His car on the bridge was faithful to him,
But only his musics made it back.

His gun and he went off together
To meet the turkey buzzard, life.

Her cigarette burns have not claimed her,
Bright motorcyclist of our dreams.

Pain for a daughter, pain for a sister,
Pain for pain's sake ate her bones.

Spreading the gospel of beauty stretched him
So thin the lysol light shone through.

C R E D O

ducks on the pond
april fool and
they are back
foolish ducks
the ice barely gone
they are back
wings hiding their
heads from chill
as they sleep in
the morning sun

yesterday in sun
with the snow
and deep mud under
our feet we stood
toasting the spring
shivering and
glasses in hands
no gloves or mufflers
foolish people
first of april still
winter up here
but sun coming back
strong soon and
each morning awake
earlier earlier

each morning
a little warmer

foolish people
foolish ducks
we have faith
each year in spring

Lip Service

You want to rap
you said
and let it all hang out
this thing about
the communication gap
that keeps us separate
your kind
from mine.

You want to rap
you said
you want to integrate
but you decline
to change your line
of crap
from speech
to sign

ON HIS DEAFNESS

My ears are deaf, and yet I seem to hear
Sweet Nature's music and the songs of Man,
For I have learned from Fancy's artisan
How written words can thrill the inner ear
Just as they move the heart, and so for me
They also seem to ring out loud and free.

In silent study, I have learned to tell
Each secret shade of meaning and to hear
A magic harmony, at once sincere,
That somehow notes the tinkle of a bell,
The cooing of a dove, the swish of leaves,
The raindrop's pitter-patter on the eaves,
The lover's sigh, the thrumming of guitar
And, if I choose, the rustle of a star!

SUE RHYNHART

dried grasses sage gone to see
red berries tooo
the autumn in your eyes
to touch your hand
so gracefull the butterflies
have come and gone

it's strange truly
to not wake to fog
my mind half in one
till the morning passes

on the side of this hill
it's mushroom season, chanterelles
conches, muscaria
uncomfortable i rise
and see i've been sitting on
a heart shaped mushroom
i pick it up & be it not but
an old shoe a very old shoe
& somehow i know that shoe belonged
to someone who never agin stepped off
this hill
i drop it
running yelling "Budd!! Budd!
i found this old shoe, this
raggedy old shoe shape d like a
heart." But there he i s just
climbing up the mossrock
not a bit shaken

oh

for innocent barroom floors

where i danced

until

no more

ESTES PARK -- LATE AUGUST -- 1983 (for Gail)

Silence is the weight
of wool on your shoulders, the damp
frost melting on your sleeves, a
deserted backroad under elms which
brush against each other with a
whisper
and suddenly the moon opens over
an orchard and two distant starlings,
wings almost touching,
dip into the field.
2AM or 4AM or 6AM doesn't matter
who you are, what you feel,
there's still
the long walk home, the unexpected stars.

CANTO V -- Part B

who knows what scars
caused by this despair

under the skin.
you slipped away.

something larger
rests a moment on my shoulder and

leaps like a bird from my neck.
a white flash, unfocused.

the soft touch of flesh touches
back; the light green

eyes, timid, clear.
What the body taken out of life

but out of reach,
the body too soft

for the life it brings.

CANTO XI

**no nonsense
when she's not afraid of being
simply delicious.**

TOM SWARTZ

Blake's Voices
(A Pindaric Ode for two, four,
and six voices)

for Allen Ginsberg

North (strophe)

Imagine that
you own the Earth, Urthona,
blacksmith, Los, by trade.
(antistrophe)
Poetry inspired
from iron depths
Beauty Spiritual,
the weight to lighten, Enitharmon.

West (strophe)

The mass, the body, Tharmas,
sentient shephard
of Lusty Circumference.

(antistrophe)

Painting generated
vegetable Nymph and Mother,
tolerance of water,
loins brassy dominion, Enion.

North (epode)

Wrath forged Trumpet,
Rintrah,
Humanity, Head and Ears,
Jealous Ocalyhton your Emanation,
Eden's Sun drawn occupation.

West (epode)

Pale man born Tongue,
Palamambron,
shaded, whose sign is clay,
Tolerant Elynittra your Emanation,
lie down in Earth's Generation.

East (strophe)

Music Luvah,
Emotions' weaver,
Heart Love center.
(antistrophe)
Music's woven vale
from center out,
Beauty Natural,
silver birdsong, Vala.

South (strophe)

Urizen, your Eyes in,
risen, your reason,
a contra diction.

(antistrophe)

Architechture projected,
Airy golden pleasures,
wide hungry matter,
weight and measure, Ahania.

East (epode)

Smelt of Nature, Desire,
Theotorman,
man torture, moon fire--
Free Love of Oothoon your Emanatio
Moony Beulah, your couchy station

South (epode)

Reason's pleasure,
Bromion,
Bowels stretched with air,
Condemning Leutha your Emanation,
Starry Ulro, your lot and acre.

(Composed from notes taken from 1976-1983
in Blake discourses taught by Allen Ginsberg
at the Naropa Institute, Boulder, Colorado.)

November 20, 1983

"Please stop," she whispered in broken breaths and still he looked straight into her eyes, "please."

"I must hav it," he demanded softly of her, his voice gentle, compelling. She averted her eyes from his.

"Please," he spoke again putting his hand to her chin raising her covered head taking her eyes into his again.

"I...I can't," she exclaimed tearing her eyes away breaking the intimacy.

"It's easy, trust me," he convinced her, pleaded with her.

"No, I don't want to," she spoke knowing she was lying and sure that he must know it to. She wanted to give it to him but something wouldn't allow her to trust him. Why him, only him.

"Please," he spoke again with such a gentleness, such a helplessness that her heart went to him, "I must know."

She began to speak and stopped. She gathered herself, took a deep breath. Yes she would give it to him.

She spoke, feeling release, freedom running through her, increasing with her every world. "One six eleven oh two," she confessed.

"Thank you that is all."

Mass Media

Monday after Kennedy
in the kindergarten
of the school for the blind
the children
were circling the room.
They had been hung
with drums and tambourines
on which their tiny hands
beat
the exact cadence
of his
horse-drawn casson.