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DEAN BANK HOUSE DEAN BANK TERRACE EDINBURGH 3

VOL 1 NO 2 MAY 1964 ONE SHILLING
productions since opening in January 1963 include
Orison (Arrabal) Huis Clos (Sartre) Two for the Seesaw (Kibson)
Fairy Tales of New York (Donleavy) Picnic in the Battlefield
(Arrabal) Fando and Lis (Arrabal) Don Juan in Hell (Shaw) Ubu
Roi (Jarry) A Doll's House (Ibsen) The Lesson (Ionesco) The
Maids (Genet) Private Lives (Coward) Requiem for a Nun (Faulkner)
The Balachites (Eveling) Comedy, Satire, Irony and Deeper Meaning
(Crabbe) Next Time I'll Sing to You (Saunders) The Days and
Nights of Beebee Fenstemaker (Snyder) Candida (Shaw) 3 Modern
Japanese No Plays (Mishima) Crime on Goat Island (Betti) Playing
with Fire (Strindberg) The Caretaker (Pinter) An Evening of Farce
with Chekhov Hughie (O'Neill) The Zoo (Abbey)

scheduled productions to 5 July 1964
Dead Letter (Pinget) The Square (Duras) Philip Hotz's Fury
(Frisch) The Detour (Walser)

and
New Sounds in Music—a series of 3 concerts, 26 April, 31 May,
28 June which will include works by Schonberg, Berg, Webern,
Boulez, Lutyens, Dallapiccola and Electronic Music. Tickets 5/-

and
TRAVERSE BLACK & WHITE MASKED BALL Assembly Rooms,
15 May; 4 bands including Sandy Brown, cabaret including Annie
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O LAKE OF LIGHT

(dedicated to Sevasty Koutsafis)

Risen from the milky sward
I saw the one I love with flower
And on her breast an unborn moon
O wondrous moon! O lake of light!
The grass so green is turning white
O moon, O wondrous lake of light!

Milk of fire upon her tongue
Drew birds of jade and betel gum
Run river run!

The world of late grown small
Now achieves its just dimension
The one I love grown big with flower
Wheels within the lunar hour

Birds of jade in milky fire
Mitigate the heart's desire

Then run, river, run, as runs the sun
For none are born except the one
That lies upon the breast undone

The moon unborn is chill as night
The heart is like a lake of light
Flower, moon, milk of fire
These together do conspire

Take wing, strange birds, take wing!

(written in September 1943 at Beverly Glen, California)
Light house keeper as I am (parenthetically in a police man's bed sitter) I must in such pain expose certain darkroom pictures. *Open this door.* Broken door disperse to nova police—to tape recorders playing over and over in a haunted attic. A young cop drew the curtains and walked down past time whistling Annie Laurie and twirling his club drew: Sept. 17, 1899 over New York.

"The magnitude of the swindle is breath taking" said Adrian at last his Havana gathering a delicate grey cone of ash the way a very expensive cigar does. "All this." His gesture embraced the red curtains potted palms and crystal chandeliers of the ornate lobby—discreet figures in evening dress parade a clear summer sky—music from a casino across the water—soft sad murmuring of forgotten voices—Saratoga—Palm Beach—Long Island "is just a stage set—a prop—a 'Big Store' for Martin's colossal con. You have to give it to Martin. He thinks in big terms."

"Ah yes, of course the adding machine" Lee reflected looking quizzically into his brandy while a lock of brown hair fell provocatively across the beautiful young face he had boosted in Macy's basement—"My grandfather's clock—ticking away to nova the way a clock will—But it stopped. dead. never to go again, when the old man died/with a cold metallic snigger Lee shrank in his 'leather arm chair.' (stopped suddenly to show me a hideous leather body under which any body could plainly see his nasty old radio active bones. Martin/you/are/no/where/stop./You/ left/there/naked/that/forgetton boy/sizzling to nova/because? you?had?no?choice? ??? Add it all/up/now against/harder names/from/special police). "Perhaps" said Adrian judiciously with a long cool pull on his 'Havana,' "The Old Man is more dangerous dead than alive." His audience of geiger counters applauded this statement to the "echo" "echo."

"Stand back—I'm the doctor—Well now" phosphorescent bones twisted in slow metal fire to a swarm of fire flies in St Louis summer night—music across the golf course echoes from high cool corners of the dining room. A queer little breeze flutters
candle flames on the table and swishes away down those dear dead days ("Old fairy couldn’t leave a haunted ruin").

"Well time to get on my horse." The horse is led around to La Hacienda—1920 Spanish you know 666. / 'buy a beautiful young Indian with more animal grace than the law allows.'

"Sold American." The doctor leaps to the saddle lithe as a young Jaguar star sapphires glinting in his dark eyes. "Let me at that old swimming hole!! Heigh ho silver." Last seen swimming desperately in the sewage.

Agent K9 sent back an enthusiastic report to the Home Office:

"This place is a paradise."

"This place is too good to last, folks" said Cliff Poindeaster as his penthouse club tilted ominously with a creak of old metal. Old iron will stand sometimes—outside there the throaty vibrating snarl of a billion guard dogs.

"Position I half expected" said Mrs D crisply her tiara of novas glittering in the moonlight "guard dogs slightly cross."

"Madame is very brave" said her trusted Aphid "But I unfortunately am not." And he made for The White Subway vaulting turnstiles both elbows churning a mighty host of collaborators all screaming the terrible words: "Pay day" P"Pay day" pay day. The boy’s magazine must tell you quanto paid on the table. Far away the price blured in smoke and whirlpools of the fumbling West. Sad calm boy speaking here: "Late, Meester, to get on your horse.all this" his gesture embraced the past "adios, dying fingers, unfinished cigarette." April good byes rained down between worlds when he first picked the Swan Pub. Sad face ends at this address—twisted steps trailing a lonely dining room. Stein lifted his hand: "Army who paid all our strength—Last gun post erased, his 'adios' to register."

Just the last boy's good bye—school books put away in the attic...never happened. Dream people on a frayed ship fade into the post card lagoon.

"And so, Meester, remember me. In survival terms created this sad green stranger, his face your card to safety—just the last boy—school books put away—never happened." Light years washed over his face in a haunted attic. "Indian rope trick" he said shimmering out dim cobble stone dawn/"Stein again/you may infer/my associate paid all our strength/last gunpost/giving you my life story/as it were/put away/infer my presence/shaking the typewriter/in survival terms created/parenthetically/ we all /face /that order /to /fade /in /Indian rope trick /'adios' / smoke/of a distant gun/sad boy/there/waiting/just telling you/ a distant hand lifted/ "And so Meester remember/aid/of/this sad green stranger. For you/light years washed over/a lost sky/last/human glimpse/shirt flapping/saddest/boy as I a/do you see sad servant stood on/world/shattered forever/exploding star/caught/shadow/gleamed and expired /and as to what/question/just telling you/answer/"adios"/don't get out/in the lost sky/paid, Martin/don't ever call me 'buster' again/Mister/kid from the attic there/sick Bradly. sic of you and your/aid parenthetically/last/junk pay off/you nor Martin will ever make / peanuts / 1920 movie / worth his 'adios' / my last / servant/late/and because you far away/and I face/pain in streets of war / lifted his hand / sad as the last / far away / bugles / in a
distant sky /last /human /glimpse /film snaps in /far away /shirt flapping/I had to send rockets/captive boy there/we had to retreat /saddest/boy, as I am dying/you say so/this is the way the world /shattered forever/between years/on/us/we were caught/shadow structure/now/all rights so take/I must in such pain close/screen /once Ahab threw his spear of/Face/the music and/that stained boy/friend/abandoned/you can look back/peanuts/1920 movie/ flicking to far/pin point/last kid from the attic there/dead leaves /reflecting/aid parenthetically/last/empty/boy on a corner dis- eased/thing/see? shifting/sepio swirls and/"room 18" he said/ isn't/a game kid, and said/"Hell Arch" he said/took the/ naked shoulder/pitiful range/was long ago/in Guayaquil/distant streets/steps empty/stale summer/golf course/waiting for rain/ "Flesh on your mind?"/"Lost with me, Meester"/just telling you/out/last adios/I had to send rockets/caught/dont get out/ lifted his hand stained/the sea wall/look anywhere/over/far away/buggles in the lost twilight/over and over/disaster/boy waiting/silver stars/see/a bench/waves/boy there dying/last human clear as/the subject/finished/on the white steps/adios from/shirt flapping/post me/the boy who paid/I had to send rockets/dont get out/caught/exploled between us/Cheek bone splashes a silver adios from/this address

Sept. 17, 1899 over New York
A note on the method used in this text

Since work in progress tentatively titled *a distant hand lifted* consists of walky talky messages between remote posts of interplanetary war the cut up and fold in method here used is a decoding operation. For example agent K9 types out a page of random impressions from whatever is presented to him at the moment: street sounds, phrases from newspaper or magazine, objects in the room, etc. He then folds this page down the middle and places it on another page of typewriter messages and where the shift from one text to another is made / marks the spot. The method can approximate walky talky immediacy so that the writer writes in present time. (It’s windy here now/boy voices/cigarette smoke drifting up into high cool corners of the room/ash blown from my sleeve).

Since work in progress tentative/sad servant on/walky talky / messages/caught/interplanetary war/the cut up/just telling you/ ‘adios’/from the/last/1920 movie/late/because you far away/ and /another /lifted his hand /where /the last /human /glimpse / marks the spot. The method can /rocket/immediacy so that the writer writes/as I am dying/voice/shattered forever/cigarette ash blown from/my/closed/screen/see? /tentatively *a distant hand lifted*/kid, and said/‘Hell, Arch’/message/from magazine/just telling you/I had to send rockets/look/another page of messages /lost/from one text to another/see?/Walky talky/flapping/me/ a silver adios from/this/sleeve.

It will be observed that not all the words are used, the decoding operation consisting precisely in scanning out the message. Of course a number of alternative messages can be scanned from any texts. The point is to scan out your message as it were the message that is you.

There’s a wail from the worm in every lay of every day said the fat.

There’s a whale of a woman in each lady’s pew said the bat, and bless you.
A STUDY OF CANCER

In English grammar

that
which
would
be
is
what

what
would
be
which
is
that

Gertrude died.
Malignant by
the end.
Fags adored her,
sent flowers
to the dead mouth,
cemented snails
in stucco
and gave a hair
to cheer
because in truth
Gertrude upon earnest
had put
a curse

One pays
a price
for

poetry
said the weak
now alone
in the loin.

We were talking
about a
bore.

Did he have
a good voice
at least?

Well,
he had one eye.

One eye!
That's
enough
to make
a poet.
AT ROBERT FERGUSSON’S GRAVE

Canogait kirkyaird in the failing year
is auld and grey, the wee roseirs are bare;
five gulls leam white agen the dirty air;
why are they here? There’s naething for them here.

Why are we here oursels? We gaither near
the grave. Fergusons maistly, quite a fair
turn-out, respectfu, ill at ease, we stare
at daith—there’s an address—I canna hear.

Aweill, we staund bareheidit in the haar,
murnin a man that gaed back til the pool
twa hunner-year afore our time. The glaur
that hap his banes glowres back. Strang present dool
ruggs at my hairt. Lithchtie this gin ye daur:
here Robert Burns knelt and kissed the mool.

R. GARIOCH

GHOST TANTRA 50

Gahr thy rooh gaharr eem thah noolt eeeze
be me aiee grahorrr im lowvell thee thy lips and hair
are stunning field byorr ayooh mah ahn teerz.
Ghoor ahn the green-blahk trees
are tall and brooding in the dark gray-pink
wet mist of night. All is flashes of silver
upon damp black by scrooltt in theeer.

THEE,
THEE,
THEE

mahk flooors pore reeerr, thah noose eem rakd
GAHARRRRR GAYRR RRAH MEEN LOOVEEE.

And all physicality is poesy
to demanding flesh.

Ring tailed cat.
Close Arcturus.
Heavenly visions of gentle rats with pink noses.

MIKE MCCLURE

Two Approaches to Dialect Verse
Hello sweet lady-world, you interested, have you read Baudelaire, oh lady let us in, your flowerpot, we’ll show you

**The Bees**

The bees: a poseur’s? memory Always wanted to stroke one, bumblefur

was saddened by the knowledge they would die, and I be stung

As you well see I was a charming child And now I can’t eat honey, my road to a certain (well-known) gate being paved with teeth already, & the fact death will lose its sting & die just like the bee well it is something to ponder, in bed beneath my moonroof

**ANSELM HILLO**
He sat down and pulled his dog in beside him. The dog, shy and scraggy, sat. He pulled him up. Expressionless, his arms encompassing the small brown mongrel, he poured water from a paper cup onto its head. The dog blinked in submission. He rubbed his large hand around its neck and a light lather came from some concealed soap. The water disappeared into the grease of the dog's hair already concealed into so many sharp pointed tufts. He emptied the cup on to the animal's back his other arm rubbing slowly and strongly; standing up he refilled the cup at the drinking fountain. The dog, hardly moving, seemed to scuttle under the park bench and sat, compact, on the damp unwashed macadam. Unmoved, the man returned bending his six feet deeply to sit back on the crowded bench. His young dark skin contrasted with the old white tired faces around him, their eyes, closed or open, unblinking. He yanked out his companion. Without cleaning the grit collected on its belly he poured more water onto the ticks upon its back. The dog understood: tried to lift its hind leg to scrub its own underside but stumbled under the pressure of its master's hand. The negro's tight Levi's, blue with worn white knees, flanked the steady silent operation. Each time he got up to queue at the foot and refill his tattered cup the dog snuggled down into the growing puddle under the seat.

Opposite the gentle job of washing, a young man, dressed in denim, leaned forward slightly on his bench. He seemed conscious of his profile; his thin closed lips and deep blue eyes half smiling. His straw coloured hair stood out in waves above shallow cheeks and angular jaw bones. Beside him, his girl, her hand tight in his armpit, whispered towards him, her eyes gently straying over his face. With a finger from her free hand she tried to scrape the blackheads from his ear. His teeth clenched momentarily in pleasure. She gathered enthusiasm for her work and, whispering all the while, kneaded his ear.

Further along two men straddled the bench. Their heads were bent as though the muscles of their necks had grown tired with the length and heat of the day or the multitude of days. In their hands they held playing cards. The discard pile lay amongst the green flaked paint. One, his back to the sun unseen above the trees, wore a tripty on the crown of his head. The other exposed his scalp to the flies and the early falling leaves. Under his hat his eyes, though dull, were methodical and watched, carefully enough, the intimacies of his own world. He fought his opponent with verbal forays destroying the defender’s play in its appearances and its concept. Two squirrels chased each other across the path—the most prosperous beings in the park.

An hermaphrodite walked purposefully by: tight black jeans—but not tight enough; long black hair—but not long enough; a sweater giving promise—but not giving promise enough; a soft masculine profile. A queer sat, legs crossed, watching, laughing at his own secret. His beautiful eyes betrayed him. It was the middle of the afternoon in this city of endeavour where the
unemployed are beyond salvation and the citizens begrudge their
taxes till it aches. And here the pitiful people are those who,
ignored the poets and, on becoming diseased with age, found
themselves retired. For the others the treachery of the state is
far too removed and much too confused to matter.

"You look worried."

"Me. No."

"Ah. That’s all right." He paused. "I just thought you
looked worried." He sat down beside, his elbows falling upon
his thighs, his outstretched fingers almost meeting. From sweat
and habit he wiped his eyebrows with the base of his tarnished
hand. He looked worried.

"Well, I am," he said. Or maybe he didn’t but it was to
himself he spoke. He got up, a martyr to the effort and wandered
towards the fountain. There was never more than one jet bubbling
out of the grey pedestal. But it wasn’t in the middle so it looked
as if there should have been three and someone had been
economising. Everyone ignored the fountain but the pigeons, yet
it would have been much hotter and the humidity would have
been far higher without it. The park, despite the gentle guardian-
ship of the elm trees would have been quieter.

In one corner sounded the perpetual Puerto Rican hulabaloo
of Spanish voices. Ai, cabrón, mire lo que tenia yo! He threw
his hands up, his cards down. Bah. Universal. His lips appeared
from their quiet hiding in the beaten face. Their surfaces flat.
Their edges momentarily defined, sharp as blades. Their ends
swallowed in the dimples of his cheeks. His neck muscles
taughtened. His shoulders shrugged. Inwardly he spat. Around
him the motley array observed and laughed maliciously feeling no
malice. They stood heads bent absorbing the play, conversing
on what might have been, their minds on other things. Their
clothes were light in tone and texture. Clothes clean to the eye
yet the nose noied the weeks of their wear. One stood suited. It
was light blue, a city cut, like nothing. Well pressed but hanging
from the hips, the crouch low, folds concertinered at the ankles.
He treated the open collar of his shirt with unconcern so that it
stood out unevenly from his long neck bending to belong to the
short voluble Latins around him.

The man with his past tarnished to him came again and sat
down silently beside. His hands kept clenching. Again he bent
his elbows and lent upon them. He stared before him, looking to
his left, undecided. He entwined his fingers bending them back
as if to crack his knuckles, each in turn, but no sound came. His
head cocked and he winced as if his neck was stiff and stared
forwards again. To his left his companion of the park turned
towards him. His eyebrows might have lifted. Somehow his face
enquired. He spread eagled his arms so his elbows rested over
the back of the bench. His gaze held his neighbour’s profile, half
forgetting, he glanced down the unkempt trousers to his shoes,
then, almost forgetting entirely the fingernails on his own right
hand, he pressed the bitten nail of his thumb under each of the
fingernails, sharply till the skin beneath blanched. His arms out-
stretched still left him open but now it was late. Yes, it was
probably too late. No, it was too late.
The Old Dutch Woman

The old Dutch woman would spend half a day
Pacing the backyard where I lived
in a fixed-up shed

What did she see.
—wet leaves, the rotten tilted-over
over-heavy heads

I knew only Paintbrush,
Thought nature was mountains
Snowfields, glaciers and cliffs,
White granite waves underfoot.

Heian ladies
Trained to the world of the garden,
poetry,
lovers slipped in with by night
they never went out—

My grandmother standing wordless
fifteen minutes
Between rows of loganberries
clippers poised in her hand.

New leaves on the climbing rose
New insects eating the tender green
like once watching

Mountaingoats
Far over the valley half into the
shade of the headwall
Pick their way over the snow.

GARY SNYDER
PILOT
PLAN
FOR
CONCRETE
POETRY

congrete poetry: product of a critical evolution of forms. assuming
that the historical cycle of verse (as formal-rhythmical unit) is
closed, concrete begins by being aware of graphic space as
structural agent. qualified space: space-time structure instead of
mere linear-temporistical development. hence the importance of
ideogram concept, either in its general sense of spatial or visual
syntax, or in its specific sense (fenollosa/pound) of method of
composition based on direct—analogical, not logical-discursive—
xitaposition of elements. "il faut que notre intelligence s'habitude
à comprendre synthétic-idéographiquement au lieu de analytico-
discursivement" (apollinaire). eisenstein: ideogram and montage.

forerunners: mallarmé (un coup de dés, 1897): the first qualitative
jump: "subdivisions prismatiques de l'idée"; space ("blancs")
and typographical devices as substantive elements of composition.
pound (the cantos): ideogramic method. joyce (ulysses and
finnegans wake): word-ideogram; organic interpenetration of time
and space. cummings: atomization of words, physiognomical
typography; expressionistic emphasis on space. apollinaire
(calligrammes): the vision, rather than the praxis. futurism,
dadaism: contributions to the life of the problem. in brazil:
oswald de andrade (1890-1954): "in pills, minutes of poetry."
joão cabral de melo neto (born 1920—the engineer and the psycho-
logy of composition plus anti-ode): direct speech, economy and
functional architecture of verse.
BREATHE OF CORRUPTION

Proh, fumo!

CHINESE CAT

pmrkgniaou
pmrkgniao
pmrkniao
pmrniao
pmriao
pmiao
miao
mao

SIESTA OF A HUNGARIAN SNAKE

s sz sz SZ sz SZ sz ZS zs ZS zs zs z
THE WRECK ON THE A222 IN RAVENSOURLNE VALLEY

There are more things to love
than we would dare to hope for.
—RICHARD OF SAINT VICTOR

where the car hit him, fireweed sprang with
blazons of fennel

and umbels
of dill fell
through the spokes of a wheel

on Whitsun holiday to the sun, Denton
Welch spun a web in his crushed cycle,
sat in the deat, spine curled up like a spider—

and spied: "saw
the very drops of sweat glittering frostily
between the shoulder blades"

of a lad

... on and on he spied and bled from the blades of his cycle,
small as a spider,
hiding in the fireweed, getting
wet from the skins of many human suns aground
at the Kentish river near
Tunbridge Wells,

where the dill
lulls,

and all boys
spoil

BESIDES BUTTERCUPS

c ow  c ow  c ow
o o o o o
w w w
parsley parsley parsley

the way a
whole field

looks back at
you

in Berkshire in
June

JONATHAN WILLIAMS
EARTH

We love walking
barefoot on the earth,
on the yielding, misty, homely earth.
But where? In Ethiopia?
Perhaps in Messina?
In the desert? In Havana?
In a village in Ryazan?
We are men.
We love walking about the earth.

Currents of the earth stream through us like a shudder.
Yet we are insulated from it, under
a shield of asphalt, cobblestones, cars . . .
We forget the smell of earth, in our city affairs.
But suddenly we smile—at a green sapling
that bursts through city granite
like a geyser
springing! . . .

An earth in dreams appeared to me, without trenches and chains,
without detonation of mines: a dream of telescopes,
of lime-trees, eucalyptus, peacock rainbows, lifts on crazy ropes
and showers of aluminium!
A world of seas, of trains, of women—
a world all puffing and
fructifying,
marvellous as man! . . .

Somewhere on Mars he goes, a visitor from Earth.
He walks. He smiles. He takes out a handful of earth—
a tiny handful of that burning,
half-bitter, homely,
far-whirling,
heart-catching earth!
TEN
THOUSAND
YELLOW
BUDS

KENNETH WHITE

VIGIL

These morninges and this weather winter hales me out of bed at about two in the morning. I am told by a friend I do not sleep enough, that I shall be old before my time, that I am burning up my youth. Not in riotous living, no, but in a deeper kind of fire, a fire that burns whitely within us, the spirit of whiteness, a holy ghost. Whatever I consume is consumed by this whiteness, it burns me, hollows me out. In winter there is a vigilance demanded of me, and this is the winter of the world. I am a man of winter, and winter claims me entirely, lets me sleep no more than is necessary, and even then my sleep is a winter sleep, a drifting of snow in which I bury myself.

I waken in the mornings, in the cold white silence; I rise from my bed and put on my overcoat; I drink a glass of cold water, and I begin to write. So each day begins. I have come to look forward to my glass of water the way a drunkard regards his drink. I am drunk with my vigil and my icy water, I am drunk with my winter thoughts, the incredible joyance of this apparent misery, I am drunk with a clear-minded clear-bodied drunkenness. My brain is a distillery of thought, and I use the purest of the waters of winter. Shivers of cold and shivers of enthusiasm, shivers of cold enthusiasm chase over my body; my body is a winter landscape, let's say: godscape.

I am writing from a fresh cold spring that rises in winter, and I approve all soft-stomached men who refuse my writing and keep to their own mushy diet and the weather of their own sodden mind. I approve them with a laugh that has in it all the gaiety of winter, and its malice.

CALL ME A LYRICAL REALIST

Hold up the mirror? No, no, and no again. There are too many “novelists” going round with wee mirrors showing up the
‘foibles’ of man. One goes into convulsions over the fact (delicious absurdity, what) that a man has a moustache and no hairs in his nose. Realistic literature: the hunt for the insignificant detail. To hell with realism, or to Madame Tussaud’s. That’s the place for it. Realism piles up thing after thing and then, the modern development, complains of absurdity. As if the process could result in anything else. As if by putting one dead thing beside another you could expect to get life. But the realist is disappointed. He’s really hurt. All that work for nothing. So he goes away and makes up a philosophy. The philosophy of the absurd. That gives him a new lease of life. Back he comes. But hard-boiled this time. All hope gone. No, alas. No ideal (the realist is really the emptiest kind of idealist). He’s out now for the absurd. He gets a masochistic pleasure out of it. Just look, he says, how peculiarly meaningless we are. But it’s all rather delightful. It provides a cheap snigger and costs you nothing. Pathetic, all of it. The modern novelist. What a simulacrum. And out they come, the books, in regular doses, duly swung along the production lines, with as much life in them as a condom.

The dissectors, the probers. Literature seems to have become an offshoot of the medical faculty. Knows damn all about living, but investigates varying degrees of deadness. The difference between the doctor and the writer is that the former is concerned with “cures” (so-called), while, for the modern writer (except for a few bumptious dimwits), cures are out of fashion.

I want a literature that gives me the sensation of life, not the dead-born literature with the absurd grimace on its face; nor the literature with the hypodermic cure. No, just life-literature, life-poetry. Something living. It’s still possible to live. Let’s see some life. I don’t mean high-jacked living-up. I don’t mean the feverish throes of agony—the glow on the corpse. I mean living. And just what exactly do I mean by that? No, you won’t get a definition out of me—especially an exact one. It’s you that are always harping on about meanings, exact meanings and the meaning of meanings, and the four thousand types of ambiguity. You’re a pretty worried lot of stool-pigeons, all things told. You’ve got a lot of major problems on your hands, when you get down to them. Count me out. I’m no problem-monger. Or at least my problems aren’t the dead kind you handle. I don’t feel them as problems, to be treated with gloved hands and protected brain. I feel them as living realities (I use the word too, but with me it’s got a kick in it) that I wrestle with, the wrestling itself is a joy to me. Even my thinking is living and joyous. I’m not looking for meanings, I’m looking for glories. I’m not describing through rhythms and images. Call me a lyrical realist, and be damned.

THIS IS FOR W. B. YEATS

Marmalade in a pot. The last blob and scrapings of marmalade in a thick glass pot. God is in there with his Genesis, and Homer is there too, and so are the Incas. In that orange and yellow viscous mass, in the scrabbled egg-broken shape of it, I am aware of the heart of ages—the way I was aware of it a few weeks ago
in the greasy, bloated mushroom. A storm, an Indian feather cloak, a blazing red-jellied foetus revolving in time, they're all there. And I sit at this small white table, with this pot in my hands, grey closing-down of a grey November day—give me the compact, yet easy words—and feel sure and confident, and know that realities such as this—compact, easy—are mine to work in. I don't want to write a book where the words give up being words and become lemons or loaves or tomatoes. I want grammar like that black wine there. I want literature to tickle the sage's belly, literature of the belly of the world. Look at that garlic. I want a book like a big garden. The garden's everywhere. I'm an old blackbird with a golden beak pecking at fallen leaves in a wildered garden. Look how I jerk my head, and hop, and wag my tail and drop a little skite. I'm the spirit in the garden, the essence in the belly of the world, the salty ghost of the seas. I was Mahakala once and they burned me in a wood. I listen to the claptrap of the world, the windy uprisings, and I delight in the grandiose rubbish of the Autumn wood, even that civilised Luxembourg whose pathways are bordered by pale, immaculate (God bless the shitting pigeons) queens. And even coming down the Rue Leblanc, over in the fifteenth district, with the smell of hot oil thick in my nostrils, the machines humming and clanging all down the street, steam surging in white-grey clouds from the factory windows, and the moon maybe looking like the pus of a boil. I'm still in the garden, the belly of the world, being born, always being born. Glory-be birth in a cold, Scottish hell—that is my motto. I want great, warm life in all the lost shires of the world. Great, free life that will burst through the nets of our cities. I want books like whales. I want books of the kitchen—follow me along the maze of analogies—I want books of the kitchen, not of the parlour or the study, I want bakehouse books where the dough is flabby and wet, and heavy and tachy, and the baker slaps it on the bench and punches it and pounds it and delves into it with both hands. I don't want wordy minuets or verbal still-lifes. I want the pulp of the matter, the real fat sweet pulp, the men active in it. I want every page as hot as a new-baked roll.

And pile on the marmalade, my ladies of the earth. It's feeding time for Scottish writers, the poor starved salt-brained lot of them, wailing like penguins on an arctic coast, dreaming of cages in a London zoo and herrings fried in the blood of the lamb and moons whose seas are full of whisky. Scotland, my Scotland—come to Kenneth.

HOT BUNS HOT

Meudon all bulged with snow, the lanes cram-full, blue in the early morning, one pink ember glowing faintly in the sky. The market is almost set up, and the mummies are standing beside their stalls, stamping their feet, tending their portable stoves, saying, as they chip away the ice round their lot, they wished they had brought some salt. The cafés are busy, there is a thick smell of coffee. A warm stench lolls around the butcher's shop. I go to the bakery for buns. Hot the bakery, bright the loaves. I buy my buns, and come back through Meudon eating them.

Hot buns hot, at the moment I am nothing but an eater of
buns. Understand it is the winter of the world, understand I have worked all night, understand I am frozen to the marrow, understand I am the ghost of Meudon, and then appreciate the phrase and the reality: hot buns hot. For the moment, there are two substances in the world: chill, glabrous, ice-caked snow, and hot buns. I myself am no substance, but a walking shiver, a disturbance of the air.

Hot buns hot—the words are my stove. Hot buns and a stove are no things to be scoffed at in the dead of winter. For many a ghost they are the only means of subsistence. If it were not for them, all our ghosts would retire from the world, and become angels. I refuse to become an angel. I am the ghost of Meudon, the ghost of Schiehallion, munching hot buns in the refrigerator.

EARLIEST SPRING

I was out in the garden this morning, sawing wood, the garden that is glinting with icy snow and alive with birdsong, and the sun with a touch of Spring in it, the very earliest. I was out there sawing in the sparkling whiteness, getting a heat into my body, for we have no coal left in the house, not even a surly lump of coke. The song of the saw, and the song of the birds, and the very faintest beginning of Spring were enough to make me smile and laugh for joy, all to myself, in the garden. And then I got to hankering for something else: at ten I went up to the box to see if there was mail, but nothing. And then I went down to the garden hut to have a look at my trunk and touch the rusty locks, that trunk piled up there with the old chairs and the old cardboard boxes and the sticks of discarded furniture, in a hut of humidity, cobwebs and the smell of cats. I left it, and shut the door firmly behind me, too many smelly memories, too many foosty reminiscences were crawling up over my mind, fungus and mosses of the past, mangy ideas, and I went back into the space of the open garden, into the whiteness, back to my sawing, ready for Spring as she comes, naked, bursting out from a drift of snow. All my writing has just been a loosening-up for a time such as this, a creation of space where the earliest Spring can occur in all freedom. I'm ready now. I'm ready now to walk into Spring. Look at me, boys. I'm walking. Ever seen a walking poet? I'm walking all over the world. If you hurry just a little, you'll catch me up. It's the white world, boys, it's earliest Spring, and we're walking. We're out of the waiting-room now, into space, and we're walking, walking with Spring—come on now, you others.

WASTING TIME

I am a great waster of time, having got over the fear of losing it, and the anxiety of time called lost. I have learned to live by chance, which so often leaves me in the lurch (it is a lurching church) that I am familiar with it and am always ready to take it as it comes, and wrestle with it. I am willing to waste a lot of time—without this open will there is no way, not even its beginning:

This afternoon I spent at the Rond-point de la Défense, in
the Domestic Art exhibition. I spent hours looking at model kitchens, bedrooms, stoves, refrigerators, beds, bookcases, plates, cutlery, lamps, sinks, wallpapers, carpets, vases, tables. There was one small white cell, roughly plastered, with a table, also white, and in the middle of it a crystal inset and from the roof hung a mass of white flowers and on a chair was sitting the representative of the firm responsible—the white goddess herself—reading a highly intelligent book whose title I forget: maybe, *All Our Anguished Yesterdays*. Sunburned rich people (it is the month of March) were discussing furniture and Louis XIV. There were very few people round these sections, and little lingering. The people were all up on the fifth floor, where I finally joined them. The fifth floor was choc-a-bloc with eatables and wines. Here, I ate and drank, with the rest of the crowd. I picked at tunny and tomato and curry in a cardboard cup, I munched samples of biscuits. I savoured a pineau, and then another one, just to make sure I wasn’t going to order any, then I had a cup of cold chicory, then I bought myself a cod and potato sandwich and drank a flute of champagne, then I picked at pudding in a cardboard cup, all the time moving with the crowd, the eating, drinking, immediate crowd who haven’t a chance in hell of living in a model living-room, but who possess a living belly. Sunday afternoon, the last day of the Exhibition and the sandwiches at 2.50 francs are going for 1.50, even the stale ones; and the people are wild for bargains, and are buying up “presents” from the firms: packages of tins in fancy ribbon, with a doll for baby; a box of assorted biscuits with a net-bag thrown in; a tin of energy food with a coloured magazine: a healthy mind in a healthy body. And the adverts blaze and sparkle and whirl, and a great hot hum rises everywhere and re-echoes back from the roof, and the fifth-floor crowd moves round and round and is fed and supplied with bargains.

At six, I leave the place, sticky with sweat, my head heavy with wine. It is raining, I am glad. I open the collar of my shirt, and let the cold wind blow down on to my chest. I walk, I keep walking. It’s the rain now, it’s grey Sunday over this decrepit part of the city and I walk to the Neuilly bridge, and I go down to the Île de la Grande Jatte, and I stand at the edge of the Seine, watching the waters roll by, slither by, curl by, dark green and grey, and it is a late cold afternoon now, and I sit there drenched in the falling smatter of rain now, and watch the river and the people going by, and the rain mingles with the wine in my brain and my hand feels coarse grass and I throw a stone: plop! into the river and then I stretch out on the grass and become part of the landscape.

That is how I wasted Sunday.

**TEN THOUSAND YELLOW BUDS**

Rain, March rain, marches of rain, hills in mist, red-roofed valley, wet garden: ten thousand bright yellow buds! Every twig is humped and breasted and headed with yellow buds, bon-blossoms, glistening, tightly infolded, compressed, bursting with pressure, tossing in the wind, all the ten thousand in the globed, lithe, loved, believed, bosoming Spring. The sparrow flits his tail, opens his little black diamond of a throat, teeters, hops, fluffs
his feathers, takes a look round, head never still, shrugs his shoulders, sees a cat, clears his throat, cocks an eye at a yellow bud and says: treep, and then has a dainty little shit.

Oh, the yellow buds! All afternoon it's raining and I'm looking at the yellow buds. The branches are wet, grotesque and black, defying shapeliness, but coming out right, all together coming out right, and out of them, out of their wet grotesque blackness, single and coupled, naked, quick, look: the buds. Ten thousand yellow buds.

The dry, drunken grasses, lop-sided, broken, stagger and wave in the wind, lurch. The packed grass is humped and matted, drinking the juicy rain. The sky, oh the sky, is a field of grey grass, yes, I think—what say, Walt? Take a look at them, the buds, the yellow buds. We'll talk later.

LITTLE WHITE DAWN

It was a little white dawn at the edge of sleep, wild in its whiteness and thorny, smoky with sunlight, noisy with the chirping and cheetering of birds. A morning flowing with milk and honey—but not so big as that, not yet, it's still very little, like a wild rose, or the white spot on a black kitten, or any other little whiteness you can think of. It's little, but it's a glory. It's big little. Little white dawn, I could pursue your likenesses for a thousand years, but let me just sit here quiet and enjoy your presence.

The sun is up, glinting. The juicy and furry buds on the trees are glistening and glowing. A shaft of light clean as a whistle sets a glorious illumination on my landlady's knee-length pink drawers which are hanging up in the garden to dry.

I walk through Meudon, the top of my head tingling and about to open up. If it ever did, my brain would up and say cock-a-doodle-doo or something equally philosophical. I walk through Meudon, the streets washed with white sunshine, and this tingling is on my scalp all the time. It's the nearest thing to a halo I'll ever get. I've been feeling it a lot lately. It's not sanctification, hell no, but realisation. I'm beginning to realise things. I'm beginning to live gladly and openly. I never really thought it was possible. There's been a big change. A big little change. There's more to come. It's only the dawn, and even yet a bit murky.

I see women with baskets and white linen cloths. I follow them up to the market. I go among the stalls. There are a lot of anemones and daffodils already, and those little knots of sheer crimson called ranunculus. An old man with white hair is selling honey: c'est bon pour les enfants! Bananas, their glare of yellow fading back to the colour of the earth. The fish-stall, salty and cold. I take it all in, as it comes. That is, all I see naked and open, and solid, even if murky, like myself. The rest I don't bother with.

I come back to the garden, and I sit under the plum tree listening to a blackie give me a dewy gurgle. What did he do to get such an orange beak? He must have pecked the sun at one time, when it was still close to us. Thought it was a berry. Such a big little sun. Was born at pitch dark night and didn't know any better.

Wild and quiet.
"I would not," he was saying, "have you dead. But in the lack of another alternative, that would do. Which is to say that if you were dead, that at least would be a solution or something definite."

Outside the crickets had stopped their noise and there was a sudden fragment of silence hanging on its edge like a curved sheet of steel. The beer had become flat and tepid and the condensation originally on the bottle had run down to form a small puddle on the wooden surface of the table.

"It would be like this chair. Something which having been completed is solid and contains a certain finality so that it is possible with it to know where you are, even in a sense to utilise it to provide yourself with an orientation."

The man paused as if expecting an answer. The crickets began again and the heat seemed to close in round the house like a net.

The house was situated just inside the fringe of a pine wood and close to some kind of swamp from which at times could be heard the aching croak of frogs. A rough road of packed sand connected it through devious turnings to the main road some ten miles away but the track wore such an appearance of disuse that no one would be tempted to exchange the security of the highway for its shadows and its dark trees beyond which could be seen only more trees and at times the illusion of something moving.

This being the case the cars and trucks drove past the track's opening at speed, knowing that in this part of the world the night came early and the next town was fifty miles up the coast. On occasions, therefore, it was possible to believe that the house did not exist and that its covering of lichen and ivy was no more than the projection of a lonely mind.

"It is not," the man was saying now, altogether what you might think. The fact that you wear the same tartan shirt for a week and join it to the pants of a suit you are too lazy to hang up is almost irrelevant. Nor is it even that when you think no one is looking you scratch the top of one of your mosquito bites and place it between your teeth with a certain satisfaction before beginning to chew gently and savour its consistency. These are only human idiosyncracies like wanting to stay alive and could be reasoned with as such.

"It is as if you are no longer capable of sensations, or rather not of sensations but of sensibilities. That day the clouds were lazing across their sky like their own reflection in a placid river. A humming bird was exploding from bush to bush and the air seemed full of the fragrance of the wild mimosa trees. Everything was so soft and pure and quiet it could have been the beginning of the world. And you were making love on the pine needles to a girl you hardly knew. Even then, however, it was not so much a matter of your activities which in themselves were no more than animal instincts, but that the girl was ugly and lay there on her back looking like a dying cow and with a weeping sore on her face. Yes, what was important was that she was ugly. And that you were not aware of the conflict between the illusion and reality."

The man rose to his feet, swaying slightly, and went through to the kitchen to return with another bottle of beer. As he removed
the top the liquid foamed up and some flecks fell to the floor before he could direct the neck towards his glass. The second glass was positioned on the table, three feet away, and directly in front of the other arm chair which in its turn was positioned so as to face the window and allow an uninterrupted view of the blackness outside. This glass had not been touched.

The man watched the foam on his beer gradually subside till only the amber liquid and a slight crown of white was left. Then he raised it in his left hand, inclining his head slightly in a downwards direction, and gulped back some of the contents. When he returned the glass to its original position on the table it could be seen that the level had fallen by almost two inches and that small bubbles were winking their way to the surface and disappearing.

The man withdrew a cigarette from the packet which was lying on the table beside the second glass and lit it. The noise of the crickets outside had formed into a solid wall of sound which could have been mistaken for silence. A handful of moths were fluttering against the glass of the window trying to find an entrance. With something akin to mechanical deliberation the man began to speak again, softly, but not so softly that words could not be heard in the room—or at least could not be heard at a distance of three feet.

'As yet you have refused to accept the reality that lies around you. You are not aware, or pretend not to be aware, of the conflict between illusion and reality. At times you do not seem to be able to realise that the future can only be a repetition of the present; that as soon as you convert others to your beliefs you no longer have faith in them yourself because you have been relieved of that necessity. It may, of course, be a consequence of your environment and upbringing because both of these factors
are said to be influential in such matters. On the other hand, is there any reason why it should be?"  

The man paused as if expecting an answer. None came.
"Is there any reason why it should be?" repeated the man.
"You have had an ordinary life, which is to say an interesting life, with its normal share of work and love and boredom. No one could look at your body and deny it. The skin on your hands is hard and rough like emery paper, and you still have a certain agility of movement. Your face—well, it's a face with two eyes and two ears and one nose and one mouth like any other. Perhaps the skin is beginning to look flabby round your cheeks and the nose, it is true, has the colour and texture of a burst tomato. But at your age that's only to be expected. And when the future is only a repetition of the present it's even more natural."

Another silence fell on the room. The pool of condensation from the beer bottle had spread out and was now beginning to drip gently onto a small fur rug which intervened between the table and the floor. This was the same tiled floor that ran all the way through the house and at one point, almost accidentally, made a short sally outside in the direction of the wood's shadows before stopping and petering out in confusion. The manner in which the tiles stopped at this point suggested an animal hunched up before a terror that could not be escaped. Had the tiles continued they would eventually have reached some kind of swamp which could not have been too far away because at times it was possible to hear the aching croak of the frogs. Further on, of course, they would have had to cross the twisting track of packed sand that ran through between the dark trees with a certain latent fear before emerging thankfully onto the main road.

"It was not," the man was saying, "altogether what you might think. The fact that you would seem to want to stay alive is only a human idiosyncrasy after all and may easily be overcome, being as it is sensible to reason. On the other hand, the question is whether at the end of the day it is really worth it. Not, I mean, the effort to stay alive, but that which would be required in even the simplest method of suicide. Let us presume, for example, that for reasons of tidiness you should prefer to utilise aspirins. In that case it would be necessary to rise from the armchair and put on your shoes and walk through the house to the bathroom with its tiled floor. Once there it would be necessary to open the door of the cabinet on the wall and to remove the dark brown bottle which stands on the second top shelf and contains, if we are to believe the label, one hundred pills to be taken one or two at a time to relieve headaches, neuralgia, colds, influenza and sundry other minor complaints—pills which, it must be noted, are reported to be dangerous if taken in doses in excess of the stated quantity, by which we may presume one or two tablets at two or three hour intervals. Having removed this brown bottle from the shelf it would be necessary to hold it in your left hand while with the other twisting the top firmly. That achieved—which, as with similar bottles, might create some difficulties—it would be necessary to remove the wad of cotton wool with a pair of eye-brow tweezers. At this point we may say the main point of the operation begins since it is the swallowing of these white tablets, now accessible, that may be expected to end your life. This in itself, however, is no easy task because to be in any
sense confident it is desirable to take the entire contents, which means swallowing in addition considerable quantities of water, and there is no guarantee that your stomach will not revolt and you may eject, amongst the vomit, the already dissolved white tablets."

The man gulped down some more beer. There was no voice audible in the room till he began to speak again.

"It is important to understand, therefore, that the easiest way may not in fact be the easiest way. The easiest way may be something entirely different. It may consist of removing the knife with its sharp edge for skinning animals from your pocket and snapping open the blade. This done, the next logical step is to locate a suitable vein beneath your flesh. As years of life in the open air have darkened the pallor of your skin, this may present a problem. By tensing your arm, however, a suitable vein may be expected to reveal itself, at which point it is necessary to grasp it firmly in the left hand (to forestall its natural habit of rolling away beneath the skin) and with the other to pick up the knife from the table and make a deep, sharp incision crosswise like a saw. For an instant there will be a sensation of pain but once the blood spurts across the tiled floor it will gradually diminish as your capacity to react itself weakens. Because comparatively little is involved in this method, it may well be the easiest method despite earlier prejudices to the contrary."

Outside the crickets had stopped their noise and there was a sudden fragment of silence hanging on its edge like a curved sheet of steel that at any moment would overbalance and fall. The man had paused as if expecting some kind of answer (though in fact no question as such had been posed) and when it became clear that none was to be given he gulped some beer from his glass. The latter was now almost empty and flecks of foam had hardened onto the uppermost edges of its inside. A moth had managed to find an entrance into the room and was fluttering round the light high on the raftered ceiling.

With something akin to mechanical deliberation the man began to speak again, softly, but not so softly that the words could not be heard in the room—or at least could not be heard at a distance of three feet where the other glass was positioned directly in front of the other chair.

"I would not," he was saying, "have you dead. But in the lack of another alternative, that would do. Which is to say that if you were dead that at least would be a solution or something definite. Something, you could say, that contains a certain finality so that it is possible to utilise it as a point of orientation in the conflict between illusion and reality."

The man had finished his beer. Swaying slightly he rose to his feet as if contemplating walking to the kitchen to fetch another. Instead he hesitated, and moving to the left removed the other glass which had not been touched from the table in front of the empty chair.

"It is not," he had begun again, "altogether what you might think. At times you do not seem to be aware that the present is only a repetition of the past, and as yet you have refused to accept the reality that lies around you. The terrible loneliness of it all."
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