

77
30

THE LEDGES

78
71

4 a.m. lips move

moon
cell ice

realm of pure symbol

etched in the eye

cult of paper

owl egg and thigh

From this hour on

to know the spine-rant

licking shut all the openings

to the outside

A deep unquiet in
the hands

the paper

breathing

fields of dust
from my face

the sun throbbing

like ice in the blood

the moment is a lived
memory

a looking backward
into the present

the statue of a ghost

turning to face the moonrise

the flesh knows nothing
but sere blackness

a static blur

behind a lattice
of empty windows

Upon
 this Sunday
under the grey
 sun
trains
 bring
untold stories
 of
rain and suicide
 in December
light
 the river
darkens
keeping
 its secrets
from my pages

Steps
 into the stone wind
to enter the branches
 from inside the howls of dogs

I read mummified books
that crumble in my hands

Soon

 I am the living room again

A lamp burns within me

I see a pen
 lost in the couch's folds
A life there undreaming itself

As it becomes each minute
more elusive and pale

Breath
inhaling
breath

turning
into mist

adrift
in snow-fields

writing
the black weeds

daily

sinking deeper
into ghostworlds

slowly
eaten
by stones

The glyphs
speak aloud

calling
the wood-gods

to drink
starlight

from the blood-
roots
of ancient dryads

a shout
and a whisper

the world
cracks
open

a landscape
of winter

and red
flames

84
3/1

On your back
a face
of white lichen

as though a
star
had died there

the woodthrush's
song
shimmers

all
around you

I lower myself
to inhabit
you

on
the wordless surface
of space

In pre-time

smoke and ice
a light in my lungs

rustle

of drying wings

hollow fingers of sleep

grow
into the paper

darker and colder

no memory
before
you

Always waiting
these
notebooks

out of autumn's
womb

thrown into winter

born
of dead suns

succubus-eyes

scarlet decay
of cities

what
cannot

be written

will
be read

under this
black river

Even
the supreme alchemist
knows

his ceaseless labors
to be futile

he toils anyway
until his eyes turn gold
his hands blacken into slime

he swims
in the blood-cells
of beauty

the sun
is
extinguished

and the tower
sealed

around the oriole's song

88
A1

Black sunflowers
shout the ice

the crow's call comes
across five-hundred years

of greyness

echoing the pages

trying to recall
single words

my name

your hands

asleep

forever

We leave
our house
and enter the rain

nothing
calls us back

the trees bend
down
to lift us

we flow
through their fingers
a green wine

transforming
endlessly

until
we alight

rooting into bark

our voices
sprouting

into
the wind

90
~~43~~

The page is time
cold as memory

I fall into its white abyss

as though I had travelled
ninety-three million miles

to find a star of ice

a book

inhabited

by salt bone and hoar

A black yeast
swells
around my hands

leaves of steel
grasp
at my face

I listen to my footsteps
falling
around the house

a hooded shadow
clutching a book

wandering

in a landscape

of pillars and snow

92
~~45~~

Echoes of sleep darken this time

soon life will end
this spectacle of color

from the mouth of the sorcerer

will fall
into space

while there are still images left

I will walk
with you

along the banks of the planet
to the edge of the river

we will watch everything

become better
than a dream

before jumping
into the radiant waters

to become silver

ringing
within ourselves

a million bells
merging
with the stars

Hands

come out of my hands
to catch the spores streaming
through your transparent body

in you I can see
cataracts of ash rising from the earth

a necklace of moons at the end of time

what I want to say

was written long ago

the sweetness of the yellow fields

an image of light on your throat

the song of the snails at our windows

my arms fall into the grass

around you

there is no time or place

for us

99 94
4/

A book of secrets
woven of archaic fields
illuminates this place
absent even of ghosts

its pages are screech owl colors
snow-cries
a long sapphire feather of breath
spiralling into hazel light

:crystals of green blood
licked from the trees

beside the river,
bleakest of prayers

shroud of hawk bones
flowing beneath our house:

I stand aside and watch
the passage of notes

figments of a trembling season

on this bridge disappearing into dream

From my room
deep in the earth
stars rise into the night-gardens

where the lights
of buried cities
flower into dream-sounds

in the dead spaces
words fall apart
into flakes of gold

that cover root-eyes hand-claws
a blind scratching against the sky

white crows eat our sleep

spines fill with honey

our names become the edges
of uninhabitable houses
milkweed blackening in the wind

alien seasons pass
a cold green water washes us
our time does not come
on this remote planet that has thrown us

up to become cyphers
symbols in the air
reflections of each other

in between landscapes

96
48

Signs torn from the back of her neck
a handful of light flesh becomes shadow
moist

pulse and shiver

the unattainable gulf

river-music the green heron
plays across our faces

fallen

the dark cloth of Sundays
our doubles commit suicide

where the sun has just passed

a cold black egg remains

Moist syllables stream
from the lichen-mouth

the hidden drop of sap
opening into years of water

a deep lace across the sky
shadow-pulse of red cicada suns

texts of pure symbol recovered
against the decayed silences

August: cold wind and rain.
A blood-covered light
covers the maps of silence and death.
Words scatter across the fields.

Time falls,
a mournful sound,
purple skin peels back,
a white nerve tolls.

Lonely utterance from
the grass.
Blinding, unreadable omens.

A call across summer.
From deep in the woods,
the cuckoo's dark prophecy.

Ghosts swim in the empty rooms
of our bones.
Life narrows to a summer evening.
The wren of folk tales
flies back and forth
across the yard.
A dark moth flutters
through mist-filled centuries.

The silver echo of our whispers
invents languages
necessary to survival.
Visions are everything-

A basilisk face
watches me
from my sleep.

100
53

An oriole writes the morning
song of gold ashes

a cicada being born
in layers of bark

the trance-net
catches
fields

roadsides
lined
in milkweed

hands tremble
at the coming
of autumn

behind the gates
of the asylum
an imperial moth

waiting

101
5/4

Going to the blank page again and again
to consult
the void within the void
for anything
whispered fragments of gossamer
I press against hot lead
a cicada jets into depths of air
a dark rune has fallen

102
55

From the coffin of the skull
intermittent signals
every million years

the dead loss

seasons mesh
light and dark the same

the line mirrors the moment
zero, echo, moon in a window

white fading into transparency

the larva raging

within the pupa

Zone of water shadows
clasp of stone
where we live exiled

the attempted leap from words

anvil of light
the sky towers down

crows turn the leaves into metal

buried in the sun

knowing in advance our last thoughts

scraping together

in the dawn

there is little left here
that ache too will disappear

One hand clutches the
other
aching for stillness.

Beneath the blue light
of the street lamp,
moles move in the earth,
chewing grubs,
sucking the giant dock dry.

I ask the maple
if there can be a time
for beauty,
if we can ever be silent
and unmoving.

It answers in the voice
of a katydid,
telling me,
Lie down by my side
and listen to the river
forever.

Shaking in the darkness,
my hands grip each other
tighter,

I fall to my knees
and pray desperately
to the grass.

In autumn
the sticks get up and
walk
their white, wet eyes
unblinking
as they circle
round and round
in the yard

Pheasants bring us
wine the color of sumac
mixed with blood
in small black glasses
swirling with stars

Skin and feathers
dance,
drunk on frost and
dead-leaf bread
inks turn oily red
we dig through clay
beneath the streams
we wait for years
in blue moss sleep
for the salamander king

In autumn
we reclaim our
empire
the fields open
to embrace us
unending
gold and purple creatures
take us to their earthen lairs
and feed us
the sweet sweet roots of death.

106
79

Bird
of snow
calling,

ice-orb,
black
branch-heart,

nightyears
blanketing

the million-voiced
river.

Hysteria
of bones,

raw grey
landscape of
breath,

our faces
winter suns,
stone-pores

in the forest

circling
ourselves,

our dreams
leave no tracks

in an owl-less
time.

From
this rasping space
between
the letters,

the
wall of ice
and stone

in which
I am embedded,

I shout
single words
into the throat
of the raven.