







**IN NOMINE – KLAUS HØECK (2001)**

*for my father*

klaus h eck johnsen klaus  
h eck johnsen klaus h eck johnsen  
klaus h eck johnsen klaus  
h eck johnsen klaus h eck  
johnsen klaus h eck johnsen klaus  
h eck johnsen klaus h eck  
johnsen klaus h eck joh  
sen klaus h eck johnsen klaus h eck  
johnsen klaus h eck joh  
sen klaus h eck johnsen  
klaus h eck johnsen klaus h eck joh  
sen klaus h eck johnsen

on november the  
twenty seventh nineteen hun  
dred and thirty eight  
france was in a state  
of siege schou's factories en  
sured themselves possi  
bilities of ex  
pansion the trotting horse ad  
dison was put down  
and i myself came  
into the world at three for  
ty in the morning

i was born during  
a violent snowstorm my  
mother once told me  
(family legends  
have a strong tendency to  
outlive truth itself)  
i have actual  
ly checked the meteoro  
logical condi  
tions and fair is fair  
a violent hurricane  
raged the day before

the event took place  
in the national hospital's maternity  
ward and a swedish  
professor greeted me with  
the words: what a chap  
it's said that my hair  
twirled like the dragon-tails on  
the stock exchange spire  
and i gave the world  
and my mother a baleful  
and defiant look

mars was in libra  
red as a bohemian  
garnet just above  
malachite and violet  
sutures of the eastern  
horizon marking  
off the coming  
winters of reality  
the sun was then in  
sagittarius  
while uranus concealed  
itself in the eighth house

flashback to thirty  
nine: was i the one who o  
verturned the cradle  
is that something i  
can remember or just some  
thing i have been told  
was i the one who  
once capsized in front of the  
nursery door in  
a fictive sea bat  
tle can i have had so preg  
nant a memory

on the other hand  
i clearly recall the sum  
mer of forty two  
high with wheat and flames  
coming from the eastern front  
rumbling just like the  
andante in pro  
kofiev's fifth symphony  
but that is impos  
sible since it was  
not actually composed  
until forty four

so i was five years  
old then in forty three that  
much i remember  
and in a photo  
graph taken at the time i  
have a fringe à la  
j.r. ewing – i fell  
in love with the teacher at  
the kindergarten  
and used to sit on  
her chair while it still had some  
warmth from her body

the headword for the  
following year is strangely  
enough: banana ice  
which shows the impor  
tance of the sense of smell for  
the memory – but  
shouldn't i in  
that case have tasted a ba  
nana ice again in  
stead of the thought oc  
curring to me of the word  
itself 'banana ice'?

like the snowstorm from  
the north east like a thighbone  
like osidian

such is necessi  
ty i here pay homage to  
i of all people

who wrote such great po  
ems in praise of freedom for  
tified with rubies

like 'das wohltemper  
ierte klavier' such  
is necessity

prelude and fugue one  
more time and yet again mar  
vellous E major

like a samurai  
sword the keenest of the all keys  
connected with mer

cy in both physi  
ial and metaphysical  
sense connected with

infallibili  
ty and swans that shed their plum  
age in fairytales

necessity is  
what i want to write about  
there's no more time for

any digressions  
of lapis lazuli my  
days are fading a

way like smoke my joints  
are on fire i must get in  
to what is essen

tial i must get in  
to G major's inexor  
able sun topaz

necessity is  
not the same as the ruby  
glass of causali

ty but what the dif  
ference consists of i have  
no idea whatso

ever it is not  
a modus ponens either  
or a japanese

stone lamp outside in  
the snowshowers – you are my ne  
cessity my love

necessity is  
as death is completely just  
no one escapes – no

one – were you to change  
into a bird were you to  
offer your belo

ved in exchange no  
no camaraderie here  
no preferential

treatment here necess  
ity is as incorrup  
tible as borax

there is nothing small  
about necessity or  
dehydrated i

do not believe eith  
er it has been embellished  
with mother of pearl

or rectified in  
polish vodka like poe  
try it reminds one

more of a slaughter  
house than of a petit four  
confectioner's shop

i think that necess  
ity must taste of rust and  
of wood sorrel but

i know that it is  
larger than saturn and vi  
olet that it still

exists even though  
you shut your eyes and pretend  
that it is not so

necessity is  
pure and consecrated to  
death like youth itself

like C major like  
the syllables in a hai  
ku like my own name

such is necessi  
ty – don't try to talk to me  
about the little

spasm that is called free  
dom the little phobia  
of self-glorifi

cation that is called  
freedom like death itself such  
is necessity

nineteen hundred and  
forty five was a year that  
was objectively  
unlike others on account  
of the liberation in  
whose shadow every  
ego (no matter  
how transcendental) faded  
away and disap  
peared or became u  
nited with the histori  
cal necessity



skive in the hy  
po of recall oblivi  
on's last silver and  
salt strewn out over  
the photograph of the ship  
broker's patrician  
house where i lived for  
long periods like  
some sort of foundling like some  
body bereft of  
relations while my mother  
sailed the seven seas

the long summer ho  
lidays on the north coast of  
samsø in the glow of red  
campions where e  
ven at that early age i  
played on the beach all  
day long with the girl  
with whom twenty years later  
i was to enter  
into my first mar  
riage (even at that early  
age dubious games)

no deductions had  
reduced the ego's possi  
bilities every  
thing still lay in the  
open and the jewel of the  
immediate no  
thing prevented the  
imagination's flight to  
the ends of the world  
so in a certain  
sense all wishes were imme  
diately fulfilled

the ego had as  
yet not set itself as a  
nything else than a  
mirror image of  
its parents or of itself  
in venetian mir  
rors of dubious  
value (magical  
splinter in one's own eyes or  
the eyes of others)  
the ego had as yet not  
come to see itself

reflection had not  
as yet come into play the  
ego had not as  
yet been fractured and  
refracted in the prism  
of eternity  
into separate  
colours separate words on  
the paper's endless  
page upon page the  
ego had not as yet be  
come self-awareness

*'i will dwell in my name'*

night rain once again  
after the long dry spell in  
the month of july  
for a long time i  
lie listening to the drum  
ming on the tin roof  
will it fertilise  
my own roots deep down there  
in the dark will the  
drops fall over the  
forgotten grave of my fa  
ther in birkerød?

today i array  
myself in a white shirt and  
a silken tie i  
begin to search for  
a document at the back  
of the drawer of  
the writing desk it  
seems to me that my hands have  
a smell of forma  
lin about them i  
look up from my poems and  
thirty years have passed

the sky has been rent  
by light and the dark congealed  
at the bottom of  
yesterday's coffee  
cups i am looking at that  
pen-and-ink drawing  
of my father with  
the seven black pine trees that  
hangs out in the hall  
how on earth am i  
to remember what even  
he had forgotten?

like the vast fields of  
roses up behind the em  
bankments near bogen  
se like a single  
quartet movement – allegro  
assai for exam  
ple like overheat  
ed aluminium or  
like a thin drizzle  
is the secret life  
that i never lived toge  
ther with my father

i sleep with my head  
facing north as in fairy  
tales and i dream  
almost allegor  
ically of salt and of  
the larch boletus  
before waking at  
your sharp scent of ascorbic  
acid my love – per  
haps it is an act  
of treachery to be so  
utterly happy?

time flies past on the  
wings of a buzzard in ac  
ross the garden so  
swiftly that it is  
only this morning that i  
discover the chan  
ges and notice that  
i have come to resemble  
my father as he  
was on the final  
photograph taken of him  
all that time ago

i take back my name  
i retake in the liter  
al sense of the word  
its dark syllables  
of iron and of emerald  
after almost for  
ty years in exile  
sign with my baptismal name  
once more i transform  
myself into who  
i am closer i'll never  
get to my father

i practise in the  
utmost secrecy writing  
it down in chinese  
notebooks that have red  
corners and are dog-eared i  
whisper my name in  
great confidenti  
ality once more as i  
used to do in my  
childhood when it was  
embroidered on all my li  
nen and my washing

i will dwell in that  
name i have received by the  
grace of god and not  
by it being grant  
ed with the royal seal of  
frederik the ninth  
i will make my a  
bode in the name i one day  
will die in and clo  
ser i'll never get  
to a reconcilia  
tion with my father

my father in ti  
voli at the palladi  
um and in vester  
brogade my fa  
ther in köthen-anhalt my  
father's black dachshund  
his royal enfield and  
toyota my father's kid  
ney stone my father  
at the piano  
in holsteinsgade: quasi  
una fantasia

why did my father  
spend his time in germany  
during the war why  
did he send me a  
subscription to B.T. in  
my time at school why  
did he not come to  
my confirmation why did  
he hide bottles of  
port in the cistern  
why did he die without giv  
ing any answers?

i never knew my  
father have only heard a  
bout him and seen him  
from time to time (with  
such a shaky hand that the  
spanish coffee ser  
vice still clatters in  
my head still spins round on its  
bamboo pole in the  
chinese circus of  
the memory) only met  
him from time to time

like some parricide  
i had turned my memory  
into a secret  
and inaccessible  
place where my father lived  
alone with his shame  
his silk embroidered  
eagle on the reverse side  
of his lapel or  
was all of it no  
thing else than lies and poetic  
fabrication?

my inheritance  
from my father amounts as  
far as i can as  
certain and recall  
thirty years after his death  
to astigmati  
sm of the left eye  
a certain melancholy  
a surname and a  
share in a summer  
cottage near rørvig strand one  
that's been sold long since

did my father real  
ly marry no less than five  
times is it true that  
he pawned my christen  
ing present (a spoon of hall  
marked silver with bite  
marks on it from my  
milk teeth) is he really to  
blame is his absence  
to blame for the fact  
i have been seeking god (the  
father) ever since?

birkerød ceme  
tery is beautiful on  
such a late autumn  
day red with rust and  
brick as if it lay partial  
ly hidden in a  
sonnet cycle but  
i found neither my father  
nor his grave here nor  
his ghost of turquoise  
could it be he had simply  
never existed?

nor up at the gen  
eral registry under the  
neon lighting was  
his name to be found  
in violet ink in the  
city records where  
the accounts are kept  
my father had disappeared  
without trace and i  
myself was the on  
ly evidence that he had  
ever existed

it shot through the roots  
of my family tree like  
lightning from an un  
derground storm or the  
pain from root surgery at  
the dentist's or like  
st elmo's fire from  
søllerød cemetery  
where i at long last  
had managed to trace  
my family's and father's  
final resting place

and a great recon  
ciliation took place as  
my father rose with  
in me like an x  
ray photo dark with night-time  
rain and alumin  
ium and the small  
bitterness dissolved like salt  
in my blood like a  
thimble of hemlock  
juice that's emptied into the  
sea and disappears

far off spring's ordeal by fire  
and more silent than a nighttime sparrow

long before the heart was cast  
into its electric piece of amber

silent as a stone  
and long before i read post  
humous poetry

far off are czerny's études  
and my hands then completely unscathed

and my hands then completely unscathed  
wrote other words that were secret

other poems without plaster and holes  
purer still than sodium

once i used to write poems  
without words greater than death  
about this and that

long before i began to quote:  
'when the grasses shivered chill with rain'

when the grasses shivered chill with rain  
and stainless steel from solingen

opened my heart up with a sword  
as sharp as the E major prelude

when i was too strong  
to be living and too weak  
as yet to be dead

at a time when the fire's heart revealed  
swaying flowers of water

swaying flowers of water  
in the chasing of the ruby glasses

like the flames from another age  
or was it simply a reflection

of something that had  
taken place in the fairy  
tales of brothers grimm?

another death and  
another hunt rushing crashing through the forest

another hunt rushing crashing through the forest  
on mountainbike

or on mitsubi  
shi off-roader from langesø forest district

other power saws  
and english horns sound right back  
from when i was young

the buzzards gyre far above my words and  
i am visible visible

i am visible visible  
do not hide myself in juniper smoke

no longer conceal myself in  
the silver thickets of poetry

no longer dress in  
the woodpecker's borrowed feathers  
of cinnabar

coal and petrol like some other joe cocker  
torn apart by song

torn apart by song  
like an oratorio by stockhausen

like the pheasant at daybreak  
like a shower of rain on the motorway

like red glazed paper  
like the mind of mindlessness  
like aluminium

like the sultry dogdays  
where now are the companions the answerless?

where now are the companions the answerless?  
those who travelled northwards

who discovered their own goetheanum  
in the heart of poetry

those who tuned their sets  
to radio bremen on  
FM 96.7 MHz

who died of their poems?  
beneath the grass the lost children lie freezing

beneath the grass the lost children lie freezing  
that i never had

before it was too late at the ferti-  
lity clinic on ildervej

where they hopelessly  
perished from injections and ar-  
tificial light

silent is the slow fall of old age  
far off spring's ordeal by fire

hummeltoftevej  
full of roses perhaps from  
before memory  
a mirror shard in  
side the brain somewhere a place  
from freud's fairytales  
like silver paper  
like a flashback of fure  
sø i never saw  
hummeltoftevej  
in a most queer gleam of am  
niotic fluid

hummeltoftevej  
seen ajar and skew through  
the eye of abel  
seen from below be  
neath a homeknitted light  
blue flying helmet  
seen from a pushchair  
in haste across flagstones be  
tween hedges and rain  
seen in a cloud of  
talcum and seen through a re  
construction of words

hummeltoftevej  
before the second world war  
rustic presumably  
like larch trees in the  
month of november  
sixty years on like  
a piano so  
nata by rachmaninov  
while it is raining  
before memory's  
pinpricks because there was no  
thing to remember

hummeltoftevej  
red with tiles a genera  
tion later ruler  
straight as the lefthand  
parting in hair combed at that  
time using water  
the library sorgen  
fri station all of it oh  
so neat and tidy  
hummeltoftevej  
seen through the front window of  
a fiat punto

on from there to gods  
banegade in a sud  
den hyperbola  
of dampness and draughts  
to a two-roomed apartment  
with with backyard loo  
on from there to a  
smell of kitchen range gas rings  
and bitter almonds  
on from there to the  
railway terrain alongside  
ingerslevsgade

thus did the course of  
my life continue in a  
curve of hard tracks al  
most as in a book  
by lawrence sterne that concludes  
before it has begun  
like never-ending  
digressions of violet  
i can remember  
it to this day when  
i pass through godsbanega  
de in home-from-work mood

godsbanegade's  
lightshafts its stairwells with its  
loads of coke and coal  
godsbanegade's  
divorces and its sex re  
lated offences  
godsbanegade's  
metal fatigue its mondays  
hard-white with spirits  
godsbanegade's  
dairies and all its outbreaks  
of scarlet fever



now gleams the sun in  
all its glory out over  
padesø church and

it is not even sunday or some  
other church festival after

trinity but a perfectly nor  
mal seven sleepers day that slow

ly fades away in  
to a dream in the summer  
night's fleeting coolness

a heavenly breath  
sighs o'er the dust in all the  
cemeteries in

all the cemeteries of denmark  
a breath of elder and dog rose

sighs over the heart's nineteen grammes  
of calcium till the resurrection

it causes the rain  
now falling it sires all spir  
it now descending

it sires all spirit  
now descending into the  
poem's core of words

which it scatters to the four winds and  
on every side to form one tongue

that stretches all the way from 'pader  
borner beer' to 'heinz tomato

ketchup' and the new  
testament in jesu's name  
let tongues be aglow

in jesu's name let  
tongues be aglow with emmen  
thaler and bordeaux

and forming the sound of your name  
my love: a rose branch covered in salt

and your kisses that burn with si  
licon and almond oil as well as

the line of the hymn  
by grundtvig 'now gleams the sun  
in all its glory'

in jesu's name let  
tongues be aglow in every  
key there is with song

and interjections with all the  
words of creation the first as

well as the last which no one un  
derstands before he is dead and gone

bearing the living  
word in mind it sires all spir  
it now descending

it sires all spirit  
now descending from the great  
quarry of the sky

where thunder has its home and god  
although in other castles than the

clouds of silver and mother of pearl  
out there in the west at the end

of the world and that  
of life where a heavenly  
breath sighs o'er the dust

a heavenly breath  
sighs o'er the dust well mixed with  
nitrofoska and

pesticides from the farmer's toxic  
unit there is an earthly dust

over the spirit's visibili  
ty of green miracles it stinks

of death and corrup  
tion even in the summer  
night's fleeting coolness

in the summer night's  
fleeting coolness beneath the  
radar screens of the

elder bush we cool our senses –  
for no project exists that is wild

er than the fire of faith and the dark  
flame of love and the protuber

ances of hope a  
round the heart now gleams the sun  
in all its glory

now gleams the sun in  
all its glory striking the  
heart's dish aerial

so that creation may be seen  
as the reality it really

is without distortion in all  
its grandeur and its mortal splendour

in nomine in  
nomine in jesu's name  
let tongues be aglow

in the summer night's  
fleeting coolness i'm lying  
on my air mattress

close to the darkest forests of the  
heart which are so frightening and

compelling as death itself where  
light only reigns in the realm of dreams and

in paradise or  
in the hymn: now gleams the sun  
in all its glory

a heavenly breath  
sighs o'er the dust from the hole  
in the ozone layer

ultraviolet and invisible  
from another light source than

the sun that sounds like a vio  
lin concerto as it sets in

the little belt and  
is put out in the summer  
night's fleeting coolness

it sires all spirit  
now descending while the leg  
horn cockerel crows

unheeded and to deaf ears from the yard  
of the nextdoor neighbour as

if just three times did not matter  
and two and five were just the same while

the corn is smoking  
in pollen: a heavenly  
breath sighs o'er the dust

in jesu's name let  
tongues be aglow with cinders  
and coals and words that

smoke from july's charcoal stacks words  
that bear an ordeal of fire through the

poem to melt reality and lan  
guage together to form one

world and one uni  
ty once more it sires all spir  
it now descending

a heavenly breath  
sighs o'er the dust on the win  
dow sills and over

the persian carpet from the flying  
summers of my childhood as if

a great telekinesis is tak  
ing place somewhere behind my back

or whenever i  
close my eyes it sires all spir  
it now descending

in the summer night's  
fleeting coolness we stroll through  
the beeches' baron

ial halls in adidas shoes on  
the border between words and speech

in poetry's greenest vales and list  
en to death's nightingales which can

only be compre  
hended when a heavenly  
breath sighs o'er the dust

now gleams the sun in  
all its glory over strand  
bakken near ege

løkke as not in the poem from  
long ago when it set but now

over the basalt of love and spir  
itual flint and gabbro now

before it cools it  
self here too in the summer  
night's fleeting coolness

i confess that i have had other gods  
than god satan's bird lost

one of its feathers in my room  
on some occasion and i unwittingly

picked it up and ever since have  
made use of it as a book

mark – oh yes i have broken  
the first commandment quite a lot of times





i also admit that i flirted  
with buddha for a while in my

young days that i devoted myself  
to the sudden light of snow and

brass that takes place inside the brain more  
than to the moment of darkness

that takes place in the heart as now  
as we take a run in morud wood

furthermore i have worshipped death  
(as has always been the habit of

young men) more in the form of mar  
ble statues in various parks and

in nocturnal cemeteries  
or in a manner that was pictur

esque as among the cypress trees in böck  
lin's painting 'toteninsel'

the great void once used to attract me  
(in the white night of puberty)

what false idol there in the  
hall of mirrors of introspection what

selfglorification on its  
pillar of ash what temple very

nearly as compelling and in  
comprehensible as the cosmos

skovshoved fire thorn  
that was the beginning of  
the first poem of

my first collection  
written in the shelter of  
the dark and the big

clematis that flowered  
on the terrace's spruce-stem  
fence that was the be

ginning of my a  
priori like a rune en  
graved in coastal clay

a rune engraved in  
coastal clay like that engrav  
ing of christian

høgsberg that has been  
printed between two black pa  
ges in my first book

like a raging o  
blivion just when i had  
recalled everything

and once more have re  
united myself with your  
name of thrashing fish

your name of thrashing  
fish and letters that are green  
er that romanti

cism itself like  
gold leaf on black leather or  
like a transparent

alphabet that has  
broken the intellect in  
its prism your eight-point

ed star your light so  
strong that it darkens your wild  
navigation marks

your wild naviga  
tion marks that still show farther  
out than the waters

of the sound farther  
in than the words on their yel  
lowed pages that still

havethe faint smell of  
smoke about them still show on  
wards to the poem's

early morning when  
not a single second  
spreads eternity

when not a single  
second spreads eternity  
but when thought transcends

its own categor  
ies of salt and roses and  
penetrates into

the space of the in  
conceivable where the words  
no longer express

what they normally can  
but the day cycle itself  
quivers on zero

all amber and be  
ginning and ending which is  
here now and always

and it is no mean  
consolation to parti  
cipate in this u

nion and this great  
conspiracy between life  
and death this tremend

ous transparency  
behind which the gaze is as  
blue as vitriol

on sønder boule  
vard i paid anne lise  
twenty-five øre  
once to let me see  
her having a pee and we  
played at ghost trains down  
in the cellar and  
hide and seek outside in the  
bicycle sheds there  
where all of the fair  
ytale adventures and my  
memory begin

on sønder boule  
vard an angel's wing once fell  
in flames down onto  
the asphalt when the  
house opposite on the cor  
ner of vesterbro's  
passage was bombed  
by the royal air force and sev  
en of my playmates  
were killed during a  
birthday party being held  
up on the fourth floor

on sønder boule  
vard we carried on our pri  
vate war against the  
neighbours' houses with  
catapults in summer and  
snowballs in winter  
on sønder boule  
vard we built castles out of  
cardboard and barbed wire  
on sønder boule  
vard's field of battle i was  
both strong and happy

hallo herluf trol  
lesgade here i come fif  
ty years later to  
inspect the building  
at the back of number twen  
ty-four which now on  
ly exists in memory's  
innermost secret  
recesses darker  
still than the coal-cel  
lar which does not even ex  
ist there any more

the stairway smells of  
lime and vinegar just as  
it used to do that  
time the child molest  
er showed me the photograph  
of a nude woman  
and asked me if he  
could look at my willie the  
day before the re  
sistance movement li  
quidated frederiksen  
from the second floor

hello herluf trol  
lesgade do you remem  
ber me? – it was me  
who stole a techno  
car in the kindergarten  
it was me who sailed  
excessively with  
the harbour's motor ferry  
and it was me who  
played here with kirsten  
do you remember me her  
luf trollesgade?

yggdrasil dripping  
pure gold once more as when i  
wrote these words more ab

ruptly yggdrasil  
stop dripping stop gold stop se  
parated from each

other as now no  
longer where they are welded  
together again

and heal the poem  
under the lightning para  
bola of the storm

the lightning para  
bola of the storm farther  
off in another

poem etched into  
the mirrors' reverse side like  
cracks in the past

which in a way (con  
cretely) repeat themselves when  
the eriksminde

farmer kicked the earth  
and spoke these words: and the crop  
will do well – he said

and the crop will do  
well he said aage iver  
sen who i have just

bought heartland from for  
a sum that the tax author  
ities have nothing

to do with it is  
space i have bought i replied  
a mode of percep

tion i thought in my  
heart of hearts or the dew that  
forms above the heart

or the dew that forms  
above the heart my love when  
we bathe in the kat

tegat's aqua re  
gia and dissolve the po  
em's last remnants of

gold in the blood's far  
greater sea the residu  
um of the letters

of seaweed and the  
very first words of your lips'  
taste of salt and ants

an old confidence  
between words  
i hardly have a

need to write any  
more like the elder that is  
flowering deep with

in the forests or  
in brother grimm's fairytales  
undisputed

by the final lines  
of the poem: thus things were  
to come to an end

plucked on the lips of  
eternity – i wrote in  
the hubris of youth

but i stand by those  
words even though forty years  
have since passed i do

not hesitate for  
one single second (the time  
i won) in repeat

ing them among o  
ther words and incessant talk  
about the weather

incessant talk a  
bout the weather ever since  
the mid sixties the

one torrent of words  
after the other dashing  
across the paper

cloud formations that  
are the same size as the brain  
and i no longer

know its whys and where  
fores – the hedges of the past  
lit up by the dark

the hedges of the  
past lit up by the dark like  
the lilacs at night

what was it i was  
meant to remember i on  
ly know it had to

be remembered on  
this my thirteenth wedding an  
niversary – it

is this and the po  
em's beginning: oak stone ygg  
drasil dripping gold

along the pathways of infinity's spirals  
we turned counter-clockwise

out of corkscrew convolutions  
gilt with powder into the moment

here and now in fu  
nen in søndersø district  
in hedebovej

following the heart's own paths and its contortions  
we came to saturn

we came to saturn  
or did we come to heartland

did we suddenly  
sober up although we drink  
red wine each evening

(banda azul croix  
de sud chateau haux or  
else sangre brava)

did we move out of  
the prose poems of the town  
to build our own house?

to build our own house  
among all the sonatas  
black with cempexo

with whiter wine with  
pigeon-frame windows and  
yet blacker gables

like an iceland farm  
a second hlidarende  
from the family

of my father placed  
between the words and the game coverts  
in T's wood

in T's wood  
where the poetry comes to an end  
or where it begins

(it all depends on  
which direction you are com  
ing from on your walk)

there between the words  
and reality we took  
up residence at

that boundary at  
that wall of granite boulders  
and at U's pitcher

and at U's pitcher  
(just another name for the  
trundemose trough)

under the snowdrops  
at the root of the springtime  
and stained with red lead

between mørkenborg  
and hindevad inn not far  
from where we live

between chessmen  
and the black salt of the apple trees  
all was beauty

all was beauty  
the wind turbines the pylons on  
their way westwards

the sewage reser  
voir out at brenderup  
from where the fields and

the sonnets had their  
slurry and rebis brought out  
every february?

we had no  
reply for god  
the forming strangers then came on the scene

the forming strangers then came on the scene  
with ideas and  
blueprints

of dreams and castles  
in the air more wondrous than  
any camelot

their angle irons and  
their hardboiled eggs and with their  
drawing tables and

their white ar  
chitect offices  
and the future accumulated

and the future accumulated  
in a world of  
speculation

that only exist  
ed on parchment paper and  
drawings' measurements

which could just as eas  
ily have been yesterday  
or some other day

but not been here  
and now where time itself grows  
like enormous plants

like enormous plants  
of inaccessibili  
ty poetry lay

behind us like woods  
where no one goes apart from  
those who are poor in

the word the childless  
and those who were snared in the  
thicket of brambles

the past lay there in  
its word  
like mountains that are insurmountable

like mountains that are insurmountable  
the curves of language rose up

in those poems that would never at  
any time come to be written

we arrived at a  
round five late in the milleni  
um at these words:

we left the poem  
along the pathways of infinity's spirals

dedicated to  
no one these words which i've not  
hit upon myself

(and the roses the  
black-red ones only themselves  
and their creator)

dedicated to  
the paper on which they've been  
written and the book

they original  
ly come from the words say and  
write siriasis

say and write siri  
asis – look it up just once  
again in meyer's

foreign dictiona  
ry dogdays' disease sunstroke  
or meningitis

what on earth can i  
have meant by it so many  
poems ago? – so

why not go on and  
repeat the words instead: re  
peat snail sky clover

space time now the day  
right here on the very stroke  
of twelve of brass here

at heartland high noon  
over the grass and the first  
of the yellow-brown

tricholoma with ex  
actly the same look as i  
myself have here in

my sixtieth year  
the coordinates: x, y,  
z gravitation

the coordinates  
x, y, z gravitation  
as easy as that

and as hard – the bo  
dy's weight when the soul now will  
up the heart's eclipse

when the spirit now  
is light the finitude of  
dust and of ash when

the eternal now  
exists only cut off from  
us by a second

like purity in  
the shadow of a poppy  
time is in itself

(before it is stopped  
out in omega hour with  
stopwatch or with quartz)

only borne by its  
own happening as is a  
haiku by its own

instant or by the  
snail's circles in the eter  
nity of the grass

the sun dizzying  
sand silurian like de  
posits in the mind

formations mirror  
ings of something that finds it  
self again its mir

ror in these water  
surfaces near æbelø  
where we wade in a

pattern of light that  
only contains its own mean  
ing of tartan sun

tartan sun a bird  
hieroglyphic small vulcan  
oes the words are fall

ing like rose petals  
from one book to another  
one without address

without greeting with  
out any numbers like the  
riders on the sev

enteenth stage of this  
year's tour de france dedi  
cated to no one

thank god i am once  
again going to be cross  
ing this enormous

forest of sona  
tas framed with tin and ivy  
like a new begin

ning a poem with  
out words as if it was the  
very first time or

the last time like guess  
ing stone paper scissors at  
each and every chord

all these trees that are  
bending under the weight of  
their own shadows all

these tones that are red  
der than the saltpetre of  
winter all these po

ems in which you can  
completely lose your way a  
mong the windfalls

of the words until  
you go through the eye of a  
needle of silence

i do not say you  
cannot possibly lose your  
way in a single

word – 'god' for exam  
ple or in a sonata  
that's full of turquoise

i do not say that  
a-minor does not possess  
its own enigmas

but it is in the  
great works that becoming ut  
terly lost takes place

such a great work is  
domenico scarlatti's  
'oeuvre pour clavier'

glittering with erg  
with gravitation and with  
perfection all of

that necessity  
to which i have been subject  
and in which i am

to go in search of  
the black ebony of the  
first minimal rift

necessity al  
so has its problems also  
has its forbidden

fifth so to speak ev  
en though it might sound somewhat  
strange to talk about

necessary mis  
takes it is nevertheless  
those which i am hunt

ing for them which i  
am to rap myself over  
mouth and poem with

it will once more be  
a real pleasure for me to  
demonstrate the in

sufficiency of  
every system the secret  
rift of the perfect

the little white lie of  
every truth and the synco  
pated notes of the

parma-manuscript  
to cultivate the burnt um  
bra of the errors

like the first cracks to  
appear in the ceramics  
of the ice like a

snowdrop in pade  
sø cemetery like a-  
major that's under

mined by f-minor's  
chants lugubres like a doub  
le rook sacrifice

like the poem that  
suddenly disturbs language  
with new words and signs

like the great spring  
thaws between the sonatas  
like the absolu

tion like the glass mo  
saic of winter with one  
piece missing such are

the errors i am  
referring to or the ex  
ceptions i from now

on intend to lash  
my poem with like some fla  
gellant or other

there is room for er  
rors in this mighty inte  
gral of music there

is time to take li  
berties between the pre- and  
post cruciate and

that is perhaps what  
can be called consumma  
tion when the white and

the black notes comple  
ment each other in the ear's  
cinema organ?

but now that para  
dox occurs that perfection  
itself constitutes

the greatest error  
since thought is unable to  
think that concept with

out thinking itself  
at the same time and precise  
ly that it's una

ble to do – this strange  
skate egg in the marble  
heart of perfection

then felding allé  
blue with schilla like a mir  
ror scoured with the spi  
rit's chemicals framed  
in the heart of jutland and  
without a scratch just  
like childhood itself  
and boyhood's gleaming silver  
paper in which we  
used to bake new po  
tatoes behind the fields that  
belonged to balling

felding allé is  
large seen through the sapphire of  
the third eye although  
disappointing in  
daylight on this win  
ter's day on which i  
have visited it to ver  
ify my life disap  
pointingly tiny  
and insignifi  
cant seen through death's re  
versed binoculars

back once again to  
birkholmsvej to copenha  
gen where i came from  
back once more to the  
outskirts of my consciousness  
in kongens lyngby  
where the adventure  
really first began among  
the tinfoil of the  
rubbish dump and the  
black stallions from the stud  
farm of stenrødgård



on birkholmsvej road  
i earned my first money twen  
ty five øre for  
every dandelion  
that i pulled up by  
the root twenty five  
øre for life it  
self neither more nor less now  
as then when birkholms  
vej resembled flintstones that  
had been soaked in a  
marinade of salt

i further confess that i am  
infatuated with fragonard's

and chardin's colours that have  
been ground more on nature itself than on

a stone roller – not to mention  
the wonderful women of fran

cois boucher that have set in  
varnish and such solid sensual flesh

i have gone astray in the  
oil paintings of joseph vernet in the

far depths of the lightest for  
ests to find the springs and waterfalls

of the holy spirit  
and to see that which no one otherwise sees:

the clearest of everything to  
perceive the light within the light

i admit that i have also  
studied darkness (for example in

certain pictures by the painter  
ruysdael) because night too has to be

conquered i acknowledge this depend  
ence on images and the car

bon fourteen of darkness which  
i'll probably also be punished for



it is the poem's double  
burden (paradox): to have to receive

eternity in its spider's web (the  
spirit's glowing internet)

and simultaneously at this  
climax write off itself do away

with (decreate) itself in  
order not to end up as an image

i am not saying a poem may not  
be beautiful just that

there is a time before and  
a time after the perception (the cul

mination) when the poem no  
longer mirrors either itself or

its surroundings but rather gathers the  
world into reality

i admit i have this tendency to  
disregard the poem's de

lication and instead to culti  
vate it for its own sake (as art)

as image and as imaging of  
that which is up there in the sky

or down here on the earth or in  
the water that is under the ground

i acknowledge with a certain unease  
that in particular i

have not kept the third commandment  
that my soul is ashamed behind its black

panes (like the windows of the house at  
night) that unfortunately i

am unable to do anything  
at all about it – god dammit

i have god help me spattered my  
poems (even entire collections

of poems) with god's name  
like statues in a park or like magnifi

cent sepulchral monuments white with  
bird droppings white with the gua

no of the spirit besmeared and sul  
lied with this utter presumption

i have abandoned myself  
to all kinds of gluttony (also called

gula) squandered god's word in  
various prayers may god here and may

god there may god this and may god that  
may god most everywhere i ac

knowledge my misuse of bible  
quotations and manna from heaven

i confirm i've this weakness  
for brand names (mostly the inexpensive)

wrangler – adidas – everlast  
gillette and williams ice blue too

this disastrous urge to surround  
myself with what are borrowed plumes

on all my sportswear n.y.  
ucla or inri to name but a few

perhaps it is most often the  
name itself that has interested me

more than the actual content perhaps it  
is the letters more than the

living spirit the harle  
quinade of the letters their magnifi

cent graffiti their black trident per  
haps it is the letters that kill



it's a helluva long time it's  
a blasted sight too long godammit

it's a devil of a long time one  
rot in hell of a bleeding long

time since an end should be put  
to what bloody well can't sodding be de

scribed as any go-to-hell else  
than damned blasphemy and sacrilege

holbergsvej lies in  
sorø at precisely the  
same location as  
it did half a cen  
tury ago when i used  
to live at number  
one just opposite  
the school of domestic science  
with all the girls that  
mirrored themselves in  
the windows and in my pi  
tuitary's quartz

in actual fact  
holbergsvej leads into the  
forest indirect  
ly at any rate  
via a disused railway  
track that i used to  
balance on as long  
as i was able to un  
til i reached the char  
coal stack of fairytales that  
still smoulders on at  
back of my mind



unconceivably  
beautiful between time and  
night bordering on  
something which i do  
not know like a butterfly  
that's been punched out in  
white gold on my writ  
ing desk like rhomb-porphry  
on the window sill  
that is how 'the close'  
lies in a sonnet that i  
have never written

next the main building  
grey with rainy weather and  
detentions built by  
peder malling af  
ter thurah's lifetime pro  
ject went up in flames  
i have often sought  
refuge in its boiler rooms  
from german lessons  
and my school-leaving  
photo may well still hang in  
the blue corridor

the west dorm that looks  
out onto the acade  
my infirmary  
oh just to lie there  
once more one's only ailment  
being a savage  
attack of truan  
cy on a cold winter's day  
oh just to lie there  
under the warmth of  
the duvet to lie there and  
read 'really the blues'

*'That act of love  
to remember one departed'*

inside the illuminated room i am sitting  
with a black book

that has within its covers all the words  
that were never written down

that never bubbled to  
the surface of the poem  
like tetrachlorine

i'm sitting in a half-lotus position  
looking out at the night

looking out at the night  
that is gleaming above the heart like titian

like a coat of arms i have  
designed myself in honour of my death

the dark too shall be  
celebrated the dark cut  
out of balsa wood

or like an acronym – because  
the night is also inside me

the night is also inside me  
bitter with iron and with olives

the night's moist branches of for  
sythia that scorch like salt of hartshorn

the night which no one  
can conquer or can take pos  
session of with light

and life in one piece the night tonight  
and within this inner darkness

and within this inner darkness  
deeper still than the darkness of Le

leth – el Kadr at this twenty sev  
enth midnight i call upon the dead

because darkness and  
darkness engender the e  
manations of light

i'm looking out of a window  
i'm looking out of a pane of glass

i'm looking out of a pane of glass  
or is it just a delusion

when i read Hymnen an die  
Nacht and catch sight of a geranium

burning there inside  
the house of pain where i my  
self once made my way

along the corridors of darkness  
into an illuminated room?

into an illuminated room  
at seventeen webersgade

where the moon once boiled over  
with savage rage and polyurethane

on the wings of mem  
ory back on the  
rotor of poe

try but the poem finds nothing  
there is nobody in there just light

there is nobody in there just light  
as if god is photographing

consciousness with instamatic cam  
era and electronic flash

or the soul is tak  
ing a bath in potash and  
in developer

inwardly: the outer light  
and outside only the inner darkness

and outside only the inner darkness  
after the pyrotechnics

even darker than usual af  
ter the light of the aquarids

here in april where  
they fell to earth in showers  
and hit my left foot

perhaps i will discover the last star  
if i walk on down the street

if i walk on down the street  
(‘out on the road’ is what they say round here)

it will not be all that far to walk  
to the spring of reality

all that’s needed is  
to take just one step out of  
the poem’s dactyls

and i’d be right in walpurgis night’s tin  
looking up at the window

looking up at the window  
it says in memory’s book of obli

vion printed in basker  
ville and so as to make it come true

i look up at my  
window that gleams like a  
poem by strunge

and if i read the poem a bit later  
i will see just the same

i will see just the same  
inside me will i like a déjà vu?

again and again like a  
whole series of photographs of the dead?

if the dead are a  
part of us are we also  
then a part of them

as a foretaste of eternity or  
as in the inner night?

as in the inner night  
as in chess's king's indian variant

as in joy division  
as in bowie's 'sound and vision'

and in a green ru  
by as in an elbow  
room inside myself  
i am sitting  
inside the illuminated room i am sitting

*'memory with variations'*

my other root reach  
es deeper down than holmen  
cemetery deep  
er than the rose that  
i have just planted this last  
autumn in the name  
of omar khayyam  
deeper even than meta  
physics and sili  
cates right down to the  
heavens is how far its lov  
ing kindness reaches

memory can be  
come recollection become  
a whole series of  
years that cannot be  
distinguished from each other  
on the grid of the  
calendar no mat  
ter how much i attempted  
to wipe the pane clean  
so as to gain a  
final glimpse of my mother  
out there in the dark

my mother rose a  
gain for a instant when i  
opened a bottle  
of polish alco  
hol which was from her life  
time (spirytus rek  
tyfikowany)  
like a delayed heirloom my  
mother rose again  
like the genie of  
the lamp from ninety six per  
cent pure alcohol

but when i discov  
ered the black spots (thrips from last  
year) behind the glass  
which covered the por  
trait of my mother (taken  
by mydtskov) i was  
suddenly afraid  
that nothing remains of  
the dead though that  
did not call the ex  
istence of god into ques  
tion in any way

memory can be  
come recollection can be  
broken into bits  
and pieces by the  
chimes of the clock from pade  
sø church a late de  
cember day no mat  
ter how much i attempted  
to retain my moth  
er's image as one  
true unity among the  
sundays of advent

my mother was born  
and grew up on amager  
near artillery  
road - i do not know  
much myself about that is  
land's lanterns and fog  
horns (i refer to  
rifbjerg's poems) but i stand  
nevertheless despite  
all this with my one  
leg firmly planted in a  
marcadian soil

her childhood passed to  
put it briefly like any  
other childhood sur  
rounded by the heart's  
willow scrub - no not complete  
ly like childhood for  
all of her brothers  
died either of volvulus  
or of the black i  
vy of tubercu  
losis up at the coast hos  
pital at refsnaes

my mother has be  
come an evening walk down by  
the sea a sharp smell  
of iodine in  
the sinuses a bank of  
clouds moving westwards  
become a stab in  
the heart with a knitting need  
le an english trans  
lation in anoth  
er book which as yet only  
exists on paper

my mother has be  
come a rococo chair with  
canvas embroider  
y of yellow ro  
ses embroidered by herself  
or has become a  
bell-pull with the words  
'happy christmas' in cross-stitch  
my mother has be  
come a bottle of  
pectin become kitchen salt  
a raging winter

my mother has be  
come three glasses of jim bean  
brand bourbon whisky  
a pinch of lemon  
verbena and an open  
sandwich with smoked ha  
libut and pepper  
one late evening when i put  
memory to the  
test empty memo  
ry's and midnight's wicker bas  
ket full of seaweed

and memory advances stealthily on stock  
inged feet in its sharp  
smell of clementines  
and brine 'can you remember  
can you remember'  
it whispers with a  
voice mysterious and draped  
in crape - 'yes i clearly remember you  
and your seven league boots with  
holes in' i answer

and oblivion sneaks in like a thief in the  
night with its shoes on  
backwards 'have you forgotten  
have you forgotten'  
it whispers with silvery  
voice - 'yes i'd almost forgotten you and  
your moth-eaten table runner hiding  
at the back of the linen  
closet' i admit

i assume that my  
mother had a post mortem  
done on her just as  
elegant as a  
cut by lucio fonta  
na that her heart and  
her kidneys have been  
examined much more closely  
than her conscience has  
been that she was not  
stuffed with cotton wool and tow  
and forgetmenots

my mother has be  
come three shovelfuls of earth  
an urn of ashes  
mixed with white roses  
become three millimetres  
of hoar frost on the  
grass at holmen cem  
etery become a look  
full of wild dreams be  
neath the snow showers be  
come the last seven words in  
this poem by me

*'The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad,  
and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose'*

blossom as a rose-  
filled bower shall my garden al  
so and by god that's

what it's doing this morning  
while the dog-days unfold in red

and gold late in life like a  
magisterium between 'rosa

isphahan' and 'wes  
tern sun' – and be re-won shall  
the barren desert

shall the barren de  
sert stretch to the start of the  
new millenium

like fallow-fields in the heart that are  
full of stones thistles and navew

where jesus walks about on  
naked feet as always and as never

or shall our very  
thoughts our very words blossom  
in a golden year?

among birds in con  
cert fall ton upon ton of  
shit and guano

which i collect in black plastic sacks  
and take them with me to the land

fill where frightful stench and putre  
faction is a tiny price to pay

for all the songs and  
the beauty that shall blossom  
as a rose-filled bower

blossom as a rose-  
filled bower is what even the  
motorway does a

cross funen up and down the slopes  
like a brush fire of dog roses like

grateful dead's logo round one's  
pate and knudshoved ferry terminal

may also the gar  
dens of poems now blossom  
as a rose-filled bower

blossom as a rose-  
filled bower shall all our grave  
spaces as a sign

of a great moving of the spirit more  
than recollection more than

memory itself as a  
sign that we one day will meet again

among the roses  
among none but us among  
songbirds in concert

among songbirds in  
concert among the shadows  
among udby's trees

under the calendar under the  
blood that's now congealed under death's

silicon under the ocean under  
the stars' winter gardens un

der the heart shall the  
poem's mustard seed blossom  
in a golden year

blossom in a gold  
en year rich as the barley's  
copernicus gold

brighter than isaiah's prophecies a  
bout carmel and sharon with

a strong smell of salt and  
cinnabar of poppies wormwood and clover

all the wildest of  
flowers of god's creation shall  
the barren desert

shall the barren de  
sert really be sprayed all o  
ver with round up and

be bathed in saltpetre again and again  
so it turns into waste

lands of uniformity  
and straw shortening in the union's name

shouldn't all the  
kingdom of denmark blossom  
as a rose-filled bower?

blossom as a rose-  
filled bower shall 'heartland' a hun  
dred years after our

death behind its enchanted hedges when  
all's forgotten and we have

reawoken as if nothing  
had happened in all eternity

shall 'heartland' blossom  
a hundred years on blossom  
as a rose-filled bower

i chose with the ut  
most deliberation bud  
dies the social net  
work and girls (for some inex  
plicable reason  
they chose me) which thus  
led to my youth becoming  
consummated i  
chose in other words  
to fulfil the general  
part of my being

but it was the great  
mornings white with tin out o  
ver the lake the great  
losses of memo  
ry framed with ivy and the  
leaves of oak trees the  
great rites of passage  
evenings in the woods that made  
me become a po  
et or was it mere  
ly the memory of them  
which brought it about?

i left sorø a  
cademy without any  
feeling of resent  
ment in a prince of  
wales tartan jacket with my  
student's cap packed in  
my trunk (it was some  
thing you then were ashamed of)  
as a gentleman  
in spite of every  
thing ready to contest or  
to conquer the world

there were nine black flowers  
along with a silk turban  
on 'queen of the night'

which shone brightly some  
where else out in the garden  
with covert glances

where the tulips ex  
changed other words than those which  
actually exist

one two three – nine ex  
pectations for the children  
i would never have

one two three – eight were  
the blossoms that i watered with  
cold camomile tea

even so the spring  
scorched every single one of  
them with its phosphates

that cruel spring which  
flashed its forks of lightning in  
the bedroom mirrors

from another poem  
that i remember better  
than the actual spring

and then there were just  
seven bulbs remaining one  
fine night with hoar frost

down there in their re  
bis where the poems keep on  
growing in the dark

down there by the bot  
tommost words where silence  
also keeps on growing

down there amongst the  
seven last words' incompre  
hensibility

one two three – six black  
tulips forming a whole cir  
cle around the heart

like the spiced olives  
from bordeaux arranged in their  
preserving glasses

which we bought at the  
supermarket and which we  
found so delicious

until the day we  
overfed ourselves on their  
fire and vitriol

and then there were on  
ly five chances left in their  
green nylon net in

which the bulbs hung dry  
ing indoors above the oil-  
fired central heating

until the follow  
ing year at the same place with  
the same necessi

ty and care as if  
it had been a poem i  
was busy writing

then there were only  
three left under the light's col  
umn of saltpetre

danger danger sol  
dier the clock's striking e  
leven – or was it

the poem or on  
ly the words 'the clock's striking  
eleven' like an

inner tautolo  
gy or an echo of ne  
cessity itself?

one two three – two chan  
ces left now out of the nine  
original words

like notes in 'a song  
book for blackbirds' like tulips  
in the month of may

like the sperm cells in  
a separator like the  
ovaries like our

final opportu  
nities on the calcium  
threshold of old age

and then there was on  
ly one bulb left in the black  
cauldron of the sun

completely without  
saturnian rings just like  
a suite by handel

down there in the bi  
tumen of spring out of which  
the dead some day will

arise as words and  
as fairytales and legends  
in other poems

one two three – not a  
single flower left the sweep  
er had taken them

with him into a  
larger dream than i was a  
ble to dream alone

larger than the fields  
and the plantations down by  
hedebogården

than my inherit  
ance: tulips that will stand for  
ever in poems

crisscrossed branches of  
fir trees the drops of rain: a  
songbook for blackbirds

the open window  
haydn's seventh sonata  
and the blackbird craps

for seven years the  
blackbirds have refused to sing  
a millennium

start to sing dammit  
higher than petroleum  
purer still than salt

there it is sitting  
on its fence post: a silhou  
ette from the book of

micah smouldering  
with soot and the self-combus  
tion of pent-up notes

in its own circle  
of singable darkness its  
own necessity

turdus merula  
koltrast amsel merel mer  
le noir solsort

now we are begin  
ning accompanied by john  
mccabe on decca

'die klaviersona  
ten' – the holy sober  
mindedness no frills

stripped right down to the  
bone's potash and the dry bones  
of old age repeat

the long drawn-out en  
ticing call of death after  
me: sree sree sree sree

da capo once more  
like the C minor sonata's  
coal and turquoise

da capo once is  
nothing it is the last time  
that is everything

as when dreams begin  
to resemble reality  
more than real

it resembles  
the dream whoever's able  
to understand that

exercise number  
thirty nine in D major  
that starts allegro

chuck chuck chuck chuck so  
as to warn against owls and  
the literati

and now it slows to  
adagio: koot koot koot  
the fox is abroad

finale presto  
without any self-pity  
kee kee kee chuck chuck

what do blackbirds see  
in their dreams – death decked out in  
its capa de robe

do they hear haydn's  
seven missing sonatas  
the transcendental

could that be why they're  
so devoutly silent be  
hind sleep's cameo

or is it out of  
fear of the wideawake po  
et here at heartland?

and now to the deep  
grief of the heart the most fruit  
ful rebis for song

find yourself a sweet  
heart and lose her again: black  
bird in sturm und drang

do the cherry stones  
refuse to come out and the  
pinot noir of pain?

well sing and whistle  
away dammit warble trills  
of crushed porcelain

two different forms  
of truth exist the one pure  
tautology the

other the seven  
last words of christ – we will now  
concentrate on them

gather your feathers  
sharpen your beak sing till you  
almost bust your ass:

sree chuck chuk chuck chuck  
chack chack chack chack chack chack chack  
kee kee kee koot koot

*'eine kleine nachtmusik'*

that paradox that  
consists in freely choosing  
one's necessity

that necessity  
of gaining one's own programme  
before it's streamlined

by an uchida  
on a philips digital  
classics recording

that necessity  
that causes the pheasant to  
screech out at mozart

that necessity  
to write the dürnitz sona  
ta before it's heard

to tear at one's nails  
until the blood comes on the  
sky's cumulus clouds

to smell the sea's fun  
eral roses without a  
ny melancholy

that necessity  
to know precisely at what  
point the poem should end

that necessity  
to turn to the left when the  
path was to the right

not in order to  
be out of step or defi  
ant but just like that

because the poem  
is waiting precisely there  
between death's fir trees

that necessity  
to just say 'erdgas' out loud  
twenty seven times

that necessity  
to push the heart out into  
the abyss if it

dresses up in fea  
thers or loses itself in  
things as they once were

or conversely if  
the clock refuses to see  
that the time is ripe

that necessity  
to leave all of one's poems  
behind – forget them

that necessity  
to do one's duty without  
any grand gestures

to realise that  
every single act is free  
while the total (life)

is not within one's  
power but follows its own  
twisting paths from a

point that's been forgot  
ten to one that is never  
to be remembered

that necessity  
to assume responsibi  
lity for one's acts

even though fate clings  
on tight like a starfish that  
is nailed to the shore

after the sea has  
once again retreated  
to its own domain

that necessity  
to wait for the water each  
and every morning

that necessity  
that poetry's not only  
there for its own sake

(poetry is by  
no means that poor and by no  
means that pitiful)

poetry is there  
for the sake of reali  
ty and that necess

ity that joins word  
and life together in po  
etry's crown of thorns

that necessity  
to faithfully drink one's morn  
ning coffee each day

to let the night's cad  
dis flies out into the o  
pen to listen to

mozart's eighteen pi  
ano sonatas even  
at their most boring

that necessity  
to resign oneself to one  
self without protest

that necessity  
one fine summer's day to reach  
the end of the road

between ten sona  
tas precisely there where lan  
guage also comes to

an end (even though  
the poem is neither language  
nor reality)

that paradox that  
consists in freely choosing  
one's necessity

what could be called my  
real childhood home lay on  
melchorsvej as it  
still does in a dis-  
tinctly curious light  
of rhododendron bushes  
and rain as if life  
divides up into two halves  
that are only con-  
nected by the lit-  
eralness of this poem  
set on end in time



good god that road is  
an arterial highway  
in my poetry  
always secretly  
present like the strokes of a  
clock behind the words  
always present like  
invisible lan  
terns in sentences  
that lead down to the  
harbour's stonework and  
outermost jetties

when i wake up at  
night i can still make out the  
kyrie elei  
son of the buoys way  
out there in the sound even  
at a distance of  
two hundred kilo  
metres in reality  
(which is a thousand  
miles in one's sleep) like  
night owls or like sub  
merged ambulances

melchiorsvej runs like  
a coronal suture in  
the skull from rea  
lity to rea  
lity both externally  
and internally  
like one true world of  
past and future always pre  
sent always there like  
one true time in the tremen  
dous aristotelian  
lamp of the spirit

'melchiorsvej' i re  
peat to myself as a sort  
of mantra, and straight  
away a smell of  
ink and ginger rises up  
in my sinuses  
through the pneumatic  
systems from various  
cellars straight away  
the soul rises up  
like a column of mercu  
ry towards the head

melchiorsvej your i  
vy is up to my throat your  
siberian crabap  
ple blossom up to  
my heart your waters are up  
to my soul blue with  
petroleum and  
alaska auto shampoo  
every so often  
I really feel fed up to  
the back teeth with all  
this memory lark

i am sitting here  
with a postcard from playa  
de varadero on  
cuba sent once to  
melchiorsvej by myself  
a long time ago  
from so far away  
my thoughts return to this street  
from time to time i  
just feel as if i  
could puke when confronted with  
all this memory

on the contrary i work best  
on a sunday the great sundays that

describe a gradual path  
across heartland like sunspots or like white

buffalo herds of clouds and mother  
of pearl as they travel westwards

i work at my very  
best when i have just washed my hands on sundays



I confess that I have not observed  
the day of rest have sullied its

thin veil of mists and organza  
by the precise act of wallowing

in a horsehair sofa and by  
whiling away my time in bod

ily ballast instead of launch  
ing the spirit's trompovsky attack

i readily admit that i  
once listened to black sabbath in my

youth when love was a fabrica  
tion and my heart was enveloped in

silver paper i acknowledge this  
metaphysical deviation

towards a different type of  
rest and peace a different silence

the real day of rest is the day when  
things fall into place in the fi

re reservoir of the heart  
that day of joy when all references

cease to exist because the world has  
collected itself into its

wholeness into its centre's secret  
fire and reality has healed

i confess that i neverthe  
less have most often been instrumen

tal in spreading things in all direc  
tions in splitting the world into

thingummybobs and parameters  
in separating the soul from

the body's seven red ros  
es that i have thereby sinned against joy



it is true that em  
masvej lies on the outskirts  
of gentofte's pos  
tal district on the  
snow line on the edge of a  
large diamond bathed  
in carbon arc light  
from the town hall all that is  
true enough and that  
it connects høgghs  
mindevej with bernstorffsvej  
but the rest is lies

it is also correct  
enough that my first mar  
riage unfolded on  
emmasvej between  
the snowdrops and words which are  
no longer capa  
ble of being pro  
nounced in an attic room un  
der the collar beam  
it is true but all  
the rest is all my eye and  
a whole load of lies

it is as if time  
itself is responsible  
for this misery  
as if time is on  
ly a necessary but  
not a sufficient  
condition for truth  
because time cannot contain  
its own explana  
tion as anything  
else than a paradox or  
at best as a lie



on the corner of  
emmasvej and julius  
vej there stood a row  
an which i once sec  
retly used to speak to: mr  
tree you who are crown  
witness to the fail  
ure of my marriage do you  
have anything to  
add apart from these  
branches which resemble plucked  
uprooted heart strings?

and the rowan tree  
answered as any other  
tree would have answered:  
mr poet you  
are upon my soul a fool –  
is he not even  
aware of the fact  
that trees only converse with  
the dead is he not  
aware of that? – and  
then it shook all of its a  
thousand and one leaves

in the june summer night this dream  
in every detail as we are our

selves already on  
its foundation of cement  
and leca pellets

already raised with  
beams rafters and roof garland  
like a new arri

val already now:  
the house floating on the foam of the cherry trees

the house floating on the foam of the cherry trees  
(not the japanese

kind of candy floss  
and raspberry snow or stiff  
ly whisked whites of egg)

and all too late for  
cherry plum and sour cherry  
from the hedgerows but

the poem's zazen  
to the gurgling ripples of birds that are drowning

to the gurgling ripples of birds that are drowning  
electric motor

and hammer blow the rat  
tling staccato volley  
of the typewriter

work is going on  
outside and in on the self  
same house and poem

the innermost word  
beneath a bell more fragile than the fjord's mirror

beneath a bell more fragile than the fjord's mirror  
language is filled up

with words like 'gas con  
crete' – 'glass wool' – 'mortar' or 'fasc  
ine drainage system'

down from the build  
ing site of reality  
where the dream raises

its roof through my poem and in  
my sleep the egg of a small wren: a wall

my sleep the egg of a small wren: a wall  
a poem i make a hole in

from inside so the  
words can slip out as something  
else than mirror wri

ting and the ima  
ages as more than rust dots on  
the retina as

something else than the dreams  
of chalk and bursting optical illusion

of chalk and bursting optical illusion  
the old wall is still standing

as a guard of hon  
our for washing machine and  
for haka tumbler

a sentry box of  
cracked and damp plaster with col  
umbine at its base

and with rosethorn  
tremblingly planted in the dark the white a sickle

tremblingly planted in the dark the white a sickle  
a lunar plough

in panes that are soon  
to be replaced by other  
real forms of vision

with 'moses' white hand'  
in the rubaiyat of the  
butterfly bushes

and poetry's quartz watch shifts  
and an unseen beak pecks without a sound

and an unseen beak pecks without a sound  
(unlike the woodpecker that

hammers hard at the  
elder tree's hollow trunk with  
its freemasonry

while the roof is laid  
and is screwed firm and tight with  
new words on our house)

inside there in the final poem  
on mirror membrane of wind and salt

on mirror membrane of wind and salt  
and water i inscribe my name

with my fore finger  
on the dust and sawdust of  
the double glazing

from where it is just  
as swiftly erased once more  
by the rain and wind

a haiku consisting of nothing more than itself  
collapse is near

collapse is near  
all the systems and formulas that bound my poem

which i now release  
because it is complete and  
like everything that

finds itself has come  
into being has become  
sheer reality

where it loses itself without trace  
in the june summer night this dream

i confess that i have trouble  
with the fifth commandment that my re

lation to precisely this one  
is marked by dark memories and death

almost like a maxwell chrome  
tape that has been left lying too long in

rain water or in white wine and  
has become incomprehensible

how for example should i be a  
ble to honour a delusion my

own or the one that others have im  
printed in my hypophysis

of my father as an ar  
chetypic with a soft felt hat and nico

tine-stained fingers when i have hard  
ly ever been together with him?

can it be called arrogance  
to reject such kinds of visions and such

sublimations all these photographs  
of his father bathed in ashes –

to be unwilling to honour such kinds  
of conceptions spotted and

speckled with time and with paprika  
can it be called superbia?

what am i supposed to honour?  
a principle as hard and pure as

tourmaline an abstraction or  
my father's dark genes – it is of

course the manifestation of the spirit  
(which causes me to know

my father even though i've never  
known him) the spirit's fleur de lis

i confess that i have wasted  
my time with digressions of that kind

that i have left my heart to chart its  
own seas full of wet flames

that it is not until now  
here at an age of three score years that i

quite un sentimentally dare  
dedicate this book to my father

as far as my mother is concerned  
i have always honoured her with

my love and surely no honour can  
be greater than love even though

i have to admit in the same  
breath it could very well be i have

not been as fond of her to quite  
the same extent as i have loved her

i'm not at all sure any  
more if it is honouring one's parents

not to have followed in their footsteps not  
to have taken their advice

to have become a poet instead of  
becoming a surgeon – a

bloody rain maker and invoker  
of spirits with frills on his shirt

i confess that by nature i am  
angular and sharp like an a

methyst i confess that my  
mind is full of rifts and cobwebs i con

fess that my heart is black with smoke and  
darkness and silver paper my

soul with dirt that i have not al  
ways been able to please my parents

i confess that i have murdered but  
terflies en masse with a badmin

ton racket (mostly with backhand  
strokes) it is the second time that i

make a confession concerning  
this crime which quite worries me because

it can only derive from e  
vil and original sin itself

i once killed a fox late one night on  
bernstoffsvej it had been badly

injured by someone driving  
a car who had simply left it lying

there i grabbed it by the tail swung  
it round my head and bashed it against

the asphalt until it was dead with  
my blood pounding in a frenzy

in a chinese box made out of  
aluminium a trial and

error box of mother of pearl i  
have poisoned scores of rats and mice

with the aid of grain that was  
as red as hail i have tricked them into

the sanctuary  
of the sixth commandment and have killed them



you shall not kill – i say to myself  
in a voice that is hoarse with blood

you shall not kill just for the sake of  
killing – you shall not kill – does this

only apply to human beings?  
i'm not sure any more – does it?

you shall not kill – i repeat to my  
self in a funereal voice

and above us the  
stars distant as always and  
more beautiful than

ever and cold with  
silicon cold as the or  
der of the ele

phant gleaming with  
god's presence as not here be  
neath the dahlias

in the darkness of  
reverse-imaged and celes  
tial sky mechanics

facing the dark here  
in august the wheat blinding  
with its coperni

can gold so every  
thing goes black as if it was  
total night for just

an instant not all  
eternity as if the  
dark was but an op

tical illusion  
behind day as it heads for  
a part of its death

behind day as it  
heads for a part of its death  
we travel almost

anonymously  
in furrows of winter  
barley taking us

farther away and  
out than the mind and childhood  
and geometry

and what we're to do  
behind mørkenborg inn re  
versed in a crystal

reversed in a cry  
stal with head pointing downwards  
as in a raindrop

or embedded in  
amber like a mosquito –  
it that how it's to

be understood? – i  
do not know nor why the hu  
man race is to live

so little and die  
so much like a ritual  
urge a wave of foam

like a ritual  
urge a wave of foam around  
the sand bar of re

ality at fo  
gense point where we bathe  
in summer during

these years like a wave  
of hokusai carved out in  
the instant the whole

is gathered togeth  
er again and once more from  
a dead fire's fragments

a dead fire's fragments  
is the poem otherwise  
mainly of words seek

ing to express the  
obvious in a compli  
cated and obscure

way and i do not  
know where and whether i have  
been successful in

saying things simply  
and straightforwardly like a  
clover leaf's coolness

a clover leaf's cool  
ness – i write then and it is  
insufficient and

so i decide not  
to write it after all – that  
is also not on

i both write it and  
refrain from writing it i  
neither write it nor

refrain from writing  
it's equally hopeless – the  
night cosmic flora

the night cosmic flo  
ra tendrils of sterling sil  
ver wrought in the sky's

shield like a perfect  
ly natural device i  
also affili

ate myself with now  
that the poem draws to a  
close and the words lose

their salt now that st  
lawrence and the perseids  
now that heart star bites

heart star bites age and  
the winter that are approach  
ing i am very

unsure about this  
now that i should be clever  
i've become stupid

now that i should have  
found out about everything  
i know just nothing

on the dinner ta  
ble: rose fish bread and wine and  
above us the stars

in a nightttime dream  
full of murals i saw my  
paternal grandmo  
ther squat down and have  
a pee on the floor  
perhaps because i had heard  
this on some odd occasion  
or perhaps because  
she really had done  
so in the deepest  
necessity and wretched  
ness of her old age

her name by the way  
was clara my grandmother  
born on st croix ac  
cording to the  
family legend  
raised on a plantation be  
fore coming to denmark with  
her ebony hair  
and her talent for  
drawing which later  
passed on to me in the form  
of words and sonnets

with her too i al  
ways associate the smell  
of clementines of  
expanses of lawn  
and large entailed es  
tates of fire reservoirs  
and kitchens full of copper  
utensils and phea  
sants and garlic and  
just a slight whiff of  
suicide although she ne  
ver committed it

for a long time i  
perused my grandmother's por  
trait in the photo  
album it was grey  
as if it had lain  
on the sea bed for a hun  
dred years or more i had  
to resemble her  
by more than just the  
eyebrows this distant  
descendant of fanny men  
delssohn bartholdy

i allowed my thoughts  
to roam right out to that house  
which my grandmother  
had drawn on the win  
ter's border of lead  
and zinc white where i let them  
roam and finally snow in  
within the seven  
ten letters of my  
own name like a sec  
ret haiku concealed within  
another haiku

and even though i  
was not to carry her name  
on neither in the  
literal sense of  
the expression nor  
in flesh and blood i did at  
least manage to realise  
her dream for now i  
was living in a  
house that resembled  
the one that she had drawn like  
two peas in a pod

my grandmother's black  
hair like charcoal or jasmine –  
'do i resemble  
my grandmother' – i  
asked you – 'only the  
nose' – was the reply – my grand  
mother's grey hair like mirrors  
no one looks into –  
'there where i thought that  
the likeness was least'  
my grandmother's white hair like  
rhinestone or like snow

i don't know what my  
grandmother died of or where  
only that now she has  
disappeared from the  
military cem  
etry scattered to all  
corners of the memory  
like fly ash or mig  
nonette seeds and that  
these words will probab  
ly be the last that will be  
written in her name

*'there was – and there was not'*

it began at the  
anatomical insti  
tute and also end  
ed there in an at  
mosphere of formalin and  
of stainless steel my  
career as a med  
ical student was shortlived  
although in my mind  
i had seen myself  
as a surgeon (perhaps more  
my mother's vision)

then followed two se  
mesters of tutoring in  
law at admiral  
gjeddes gård but ques  
tions like: if it is forbid  
den to take dogs with  
you into a train  
compartment does the same ap  
ply to monkeys? – caused  
me to abandon  
for good this possible fu  
ture career as well

nevertheless this  
was a fruitful period  
in my young life while  
everyone thought that  
i was going to lectures  
in constitution  
al law and nation  
al economics i was  
wandering around  
in jægersborg hegn  
in happy idleness and  
spontaneity

i was at one with  
the woods they were really the  
spirit made visi  
ble to me and i  
was invisible nature  
and this was long be  
fore the philoso  
pher friedrich wilhelm joseph  
schelling had veri  
fied this moving thought  
for me in his most magni  
ficent and green books

'there was – and there was  
not' – as in an arabi  
an fairytale i  
ran away to sea  
one fine morning with a dream  
in my pineal  
body's salt i had  
acquired a discharge book (which  
i own to this ve  
ry day) and i set  
sail in the lathyrus col  
oured wake of summer

to survive as na  
vigating apprentice on  
board a coaster one  
needs consistency  
like stainless steel or mozart's  
'jeunehomme' concerto  
draw a circle round  
yourself of red lead and fire  
and don't let any  
one cross it under  
any circumstances then  
you will gain respect

i hardened my heart  
with aluminium paint and  
also my kidneys  
with duty-free whis  
ky and in the starry nights  
up there on the bridge  
i would think about  
poems by thu fu  
(a chinese coincidence  
from my sea bag) while  
i would also listen to  
radio lyngby

after which i fell  
down injuring my back a  
gainst a hatch coaming  
ending up as act  
ing mate on a ship that went  
down south of øland  
off the swedish coast  
(see sydsvenska dagbladet)  
what i remember  
best is the waves' foam:  
like submerged cherry trees that  
are in full blossom



an interlude:  
god in heaven knows i have  
listened to every  
thing when it comes to  
music (i submit  
my collected works as doc  
umentation) and  
now the chips are down  
i am prepared to  
put my cross against  
the name of wolfgang  
amadeus mozart he  
has my living voice



metaphysical  
ly speaking i had reached the  
boundary of in  
finity (the first  
paradox) and purely phy  
sically i had  
ended up close to  
the great landfill areas  
east of the lime kiln  
harbour among all  
sorts of waste where finiteness  
was finally stamped

the ego's infin  
ity had been bent by the  
infinity of  
another person's  
against its own fi  
niteness in towards  
its own self and that  
inevitably had to  
become a lonely  
affair and that was  
why i ended up stranded  
out at the free port

When wild geese honk on walpurgis night  
down there from trundemosen bog

i am then tempted to shout out:  
'stop that bleeding bloody racket'

because life cannot  
be put on the back burner  
but rushes off at

top speed from may to may to old age  
who thinks then of going to rest?

who thinks then of going to rest  
without valerian and hop tea

without first having drunk four  
ounces of jack daniels whiskey

so as to forget  
the poetry of youth that  
can't be rewritten?

then you walk in your sleep  
with dew-beaded hat you roam out of sight

with dew-beaded hat you roam out of sight  
(with baseball or army-cap)

and with seven-league boots on your feet  
striding through songs and folklore

from poem to po  
em right out to reali  
ty's anemones

that burn bright with electrolysis  
through fjordland and woods newly dressed

through fjordland and woods newly dressed  
on wedellsborg næs cape on the lit

tle belt where shades of turquoise are ground  
with purples in evening's mortar

there where the fair  
ytales are fully accomp  
lished and where every

poem comes true word for word  
far out there gleams so mighty a star

far out there gleams so mighty a star  
among the last of the jet trails

over the sky's glossy paper  
that has been torn across in two halves

by the graffiti  
of the moment like a hai  
ku of frozen clouds

an eyecatcher so deathly lovely  
that all of my eye it now fills

that all of my eye it now fills  
(that fly that flew into the pupil)

does not make it easy to  
see sirius through the saltiness of tears

if it really is  
the dog star barking in e  
gyptian style out there

it is the selfsame eye and  
the selfsame star I'm sure I saw afar

the selfsame star I'm sure I saw afar  
in a poem by aakjær

that i once read when i was  
living in jutland among the schilla

potato fields and  
silver paper that blinded  
the powers of the dark

and that made death invisible  
when i gazed over my childhood hills

when i gazed over my childhood hills  
and then the poems were long gone

(at least ten thousand of them)  
or was it time itself or life itself?

i look backwards o  
ver the shoulder's kitchen salt  
into that hour where

everything simply lasts and lasts  
and the peewit's cry's borne on the wind



How bitterly is the heart confined  
just like angina pectoris

or just like karlheinz stockhausen's  
klavierstücke one to eleven

just like the hedge vio  
lets that fade away with  
out saying goodbye

or just like some great heart-felt grief  
when the avocet migrates in may

when the avocet migrates in may  
when the sun is like jupiter

when the apple tree lights up  
like hydrochloric acid when the word

can no longer stand  
alone when the poem chang  
es into real

ity and the word becomes flesh  
when wild geese honk on walpurgis night

a violent splash of fire against hard blue  
there where i have placed my house

in the smoking bar  
ley and have called it 'cyborg'  
blacker than tar black

with ferric oxide  
only one word from real  
ity and two words

from the beginning itself  
the midday sun stands hot in bristling rays

the midday sun stands hot in bristling rays  
above the words i've written?

up from the hill where  
the house is like the boat of  
sindbad the sailor?

i have understood  
(and that means something to me)  
that time has past my

poems will soon seize up and  
the bank of earth's so powder-grey in hue

the bank of earth's so powder-grey in hue  
like theory and poetics

like my mother's ash  
es like the photos in the  
album of one's youth

like looking into  
the innermost heart of the  
summer drought like look

ing out over one's death where  
above the rape the insects hum and sway

above the rape the insects hum and sway  
the summer's not yet over

and there is no dan  
ger for the wild ducks out in  
the marshes either

the house is swept and  
decorated but not emp  
ty or deserted

everything could now begin  
the still day stretches out both far and high

the still day stretches out both far and high  
as if drawn with coloured chalk

thanks for the pictures  
for the magic formulas  
and the power of words

we who sang real  
its praises were most in  
need of the flutter

ing visions of fairytales:  
around me butterflies and midges whirl

around me butterflies and midges whirl  
as in my finest poem

great big sooty flakes  
from a secret bonfire where  
life is now gutting

in buddleia  
the violet and white sam  
sara of the shrubs

and while i'm writing this down  
clear song-notes trickle from the leaves and sky

clear song-notes trickle from the leaves and sky  
in through the new windows that

are standing open  
in bluebeard's castle a song  
that drowns death for a

moment and the cre  
matorium rumble of  
the oil-fired central

heating down below close by  
in glassy haze the far expanses swirl

in glassy haze the far expanses swirl  
out there all over heartland

where i intend to  
burn my last poems as a  
small token of thanks

a great karma i  
have paid for and redeemed with  
more than just my life

and with less than just my death  
it is so fine and warm near soil and sand

it is so fine and warm near soil and sand  
where we almost bathe once more

in amniotic  
fluid near fogense point  
and ebb-tide amongst

the sand bars as once  
in the innermost sea be  
fore the world first be

gan and reality's fire  
it is a summer's day in denmark's land

it is a summer's day in denmark's land  
beyond all comprehension

there is no death for  
miles around nothing but thin  
trails of cirrus clouds

life moves quickly and  
slowly all at once as if  
it was yesterday

a hundred years' time or now  
a violent splash of fire against hard blue

the cisterns of ny  
borggade street that whoosh in  
the heart the draught of  
nyborggade street  
across the waterless pla  
ces the tar wells of  
nyborggade street  
that smell like hell the shunting  
engines of nyborg  
gade street and the  
empty goods trucks always rumb  
ling away in dreams

i arrived in ny  
borggade street full of a  
remorse that was not  
my own burdened with  
secrets that i was unwill  
ling to acknowledge  
fatigued by a love  
that had wounded me with its  
fragments of glass i  
arrived in the eve  
ning of nyborggade street  
full of self-pity

while i lived in ny  
borggade street i recov  
ered my childhood faith  
i assume that this  
was due to the fact that i  
attended the green  
land church services  
in davidskirken church where  
the words were transformed  
into flesh and blood  
once more and thus became in  
comprehensible

at night i used to  
go for long walks in the lime  
kiln harbour under  
the auspices of  
neptune when the planet was  
retrograde or when  
it used to hide it  
self in the plumes of smoke from  
the svanemølle  
works i do not hes  
itate to write that i was  
almost inhuman

in nyborggade  
street i studied solitude  
and the backyards the  
anatomy of  
plaster a single word would  
cause the silence to  
overflow and to  
assume the form of blue son  
nets in nyborgga  
de street i learned that life is  
far more difficult  
than poetry is

the staircases of  
nyborggade street that lead  
down to so many  
accidents the sun  
days of nyborggade street  
huge and uncompro  
mising with petrol  
and madder lake nyborgga  
de street's zeus tem  
ple nyborggade  
street's skies streaky like an old-  
fashioned sunlight ad

nyborggade street's  
homerich dawn greener than  
neon nyborgga  
de street's ilion  
higher than any thought ny  
borggade street's moun  
tains of coke and cin  
ders under which my  
youth lies buried ny  
borggade street's four  
gasholders with their exteme  
ly rusty haloes

i listened to the  
waldsteinsonata seven  
times not for the sake

of repetition  
or for the sake of truth but  
for its own sake or

for 'der wand aus  
eisen' and 'die berge aus  
silber' waldstein was

still even greener  
than the ferns in romanti  
cism's picture book

like a sesame  
of opened doors or a sword  
belt of emeralds

like a rift in time  
through which the voices of the  
dead can be discerned

like an echo from  
the other side of life – that  
before treblinka

like nocturnal clouds  
above the sea: the hammer  
klavier sonata

as if god no long  
er loved me or as if he  
had let me down in

some way that is how  
this sonata 'funèbre'  
sounds the same necess

ity deep into  
the heart like a lamp against  
malaria that

is still burning with  
flickering flame before the  
inevitable

in all respects i  
have reached the boundary of  
what i am capa

ble of – the rest is  
nothing to do with me but  
is a question of

another necess  
ity than my own a ne  
cessity so strong

and wild as the 'ap  
passionata's' cross of bo  
hemian garnets

the true artist has  
no imagination be  
cause reality

is his domain and  
his passion because real  
ity is the ma

terial from which  
his dreams are made – is that why  
the sonata no

thirteen in e flat  
major is called: quasi u  
na fantasia?

there's a ringing in  
the ears as in the 'moonlight'  
sonata – what kind

of deceased person  
is thinking so intensely  
of me this evening

now that the shadows  
have become long also my  
own and ashkena

zy is playing ner  
vously like moths that are flit  
ting over the keys?

like a silver medal  
like a random reference  
in 'System des

transzendentalen  
Idealismus' – like the  
eighteenth of april

like the bullfinch that  
sings all day like freedom's small  
yet nevertheless

immense defect in  
necessity's fifth: the  
pastiche sonata

all poets are  
unable to agree about two  
things (all the way from

wang-wei to rifbjerg)  
that clouds are quite marvellous  
no matter whether

they are cumulus  
or cirrus (like those which fill  
the 'les adieux' so

nata with whiteness)  
and that growing old is just  
a pain in the ass

in shadows cool and still  
i sat under the parasol in summer

while i waited for her to come  
and sipped at my blue circle coffee

while the tiled floor dried  
with hydrochloric acid  
back inside the house

while i sat awaiting these words  
in the darkness spread by the roses

in the darkness spread by the roses  
i've strewn poison for water rats

between the words against  
graduate students who gnaw at my poems

i have retired to  
life and to reality  
i have concealed my

self in that which is patently obvious  
where the songbird now builds

where the songbird now builds  
a nest in my heart of the blackest feathers

where gables and facades are painted  
with silicate for the last time

where the poems are  
brimful of summer rain and  
are more than just words

where my love sows and grows like wild horseradish  
where the cows are lowing

where the cows are lowing  
and the foxes barking i swiftly countered:

'bugger off' i said 'get the  
hell off my patch' – 'i'm the one who's boss here'

'no trespassers' – i  
said to the roses in their  
gleaming death struggle

'piss off to your own preserves of woods and fields'  
amongst small golden mounds

amongst small golden mounds  
of new-mown straw i wander in my wellies

out of my poem  
and into my death a few years hence and that word

which i am una-  
ble to write myself but must  
entrust to others

while i go on writing in circles  
and forget the day on the wane

'and forget the day on the wane'  
in the words that the poet once wrote

and again in your honour my love  
as you stand there in the midst of

the dahlias in  
a haiku with your jeans and  
hair hanging free at

precisely that double location  
camoene did fill there my breast

camoene did fill there my breast  
at mørkenborg inn with an aching

desire for chateaubriand and  
wild duck and bordeaux – for life itself

on the dull tin thres  
hold of my old age where it  
was almost too late

and under martial law  
there did my song swell and the wondering wood

there did my song swell and the wondering wood  
swelled into unity

and the poems fell into  
place in the greenness and they all tallied

and everything now  
weighed exactly the same on  
the scales of justice

then i repeated the immortal words:  
see the dust can carry

see the dust can carry  
my words across the great abyss of the years

i bequeath them to you here in  
the cobwebs of eternity

on the magic square  
of this page in the far depths  
of cyberspace

like a final password to the source  
out of which all my bliss did flow

out of which all my bliss did flow?  
the lap of my love of course and that

lust which was kindled in the  
pineal gland a late day in august

when everything re  
peated itself for the ump  
teenth and only time

and life overflowed with both roses and wine  
in shadows cool and still



yes sir i love my wife –  
i say to my own soul – i am a one

woman man no sir – i say to  
my superego – no adulte

ry or fornication no sir –  
i say to my superego

who is dressed in pyjamas  
patent leather shoes and a top hat

fuck fuck fuck – my id inter  
rupts the dialogue dressed in roses e

ven at this time of year like  
greatful deads' logo – fuck fuck fuck

it repeats and has apparent  
ly not much else it is able to

say – fuck fuck fuck – it echoes  
like the cock pheasant out there in the snow

the closest that i have got to  
infidelity is with my love

or rather with a photograph of her  
which i used when i mastur

bated in the ladies' toilet of the  
fertility clinic to

fill up the measuring glass – oh how de  
liciously naughty

so i cannot be sentenced to ninety  
nine whiplashes according

to the iranian criminal  
code's article six hundred and

thirty seven – neither can i  
be sentenced to stoning according

to the koran for having com  
mitted 'senave mohseneh'

i admit that nobody  
becomes a human being until all  
  
of the ten commandments have been  
broken (and observed again) but re  
  
mains a cadger and a scrounger so  
i am in trouble with the sev  
  
enth commandment but i hope for  
god's understanding and forgiveness

the iron-age beets in  
ruler-straight rows on and on  
marching towards the

horizon it is  
a source of some small comfort  
that something in this

world continues de  
spite everything in and to  
wards the infinite

steadily unruf  
fled by death like an old fa  
miliar confidence

an old familiar  
confidence between us and  
the wood when the first

yellow leaves light up  
an old interdependence  
that words are scarcely

able to express  
but only the poem's foli  
age of ivory

an age-old longing  
like the whistling sound of months  
that are passing by

like the whistling sound  
of months that are passing by:  
all the words of which

only a few will  
be remembered (not even  
those that it's all a

bout) that's what the con  
ditions are almost like a  
profusion of sea

pink that disappears  
without trace dedicated  
to the soul's exile



the heart's stone circle  
like the garden's perhaps or  
the grave at lange

sø lake but stones at  
any rate hard with flint and  
granite hard as words

so that the emo  
tions will not end up over  
flowing all their bound

aries drowning the  
poem in poetry and  
the old men's echo

the old men's echo  
now itself old and just an  
echo of myself

on my way from mad  
der lake to malachite late  
in life where i find

it increasingly  
difficult to surprise my  
self and prefer pet

tersson's thirteenth sym  
phony to his seventh – the  
night cosmic flora

the night cosmic flo  
ra and nothing or rather  
i behave as if

nothing has happened  
night clouds of the thinnest gauze  
(like prince eugene's) o

ver nørreby hal  
se dræet drættegrund the  
cormorants must be

sitting there now where  
a once had a pee in the  
summer's heart star bites

summer's heart star bites  
with rust and liquorice loz  
enges i behave

as if nothing had  
happened for the time being  
at any rate or

everything or i  
don't behave at all – should one  
perhaps consider

doing an iron  
man or a handspring here a  
mong the iron-age beets?

a number of lone  
ly years followed without a  
ny rose bushes and  
brass beneath the ho  
meric fort of dlq's  
feedstuff silos while  
i completed my  
studies and in a lovely  
spring emerged like some  
thing as tendentious  
as ba and assistant  
in philosophy

however strange it  
may sound i managed to re  
gain my ex-love and  
i moved with her to  
ryesgade number thir  
ty four where after  
a period of  
five years i then managed to  
lose her yet again  
(i must have turned round  
to catch a glimpse of her na  
ked under the shower)

i now stood facing  
the sulphur and rebis of  
the second work stood  
facing nørrebro's  
smoke and asphalt i stood fa  
cing the dregs of the  
soul which i ferti  
lised with portuguese red wine  
snaps and maydew un  
til my life in the  
literal sense of the word  
looked like black compost



i do not believe  
that you find yourself more at  
the bottom of ex  
istence than if you  
are floating on the top (both  
are perhaps a ne  
cessary condi  
tion but hardly suf  
ficient) but at a  
ny rate i found my  
self at ground-floor level at  
the age of forty

i was well boiled in  
faith's vessel in hope's retort  
and in the black caul  
dron of love (like some  
hieronymus bosch or oth  
er) when the woman  
i loved took her own  
life and gave her spirit in  
place of it – i was  
well boiled and subli  
mated in the hermetic  
egg of poetry

close friends and people  
that i loved began to die  
around me lacing  
my heart up tight with  
their rosaries and their black  
button thread people  
who i was just un  
able to do without sim  
ply disappeared from  
one day to the next  
as if they had emigra  
ted to atlantis

i walked abroad one  
summer's day to hear all kinds  
of transistorra

diols blaring at full volume from  
rugård landevej and my own

too for that matter from here  
inside the green labyrinth well mixed up

stirred and thoroughly  
blended with songs of birds that  
through my heart could sear

songs of birds that through  
my heart could sear at three 'o  
clock in the morning

(before the devil's up and a  
bout and even the holy spirit's

still asleep drunk on roses on him  
self and on the damp scent of grain)

i listened in ex  
celsis and from far below  
in the deep green vales

in the deep green vales  
beneath the heart and the a  
bysses of the mind

grundtvig's hymns blossom and set  
their hips and their itching powder and their

living word along with their  
ultimative demands made on the flesh

and on the soul that  
attempts to conceal itself  
midst the nightingales

midst the nightingales  
that are not singing any  
more (since midsummer

has long since passed like a secret  
fire at the back of the head) among

the trees in the garden of udby  
rectory i count the beats of

the cuckoo's heart and  
of my own and all those small  
birds that speak so clear

and the other birds  
that speak so clear and that sing  
and cheep and chirp and

chatter and kick up a racket  
from morning to evening and cackle

and crow i drown out completely with my  
very own variation

on the old danish  
folk song: 'i walked abroad one  
summer's day to hear'

and the other birds  
that speak so clear i ask the  
following question:

will you lend me your wings when the time  
comes in gratitude for all the

grain and white bread and sunflower  
seed will you – you small jackinaboxes

so my soul can fly  
away up to paradise  
midst the nightingales?

midst the nightingales  
and the fires caused by pyro  
maniacs in lang

eskov amidst summer light  
ning and caravans we extravagant

ly frittered away our lives on what  
is referred to as nothing: long

walks that took us out  
to the sea and excursions  
in the deep green vales

in the deep green vales  
beyond any form of sense  
and of utili

tarianism midst mozart's  
horn concertos and forgetmenots

behind trinitatis' tremen  
dous mirrors we wasted our time on

what is referred to  
as nothing: songs of birds that  
through my heart could sear

i walked abroad one  
summer's day to hear a fair  
ytale that i know

extremely well but that even so  
is new every time it is told

(almost like evening church bells peal  
ing or like the folk high school song book)

by the tall trees in  
the forest and all those small  
birds that speak so clear

i committed my first act of theft  
(of those i remember) when i

was five it took place in herluf  
strolles gade's kindergarten in

broad daylight almost as in an  
amethyst – it was carefully planned

and executed with great preci  
sion just like my poems later on

all work of the spirit commences with  
a crime with what could be called

a fall if you like – in my par  
ticular case then with the theft

of a small blue technocar (i think  
that was what they were called) and ev

er since i've been incarcer  
ated in the prison of poetry

my next act of theft almost resemb  
led a bank robbery since i

emptied my stepfather's wal  
let of all currency – dollars pounds swed

ish and norwegian kroner (you  
name it) and i did so in cold blood

cold as the winter solstice cold  
and sober as poetry itself

all work of the spirit derives from an  
idea a plan that has to

be closely followed in its execu  
tion or else it is not the

change of the spirit that takes place  
in the poem but something else more

in nature than in being and then  
it would not be the living word

there is nothing as cold and  
calculating as writing a poem

love grief and the deepest of e  
motions are all obliged to pass through

the wringing machine of lang  
uage the calculus of grammar all words

each and every one of them have to  
be put down on the paper's shroud





in denmark am i  
both born and bred at rigshos  
pitalet as sta

ted and hummeltoftevej conceived in  
a room at a hotel in

næstved thought and conceived of in  
the imagination some place or

other in copen  
hagen and there my clothes were  
all stitched with fine thread

and there have we met  
my true love and i at ca  
fé egebjerg in

the twilight hour among the bil  
liard balls and vin rosé one day late

in december when everything  
seemed lost and wasted between the shots

there i said to my  
self: 'tis with her that i will  
both live and will die

'tis with her that i  
will both live and will die in  
a whiff of vine

gar or spray from fabergé if  
it should come to that or in a card

board box for shoes or a forti  
fication of rose bushes out in

the open air if  
that's what was called for while the  
lime maybe blossoms



'tis with her that i  
will both live and will die in  
a mica stone from

fynshoved or in a snail shell glit  
tering with gunpowder or in

'cyborg' the palace of the  
black poet where we actually live

among the words' shoot  
ing stars and there have we met  
my true love and i

and there have we met  
my true love and i again  
and again every

single day afresh among  
the roses or in the super co-op

with my trolley piled up high with  
the dream's broccoli and reali

ty's nothing and e  
verything and there my clothes were  
all stitched with fine thread

and there my clothes were  
all stitched with fine thread except  
precisely those that

have been manufactured by child  
labourers on taiwan in bangla

desh and on sri lanka so it  
is certainly true that i am quite

internationally  
dressed although in denmark am  
i both born and bred

i hardly feel up  
to mentioning its name a  
ny longer not e  
ven in my sleep or  
in some foreign language so  
much does it fill in  
side my mouth so much  
has that street meant in my myth  
ology but i  
just have to come out  
with it so i write it in  
danish: ryesgade

so i say it out  
loud without a stone on my  
tongue as if it was  
just a matter of  
hot potatoes 'ryesgade'  
i say so loud that  
i can feel a chill  
running up and down my spine  
and i can sense ra  
ven's wings flapping to  
gether round my skeleton  
like dark secret flames



in ryesgade my  
faith was tested to the re  
sonance of the in  
nermost words in my  
bones to the outermost va  
riant in the queen's  
gambit to the pri  
mal causes and the final  
prayers on the egg  
shell of my knees  
in ryesgade i went through  
doubt's ordeal by fire

in ryegade i be  
came a cat man like it or  
not as if my heart  
had been split into  
green and red i acquired this  
special look that can  
see round corners and  
at night i used to put out  
milk and bread in cran  
nies as people some  
times do in other parts of  
the world for the dead

ryegade has be  
come immanent it has got  
into my conso  
nants and the open  
vowels that fill the sun  
days up with ozone  
ryegade is be  
ginning to congeal deep down  
inside me like bees  
wax or ink as the  
material out of which  
poems are produced

it will be an in  
finite farewell longer than  
an echo longer  
than 'das wohltempe  
rierte klavier' full of vin  
egar and crystal  
violet longer  
than the refuse collection  
company's dustcart  
in the morning long  
er than my poem: farewell  
ryesgade f-a-r-e-w-e-l-l

dedicated to  
the soul's exile – it is quite  
precise however

as if the soul does  
not age at the same pace as  
the body (seen from

the inside at a  
ny rate) and therefore feels at  
home for a little

while roaming around  
until it finds peace beneath  
a clover's coolness

thundering of the  
plants and lightning flash from the  
last roses a whole

razzamatazz i  
hate september like poison  
the month of the de

ceased farthest away  
from summer although it's on  
ly just been there long

er than the hammer  
klavier sonata long as  
a meridian

as a meridi  
an each self-understanding's  
a closed circle that

assumes the under  
standing of what's to be un  
derstood or does not

realise the par  
adox that arises when  
the self wants to un

derstand itself (has  
placed itself in brackets) in  
the heart's stone circle

the heart's stone circle  
we all know – 'we who tight-fist  
edly fill the int

tellect's leaky ves  
sel and refuse to empty  
the heart's – we who write

biographies and  
memoirs that are of question  
able value and

do not dare let go  
of ourselves we who called our  
selves: 'we the fearless'

dedicated to  
no one or everyone for  
that matter (what does

it matter?) when it's  
nevertheless the reader  
who decides the fate

of words even though  
they have not been written for  
that reason dedi

cated to my love  
or itself or the air the  
sea for example

or the air the sea  
for example dedica  
ted to myself per

haps when it all comes  
down to it because the self  
by substitution

equals the spirit  
so dedicated to the  
holy spirit set

by god ergo de  
dicated to god says and  
writes siriasis

says and writes siri  
asis or o.a.m.d.  
g. or both at ex

actly the same time  
so no one is able to  
hear read or un

derstand it and per  
haps it's really that which un  
wittingly i've been do

ing all the time i  
sacrificer grave robber  
pmkiiissstttiilll

pmkiiissstttiilll  
for invocation or for  
imprecation los

ses itself in the  
poem's own secret i  
no longer remem

ber whether it is  
true or false i simply do  
not know ambigu

ous perhaps but ac  
tual and dedicated  
to the soul's exile

and he who breeds no  
roses will never prick him  
self on their thorns as

i did today on  
the john ingram rose when i  
drastically pruned

it with a motor  
saw (i have become brutal  
in my old age) and

it defended itself  
with all of nature's right and  
its necessity

and he who does not  
listen to schubert's pia  
no sonatas (no

matter whether it  
is in the early morning  
in veflinge when

the spring is green with  
flowers of sulphur or in co  
penhagen during the

splintered quartz of mid  
night) he will never get to  
know beauty either

and he who does not  
plant roses south of his house  
for example up

against a blackplastered  
wall (and let the rose be  
say a crimson glory)

he will never learn  
the innermost secret of  
the colour red nev

er get to know its  
enlightened despotism  
the depths of its pain

and he who refu  
ses to stay with his neces  
sity with its bit

ter taste of anti  
mony its rhomb-porphyr  
on the base of the

soul with its final  
call to alitalia or  
to aeroflot one

day or other he  
will never ever get to  
know freedom either

and he who does not  
fertilise his roses with  
animex and ni

trogenous magnes  
ium and boron not to  
mention the spiri

tual chemicals  
and the cream of tartar of  
love he will never

ever be among  
those present at their death strug  
gle of scarlet snow

and he who does not  
water his roses with both  
can and sprinkler or

with his own tears (in  
cases of emergency  
with his own urine)

he will not be per  
mitted either to live to  
inscribe the whitest

white 'polarstern' in  
the posthumous heraldry  
of his poetry

and he who does not  
wish to know of god but who  
attempts to think god

(into the middle  
of an emerald) he who  
places god like an

insect moulded in  
a lump of amber's omega  
time he who does not

want to know of god  
at all god will not want to  
know of in due time

and he who does not  
weed his roses does not snip  
them every morning

and does not free them  
of thrips and storm flies he who  
does not powder them

and does not spray them  
with soapy water to ease  
their flowering he

will never see 'om  
ar khayyam's' throne of velvet  
or satin either

and he who does not  
listen to the posthumous  
sonatas by schu

bert (where beauty and  
sharpness cross swords in the scin  
tillating ruby

of metaphysics)  
he who refuses to lis  
ten to truth itself

he who has never  
heard the gasteiner sona  
ta peace be with him

and he who does not  
pick roses for his love in  
the month of july

when the sun stands black  
est over the fields and the  
rose-beds he who does

not place a 'barca  
role' that is smouldering with  
lamp black on her pil

low some morning or  
other such a man is com  
pletely beyond help

my paternal grand  
father on the other hand  
died with great preci  
sion of a blood clot  
while sitting asleep  
in his leather armchair by  
the window that looks out to  
wards thanksgiving church  
my paternal grand  
father died without  
uttering a single word  
like a brass buddha

my grandfather's bril  
liant my grandfather's eau de  
cologne my grandfa  
ther i tågeskov  
en near everdrup  
my grandfather's double-breast  
ed suit my grandfather in  
grøn og witzke's of  
fice my grandfather's  
straight look my grandfa  
ther's new black lace-up shoes that  
still go on creaking

nobody could no  
tice anything in my grand  
father when he lost  
his fortune and  
his estate rådegård  
was sold by order of the  
court – nobody motionless  
he accepted the  
blow like a carp that  
has its head hacked off  
he was one and the same man  
before and after

my grandfather on  
enamel my grandfather  
taken by court pho  
tographer elfelt  
my grandfather paint  
ed on black ivory my  
grandfather fired in napo  
leon ivy por  
celain my grandfa  
ther in a storm of  
rubies my grandfather in  
memory's lustre

could it really be  
healthy to rummage around  
in things left behind  
by my family  
(amongst dream photo  
graphs and legends) like some rag  
and bone man of poetry  
who even so only  
found words he had in  
vented 'bappe' for  
example which was the pet name  
of my grandfather?

my grandfather's bust  
of paradisbakke gra  
nite my grandfather's  
plaster cast at the  
thorvaldsen muse  
um my grandfather's bronze sta  
tue out at østre anlæg  
my grandfather's death  
mask of silver on  
royal blue velvet my  
grandfather on memories'  
obsidian plinth

rumour has it that  
i once was dandled on my  
grandfather's knee and  
that i played with his  
fourteen carat gold  
watch that he was most fond of  
me just as every grandchild  
has always been told  
the air is rife with  
rumours right now as  
christmas draws near and it is  
dark in the mornings

my grandfather too  
had disappeared lay neither  
buried at the mil  
itary ceme  
tery nor in søl  
lerød among the other  
knights of the dannebrog and  
so my grandfather  
had disappeared in  
a swirl of coal a  
mong the posthumous sona  
tas (those in H-a-a-A-Des)

oh heart so restless  
and yet still so young and strong  
like the green leaves of

alchemy still fresh and yet red  
der than the sun is at dawning while

everything else grows old and grey the  
hair the beard and the sex the most

do you believe that  
you'll beat for all eternity  
what is it ails you?

what is it ails you  
that you rush around here at  
heartland dressed in a

windbreaker set from bilka with  
winter tights and training shoes do

you think you can catch up with the wind  
or run away from your own sha

dow or from death in  
your neon-bright colours to  
what end all this pain?

what can possibly  
harm you apart from yourself  
and your own distrust

and vacillation fallen inwards deep  
er than a stone that sinks to

the very bottom of your dreams a  
way from god what else my soul than

this vast shipwreck on  
the waters of the heart o  
pen up to god's peace

open up to god's  
peace in the inner systems  
whose password is: a

men (to deceive the devil and de  
ny him access) open up for

the entire bible programme from  
genesis to the apocalypse

and if you add on  
the apocrypha what can  
possibly harm you?

what can possibly  
harm you with god up your sleeve  
and jesus as trump

and nikolaj frederik severin  
in your hand luggage among

your socks and underwear and  
the four-leaf clovers from last year that

have been pressed and dried  
between the living words – to  
what end all this pain?

to what end all this  
pain about everything be  
tween heaven and earth

(nothing in the world) as if man was  
the goal of everything (what a

terrible thought) as if death actu-  
ally was life's supreme reward

the roses now with  
ered at the cemetery  
what is it ails you?

oh heart so restless  
even if you were to fly  
to amsterdam and

back again on your swan's wings or were to  
turn a somersault even

if you were to reinforce your  
sloppiness with four and twenty ru

bies it would not help  
you in the very least o  
pen up to god's peace

now all the woods are  
pale and wan and the bathing  
temperature is

falling in danish domestic  
waters the dog days have passed a long

time since and i myself have  
changed from T-shirt to sweatshirt the price of

heavy heating oil  
is rising again and sounds  
of birds are falling

him frisky swallows  
follow above my head like  
lemniscates gigan

tic figures of eight of mother  
of pearl and of lapis lazuli

around the holes in the ozone layer  
in honour of god who ne

ver fails us in all  
eternity he's with us  
always with his word

he's with us always  
with his word that binds life to  
gether to form one

true reality and one true  
death under the rose's leaves of mad

der lake when that time comes and  
our own words are no longer enough nei

ther here nor in the  
line of the poem: now all the  
woods are pale and wan

he's with us always  
with his word nevertheless  
in all of his hymns

stretched out across two centuries  
stretched out between here and now like a

cobweb that is made of nothing be  
fore they are re-sung to life once

more by you and me  
and by the poet himfrisk  
y swallows follow

him frisky swallows  
follow behind the tractor  
when the farmer har

vests the last fields and even  
higher up in heaven itself like whirl

ing razor blades in the rays of the  
sun before they fly off at a

tangent through the need  
le eye of light the stork has  
crossed the shore and gone

the stork has crossed the  
shore and gone the last and on  
ly one as mentioned

while the cormorants faithfully  
remain sitting on their fishing stakes

and on the newly formed tongue of land which  
i have given the name 'res

publica' where the  
the tide is rising and sounds  
of birds are falling

and sounds of birds are  
falling to a slow organ  
pedal point deep down

under everything where it hurts  
and the darkness gathers its waters

off fogense point just before day  
break begins to open its mus

sel shell full of shale  
and full of brass: now all the  
woods are pale and wan

now all the woods are  
pale and wan and are bequeath  
ing their foliage

to the wind and to the winter's  
great urn of ceramics the photo

graphs that are standing on the window ledge  
fade just a little more are

soon pure spirit on  
ly god holds out he's always  
with us with his word

i am not complain  
ing i knew very well that  
nobody is spared  
pain and sorrows in  
this life that everyone's e  
nough to get on with  
i'm just saying that  
i was hardened down there at  
the bottom of the  
alembic mongst the  
withered bay leaves and poems  
of doubtful value

nor do i know if  
my destiny has been writ  
ten down on a palm  
leaf or if in that  
case it will resemble the  
account found in these  
poems more than it  
does sanskrit all that i am  
claiming is that ne  
cessity and free  
dom perhaps converge on the  
same ultimate goal



what then happened was  
of course what had to happen  
when the bottom has  
been reached and the tub  
emptied it can only be  
filled with wine and ros  
es there stood my true  
love in a circle of fire  
and of holy re  
ality and my  
heart overflowed with the gold  
of copernicus

we celebrated  
our love by making noctur  
nal excursions to  
the park at jæggers  
borg hegn where the albino  
stag gleamed in its la  
byrinth like a white  
knight in the trompowsky at  
tack we celebra  
ted our hermetic  
wedding under the prism chan  
delier of the moon

we celebrated  
life itself with wine and la  
sagne from irma  
we celebrated  
lust and lightweight metals we  
celebrated our  
selves we celebra  
ted death in søndermark church  
graveyard we cele  
brated immortal  
ity's salt and prolifer  
ation's red sulphur





everyone believed  
rightly enough that it was  
over and done with

that there wasn't a  
ny more room for butterflies  
in my poems that

there were no more urns  
no more ceilings made of pine  
wood and that there were

no more obscure pro  
per names lurking where they could  
survive the winter

everyone believed  
well enough that it was far  
too late but it is

rather too early  
here in april even though  
i found a small tor

toiseshell shattered in  
to twenty four pieces out  
in the scullery

like a kaleido  
scope or shostakovich's  
piano preludes

but they had miscal  
culated they had under  
estimated the

mighty force of ne  
cessity when it seeks in  
wards towards its own

centre as when but  
terflies undergo their fin  
al transformation

and the red admir  
al is attracted towards  
immortality

nobody believed  
that i would allow an aur  
ora to flutter

through the poetry  
yet one more time almost like  
an illustration

taken from rené  
thom's mathematics or like  
a metaphor from

a collection of  
poems that could have been called:  
poems to myself



did people really  
believe that i no longer  
loved the painted la

dy any more its  
hydrogen peroxide its  
violin-coloured

wings did people be  
lieve that it was not going  
to be part of my

memories and not  
be included in the con  
ditions of my will?

did people believe  
that i had forgotten the  
cabbage white and its

zinc-white make-up its  
sooty wing-tips after its  
flight in july and

the great fire of life  
did people really believe  
that i had forgot

ten the cabbage white  
simply because the future  
now lies behind me?

people had calcu  
lated without the common  
blue and small copper

and without shosta  
kovich's opus eighty  
seven from which the

fritillary gleams  
with memoirs and barium  
sulphate had people

forgotten these last  
words they had omitted to  
swear in the poem

what a strange crinkly  
small willie my maternal  
grandfather had had  
under the water  
of the bath tub when  
i washed him once a very  
long time ago with him float  
ing there in his own  
life more naked still  
than death itself and  
even paler than pernicious  
anaemia

what a strange moustache  
my maternal grandfather  
had had on that post  
card from hoboken  
twisted and yellow  
brown as if it had been dipped  
in lipton's mango tea – 'that  
is so you can re  
member me all the  
better' – i can hear  
him answer me all the way  
from america

what a strange cap my  
maternal grandfather had  
had worn as a mu  
seum attendant  
at hirschsprung's collec  
tion in stockholmsgade where  
he did the rounds in harald  
giersing's woodland clear  
ings while outside a  
war was raging un  
der different auspices  
and death-bringing hats

my grandfather's cru  
cifix my grandfather's re  
volver my grandfath  
er's polyrin my  
grandfather's pale ale  
my grandfather's alpaca  
coat my grandfather's ilka  
shaving soap my grand  
father's sweet tooth my  
grandfather's love of  
snaps and brandy my grandfa  
ther's absolute pitch

i opened the door  
to the green room not to look  
up a foreign word  
or to get a lit  
tle peace and quiet or  
to be able to get the  
smell of decades of ciga  
rettes and winter damp  
i opened the door  
to my memory  
so that i could finally  
begin to forget

profession: regi  
mental musician and nav  
al petty offi  
cer marital sta  
tus: twice married with  
four children of which only  
my mother survived no spe  
cial characteristics of  
any kind retired  
with a half pension  
as leading hornist in the  
royal danish fleet

of my grandparents  
my maternal grandfather  
is the one i have  
loved best (is it pos  
sible to love more  
or less?) probably because  
he is the one who most re  
sembles me – on his  
death bed he whispered  
to me with blue lips  
he had just been given the  
rank of admiral

when like today the  
sky is boiling over with  
clouds that are pouring  
in from the southwest  
full of snowstorms and  
glauber's salt i see him in  
a tinge of prussian blue at  
the back of my in  
ner gaze as if some  
sorcerer's appren  
tice or other had stirred the  
cauldron too strongly

what a strange dried-up  
head my maternal grandfa  
ther had had on his  
eightieth birthday  
as if it had come  
from borneo or like the  
carved ivory knob on the  
end of a stick 'that  
is so you can make  
me into poems  
all the better' he whispers  
deep down in his urn

the clouds grow grey and  
the leaves are falling like dan  
druff from my hair and

from my eyes so i can see myself  
in the mirror: an ageing nar

cissus and that was not the intention  
now it has become too late

to die young with vine  
leaves round my temples – the birds  
have hushed long ago

the birds have hushed long  
ago this late in the year  
darker still than rust

with age we make fewer mistakes but  
that only serves to make them that

much the worse old men's wisdom: no  
form of compensation is provi

ded for power and  
action – winter now threatens  
and night is calling

winter now threatens  
and night is calling over  
there from the woods

like a lute that has thirteen  
strings on the far side of summer full of

darkness of leaves that have fallen and  
the snow of the dead that stings worse

that aftershave lo  
tion and colder still – the flow  
ers sigh: 'it's snowing!'

the flowers sigh 'it's  
snowing!' – the dahlias in  
particular which

i did not manage to dig up out of their  
crystal – oh the great fool's

cap and divine sea urchins what use are  
all their colours now in the

face of the approach  
ing darkness? – and yet we the  
flame gladly carry

and yet we the flame  
gladly carry and gaudy  
ungaro ties on

some occasions and training shoes on oth  
ers even white tie and tails

and yet we praise our skeleton in  
borrowed plumes and decorations

like some christmas tree  
although the clouds grow grey and  
the leaves are falling

and yet we the flame  
gladly carry across the  
millennium thres

hold even though it is just a  
matchstick in the dark that lights up death

it is nevertheless this  
small spark from god's sparkler in which we trust

this light which can ne  
ver go out although the flow  
ers sigh: 'see the snow!'

the flowers sigh 'see  
the snow!' – already in the  
turquoise of novem

ber i add on my own account with  
a voice that is rough with silver –

la rhétorique des dieux – i con  
tinue as if nothing had happened

and there were time e  
nough though winter now threatens  
and night is calling

winter now threatens  
and night is calling in there  
behind the poems

where there are no more words and no  
one can talk his way out of death's

bitumen or write it off with a  
sonnet sequence of 'roses' and

'ivy' deep inside  
in that darkness where the birds  
have hushed long ago

the clouds grow grey and  
the leaves are falling not on  
ly in grundtvig's lines

and in my poems so many years af  
ter but also in the gar

dens and even further off in all of  
denmark's forests and closest

of all deep down in  
side the heart and yet we the  
flame gladly carry

my real mater  
nal mother burns up in a  
large photograph from  
amager in a  
summer cottage (near  
dragør perhaps) as if time  
itself has ignited the  
photo and coloured  
her hat brim as if  
the smoke was coming  
from copper that had been dipped  
in nitric acid

apart from that she  
is a patchwork a recon  
struction of words and  
of half sentences  
from before my time  
a tall story probably  
'the bohemian's daughter'  
as she used to be  
called because my great  
grandfather once came  
to denmark from prague as a  
journeyman saddler

i almost remem  
ber the parrot better the  
family's ama  
ryllis which is said  
to have personal  
ly offended admiral  
da conja and have i  
mitated both death  
and the devil i  
know that bald parrot  
much better than my own ma  
ternal grandmother

my grandmother was  
born in capricorn beneath  
the former century's  
sun and died forty  
years later under  
the sign of scorpio in  
toxicated by the red  
angels of morphine  
and cancer's claw but  
seven years before  
i myself arrived in this  
the best of all worlds

i can well see that  
my grandmother must have re  
sembled the woman  
on stoskopf's painting  
of the five senses  
as she stood there in her lin  
en store on amagerbro  
gade lit up with  
taw in the midst of  
the starch's gleaming  
suit of feathers just before  
the transformation

ella – i now in  
voke your name though i well know  
that language always  
sacrifices the  
individual  
for the sake of the fami  
ly and that poetry on  
ly propagates it  
self and at best on  
ly the name's eme  
erald syllables – ella o  
livia augusta

my step-grandmother  
on sønder boulevard my  
step-grandmother in  
a richs photo my  
step-grandmother in  
a denmark album my step-  
grandmother in an ota  
book and her worries  
my step-grandmother  
and her anxie  
ty my step-grandmother at  
sct hans hospital

i am eating pre  
served ginger at the moment  
i have a pecu  
liar hankering  
for its secret taste  
of death as if i was preg  
nant – in the middle of the  
night i get up and  
swallow its burning  
amber perhaps so  
i'll recall my boyhood years  
with my grandmother

my step-grandmother  
has always stood on window  
ledges among mon  
ey plants and cactus  
es even when a  
live she used to stand at the  
window and to wave goodbye  
from a great distance  
i remember her  
there as dark as ju  
ly welded into the glass  
by sudden lightning

ella olivia  
augusta and rosa jo  
hanne sophie  
and anthon laurits  
frederik and clara  
and johan palle and mil  
la and hans erik and ha  
rald brynjulf all named  
none forgotten none  
named none forgotten  
none named all forgotten all  
named all forgotten

on heaven's arc day's chariot now poises  
like an empty snail's shell?

or like 'cyborg' my home black  
with silence behind the woods and the fields

like the steel balls in  
the middle of a game of  
pétanque pure and still?

fill my poem with darkness  
come secret night with stars in bright succession

come secret night with stars in bright succession  
like the osram light bulbs

twenty-five watts each hanging up there  
from the ceiling made of pinewood

while i drink the last  
of the rosé wine from châ  
teau haux and read the

poem out loud for the dead  
oh wait no longer gentle glow of evening

oh wait no longer gentle glow of evening  
unfold your wing of coal

and pencil strokes out across the woods on the  
central leaf of denmark

(so the poem can find  
peace and darkness for all the  
light that blighted it)

where it grows in the night  
here loneliness entwines its crown of nettles

here loneliness entwines its crown of nettles  
while the beard's stubble grows

when you are away my love and  
have left me behind in my poem

where life as is known  
and time do not at all go  
but where only death

stands guard over the words  
come now sweet sleep with best-loved dreams sustaining

'come now sweet sleep with best-loved dreams sustaining'  
i ought to have said as

a young man when there was life  
enough to take and reality too

as is not now the  
case where it is rather death  
who is the ruler

which is why i now say:  
'and let me in advance joy's cup be draining'

and let me in advance joy's cup be draining  
yet once more to the lees

from the green-cut drinking rummer with grapes on  
from my childhood home

or from your mouth my  
love with its coating of ar  
den's shady coral

before the poems end  
the time that's gone will be no more returning

the time that's gone will be no more returning  
its shoe's on back to front

it vanishes without trace in  
a poem a fairytale we do not

know among the words'  
inviolability  
and that which comes is

nothing but the moment  
the heart's consumed alas while it is burning

the heart's consumed alas while it is burning  
with salt and carna

tions to light up all the world to  
reality and to your loved one

that is the price of  
life or the reward of life  
if you so prefer

the while you are present  
and shades of night are softly now unfurling

and shades of night are softly now unfurling  
over my writing desk

where they make my next poem  
illegible to others than myself

and the dead which do  
not allow themselves to be  
moved for that reason

like my blue fiat punto  
on heaven's arc day's chariot now poises

i confess that: everything con-  
tained in this poem is a lie – so

could a violation of the ninth  
commandment very well begin

even though i would undenia-  
bly rap myself over the word

with this assertion and in  
so doing end up by telling the truth

the poem's black box full  
of turquoise and letters of white lies that be

have as if they were the truth and half-  
truths that would appear to be lies

full of secrets that are perfectly  
obvious to everyone and

of the obvious which no one sees - the  
'darkness' of the evident

i have also practised telling lies  
because it is so difficult

the tiny lies and the every  
day untruths only cover up that

which with another word is  
called imagination or boastfulness

but to cheat another person quite  
deliberately is difficult

it is just as easy to lie to  
oneself to hoodwink oneself to

get behind the mirrors dressed in  
full evening dress to read 'the liar'

by martin hansen time and time  
again without understanding who's

lying to whom and why just as  
easy is it to lie to oneself



the poem's beauty box full  
of mother of pearl of clouds and borrowed

plumes full of make-up eau de col  
ogne and esprit (de valdemar)

full of silence and beauty  
spots of words of words and of more words

the poem's tall story which nev  
ertheless discloses everything

ulstrup vænge does  
not look all that grand resem  
bles most the road of  
small detacheds it is  
seen both through the leaded panes  
of the gables or  
outside in the o  
pen air where the sunlight is  
a stronger shade of  
blue than elsewhere on  
account of all the reflec  
tions around røsnæs

the burnt-out cara  
van's probably still standing  
in ulstrup vænge  
full of forgotten  
dreams and the drains are proba  
bly still overflow  
ing with madder lake –  
even so i was never  
happier than i  
was there under the  
neon-light tree-tops of the  
flowering cherries

in ulstrup vænge  
life reached its zenith in a  
drop of blackbird's blood  
immaculate and  
naked as turquoise irre  
concilable and  
magnificent in  
all its reality stripped  
of trappings and con  
junctions with neptune  
strong as a beak and burning  
bright with altar wine

in ulstrup vænge  
the elephant grass kept a  
watch over me i  
can still hear its dry-  
throated whispering at the  
gates of night like a  
rustling of bible  
paper between the books of  
isaiah and jer  
imiah like a  
gust of wind between perdi  
tion and perdition

in ulstrup vænge  
i was allied to the sour  
cherries and petro  
chemistry of win  
ter i lived in poetry's  
outermost blockhouse  
and every day took  
a new line of verse out in  
to the realm of re  
ality and back  
again to the innermost  
chamber of the words

it was like living  
in the goldberg varia  
tions amidst the sear  
ing saltpetre of  
the spirit snow-washed of de  
nim it was like liv  
ing twice over at  
the same time double-up you  
could almost call it  
that's what it was like  
living in ulstrup vænge's  
supreme synthesis

when freedom reached its  
culmination it splintered  
into the eleven

pieces written for  
piano by karlheinz stock  
hausen and a new

necessity of  
a more rigorous order  
crystallised around

nothing around the  
centre of all things like the  
rings in an onion

and freedom reflect  
ed itself in this board of  
rose quartz so that it

was able to per  
ceive itself and it needed  
this necessity

in order to lib  
erate itself and it chose  
necessity nev

vertheless so as  
to avoid becoming whol  
ly self-sufficient

and the notes fell like  
a shower of emeralds  
over the springtime

from piano piece  
number eight and kontarsky's  
hands like a liter

al interdepend  
ence existing between the  
smallest tremors of

the mind and free move  
ment and matter's fixed complet  
ed figures of eight

freedom's cancer free  
dom's ethanol freedom's cap  
ut mortuum free

dom's entropy free  
dom's epidemic freedom's  
utter pigheaded

ness freedom's ego-  
trip freedom's masturbation  
the freedom of free

dom which ruptures its  
medal ribbons at the base  
and root of evil

freedom's violets  
freedom's catocala nup  
ta freedom's inner

necessity free  
dom's transcendental sonnets  
the system of free

dom the crucifi  
xion of freedom the para  
dox of freedom the

freedom of freedom  
which ties its bow around the  
thorn of love itself

and i turned inwards  
towards this centre where the  
notes all gather and

the words so that they  
would not be scattered to all  
corners of the wind

like insects dur  
ing an eclipse of the moon  
where the poem joins

the world and language  
together i sought towards  
this necessity

this was natural  
ly because nothing comes of  
itself by deduc

tion and by necess  
ity at the centre of  
spirit but every

thing only by free  
dom and decision so now  
freedom had to de

cide on this its own  
necessity so as to  
get any further

pmkiiissttiiiill  
what can it possibly mean  
i have looked it up

in various dic  
tionaries and manuals  
without success and

even if i had found  
it all it would state would be  
the origin and

meaning of the word  
is unknown and uncertain  
pmkiiissttiiiill

pmkiiissttiiiill  
i write therefore and attempt  
to say the word out

loud – it doesn't sound  
all that bloody good as if  
i had a mouth full

of hot potatoes  
or like uttering that which  
is unuttera

ble – no better to  
just write it down once again  
pmkiiissttiiiill

pmkiiissttiiiill  
then it will be unintell  
igible again

and unwritable  
a markov machine of let  
ters a string of words

then it will lose it  
self like echoes and transcripts  
in more distant po

ems and words of un  
intelligibility:  
pmkiiissttiiiill

pmkiiissttiiiill  
i write for the thirteenth time  
but so what? – perhaps

an emerald is  
concealed in the box it re  
sembles at any

rate a waste product  
from one of my earlier  
cycles of sonnets

a redundancy  
from the cornucopia  
pmkiiissttiiiill

pmkiiissttiiiill  
i whisper to myself in  
my heart of hearts per

haps it is a ses  
ame that opens the sec  
ret door of poe

try a password in  
to the combination of  
prime numbers and let

ters that started up  
my poetry's computer  
pmkiiissttiiiill

pmkiiissttiiiill  
i read again with incred  
ulous eyes can it

really be the case  
that all poems and words that  
every single mean

ing will one day re  
sult in some such mantra not  
meaningless in it

self but perhaps for  
whoever tries to read it?  
pmkiiissttiiiill

pmkiiissttiiiill  
it sounds like the branch of a  
pine tree that is flick

ing at the poem  
like a curse or the bene  
diction that comes from

having written that  
which is inexpressible  
without knowing where

or when it's like the  
sound of a samurai sword  
pmkiiissttiiiill

the wind shook gently in the blades of green  
like a breath delayed across

the chessboard of summer that brought the  
pieces to a halt and all the

words for a moment  
in the intarsia of  
the poem like a new

romanticism beneath  
the firmament with pure and azure sheen

the firmament with pure and azure sheen  
erected its dome of glass

and meridians above my  
head like some mighty cathedral of

reality and  
words joining the world together  
again re-forming

what was its true unity  
while tranquilly the sun set in the west

like roses in the clement summer eve  
like a nirvana of light

the garden lay in its own  
past already pale within my poem

now immortalised  
by an everlasting death  
now immortalised

by art like a catalyst  
against the sky the moon hung like a ghost

against the sky the moon hung like a ghost  
as if dipped in iodine

behind the clouds' gauze bandages like a  
second lazarus a sec

ond worldly roman  
ticism resurrected  
in the poem like

the words of reality  
on the emerald carpet's braided gold

the lengthy shadows stood awhile close by  
slanting in over words and

the sentences on my writ  
ing table almost before they were fin

ished linking them with  
the dark and the stars and with  
the poem's long night

where they now stand for ever  
and never will i take that path again

and death with blood of poppies me does ply  
that has been mixed with avens

a highly spiced cock  
tail the very elixir of life and of love

and i drank it so  
as to abjure myself as  
god over myself

never was the sky so blue  
the wind shook gently in the blades of green

i find myself think  
ing of my step-fath  
er because he was so fond  
of snow (was he real  
ly or is this simp  
ly a figment of my i  
magination because there  
is so much snow that  
is lying over  
the fields out there just as if  
christo had packed them  
up in a huge sheet?

i saved my step-fath  
er's life from a death  
by carbon monoxide i  
think he was in the  
process of commit  
ing suicide dressed in a  
khaki boiler suit and a  
black beret – strange garb  
to be wearing in  
order to meet death – but  
i actually found him and  
in an ill-time too

the poem always  
demands a sacrifice  
demands life in one way  
or another perhaps  
it is the price  
that i am paying now with  
the children i never had  
the curse and the benediction  
that i am attempting to write  
myself out of like the  
crows in wintertime

or the other way  
round as my mother  
believed: that my brother died  
for my sake (by stretch  
ing out her pelvis  
with his head) thus enabling  
me to come into the world  
and see the light of  
day like some second  
cain with the scarlet scar at  
the back of my neck  
from her pubic bone

my brother was al  
ways better always  
cleverer always gentler  
and above all love  
lier with his an  
gelic curls and his eyes blue  
like those of abel how in  
all the world could i  
ever hope to catch  
up with this elder brother  
who had given up  
his life for my sake?

my elder brother's  
scallop-shell name my  
elder brother's enigma  
my elder brother's  
bakelite crani  
um my elder brother's dreams  
of milk parsley my elder  
brother's glass eyes my  
elder brother's: 'ma –  
ma' my elder brother's brain  
tumour my elder  
brother in eden

the poem always  
demands a sacri  
fice demands life in one way  
or another fin  
ally it will al  
so demand my own life be  
cause i am standing in the  
way of its immor  
tality with my  
violet beard-stubble and  
the black rings that i  
have under my eyes

this blue that is called azure-blue  
i'm bloody well aware of this too

can be found in the depths of your  
innermost look my beloved

where it emits e  
lectric sparks and flashes com  
peting with death and

with that flintstone which we call the world  
that handful water clump of earth

that handful water clump of earth  
there is nothing more to it it seems

the soul's ten grammes of roses and  
calcium or ditto of the heart

if life itself is  
viewed through the optics of worn-  
out contact lenses

and words are nothing else at all but  
the foolish nonsense of no worth

the foolish nonsense of no worth  
that surges in over all the earth

like a tidal wave of darkness  
and opinions it strands in the sand

(salutations in  
the spirit from where the echo  
shall reach us at last)

it is erased from life  
oh all this diversion so frail and slight

oh all this diversion so frail and slight  
that is also called: write – write

poems and the whole course of your life  
so as to escape life itself

write down love to fit  
the golden mean of these sev  
enteen syllables

your codicil is yours to list  
oh there must be some more to life than this

oh there must be some more to life than this  
than this wrought-iron grill on which

everything is turned and roasted in  
the fire of publicity

(good grief this is lit  
erally becoming just  
like chewing the fat)

with the intellect's burnt coal  
by using thought I could not make a hole

by using thought I could not make a hole  
nil was the result all told

since thought can never include itself or ex  
clude itself from thinking

that is why it went  
haywire ending in an ab  
solute paradox

nothing more's required than this  
for thought itself is wont to go amiss

for thought itself is wont to go amiss  
in the same style more or less

as the obscure romantic vari  
ant in the king's gambit which i

have never so far  
dared to put to the test on  
the board of logic

even though life is more dangerous:  
death with his scythe comes striding by

death with his scythe comes striding by  
passing right through life's fait accompli

as on tarot card number thirteen  
with his white rose's innocence

(like a combine har  
vester perhaps in the pre  
sent day one from claes)

he creates his last haiku  
he can slice through the knot with one swift blow

he can slice through the knot with one swift blow  
in a single massive now

where life and death's significance is lost  
united in clay and dust

their opposite na  
tures resolved into that which  
in eternity's

camelot is always really true  
this blue that is called azure-blue

*'once upon a time that  
always is and will always  
at some time return'*

finally i have  
arrived at hedebovej  
and february's  
stronghold of black-ice  
finally i have caught up  
with the poem or  
the poem has caught  
up with me at this moment  
which for the same rea  
son cannot be re  
called but only depicted  
in the snow's haiku

finally i am  
standing at the poem's ex  
it beneath winter's  
red letters where he  
debovej trails off into  
snow and slush and words  
that i can no long  
er use finally i'm get  
ting the better of  
memory by hav  
ing recalled everything – for  
getting can begin

or more precisely  
the past has become intra  
venously suspend  
ed in the blood like  
sea salt or gold chloride like  
a great surge of gra  
titude like vinho  
verde in blotting paper  
the past has become  
completely present  
and can therefore no longer  
be recollected

the moment can na  
turally not be recalled  
while it is taking  
place as hedebo  
vej cannot be either or  
aria da ca  
po even though i  
have listened to the vari  
ations thirty times  
both forwards and back  
wards like i have life itself  
while it's taking place

thus the wheat of the  
dead has been written into  
my poems and the  
ashes of the past  
more as ferment and as fer  
tiliser than an  
actual memory  
not as a loss or as a  
longing or as a  
laurel wreath but as  
the dreams from which the future  
one day will emerge

if this integral  
of time (larger than the pol  
der of any re  
claimed land) is to be  
called forgetting fine by me  
but there must in that  
case be another  
word for the real forgetting  
which is only out  
done by the abso  
lute unpredictabili  
ty of perdition

it is myself i  
have caught up with here at he  
debovej like a  
fugue whose motifs sud  
denly come together in  
an infallible  
C major there are  
no longer any excu  
ses neither forwards  
nor backwards and there  
is no more explaining a  
way from who i am

indisputably  
it is i who am sitting  
here at hedebo  
vej more in flesh and  
blood as time passes than in  
writing and poems  
it is i who am  
staring out across  
winter's snow-stained ox-  
hide stretched out between  
the four corners of the world  
like a taut drum-skin



*'études australes'*

and behind me stars  
of glass and soda sparkle  
behind my shoulder

that's smoking with salt  
behind my bedhead while i  
am dreaming the stars

sparkle like crayfish  
on the sea-bed of baring  
vig the stars sparkle

like lightships there up  
in the springtime night while i  
am falling asleep

i have gathered the  
dead around me in a cir  
cle as around a

maypole for a dance  
and a conversation they  
cannot take part in

all the dead members  
of my family around  
me like statues that

move almost imper  
ceptibly whenever i  
do not gaze at them

and behind me the  
stars sparkle like electric  
welding over fun

en from the lindø  
shipyards behind me the stars  
toll for my ears out

from the spit ene  
bærodde as if strangers  
were going to be

evening guests or an  
unexpected word in my  
most recent poem

the dead also look  
at me (at any rate from  
their carbonised pho

tographs turned pale by  
purgatory) or maybe  
it is the other

way around that i  
only move (am moved) when the  
dead gaze at me and

that i otherwise  
come to a complete standstill  
in my memories?

and behind me the  
stars plummet down cold and a  
lien with sili

con from their orang  
eries and from their enorm  
ous celestial map

plunge into the realm  
of my poems where they strike  
my left foot or leave

behind them such words  
as 'carina' or 'puppis'  
or as 'canopus'

and behind me the  
stars fall down from their winter  
gardens fall down in

to 'études australes'  
from one star chart to anothe  
r one and that is

the way the stars sound  
then even harder and wild  
er than emerald

that is the way the  
stars sound in grete sultan's  
interpretation

nobody becomes  
a good person just by dy  
ing it is unfor

tunately not that  
simple just as nobody  
becomes an evil

person just by liv  
ing it is not that simple  
everyone has to

do it by themselves  
both parts of their own free will  
it's that difficult

and behind me the  
stars cast out dice over the  
sky's rough glass surface

like ice-cubes like the  
coins in an I-ching throw  
like the notes coming

from a steinway grand  
piano like the sparks from  
john cage's pitu

itary gland like  
crocodile tears like the last  
words in the bible

i have gathered the  
dead around me for life's sake  
(also the dead chaf

finches that flew in  
to the window pane yester  
day) life cannot un

equivocally  
determine itself as life  
the dead define us

in a way they are  
what makes us living without  
death there is no life

and behind me the  
stars chime with death and necess  
ity behind me

the stars ring out for  
god – what if i were not to  
turn around would i

then not be transformed  
into a pillar of salt  
or into a stone

plinth would my poem then  
not be transformed into a  
mourning cherry-tree?

i confess and what is more in public  
that i covet peter laug

esen's dog even though i  
neither know what its name is nor what breed

it happens to belong to (per  
haps it doesn't even have a ped

agree) because i've read so  
many wonderful poems about it

I covet all the horses up at  
hindevadgård farm (but espec

ially the light-brown mare by the name of  
'maiwind' that steams with ozone

and ammoniac) here on the last day  
of winter when the first snow

is falling and is slowly  
erasing them from reality's light



i confess that i have never  
coveted my neighbour's ass or his

oxen (unless it should happen to  
be the american bison

up at ditlevsdal) but on  
the other hand for a brief moment his

red alfa romeo (though i've  
only a motorcycle licence)

i confess that i covet every  
thing between heaven and earth that

does not belong to me – the woodpeck  
er's colours for example are

important to me – i could quite ea  
sily introduce them just like

that into my ex libris that  
gleaming of cinnobar and pitcoal

i covet youth and all the poems  
that i have already written

poems that do not belong  
to me any longer that have a heart

of tin that have their shoes  
on back to front that belong to my neighbour

to my reader despite a certain  
allegorical copyright

i covet silver and celeri  
as i covet the thuja's smell

of death i covet floors made of terracotta  
as well as the song

of birds i covet diesel oil as  
well as earl grey tea i covet

yet the body of my wife i  
confess that i covet life itself

now gleams the sun in  
all its glory down upon  
heartland's evening hour

that glitters with gold as if it  
had been bathed in hagerty's jewel

clean i have my gun with me to  
kill a hawk (which is ravaging the

foodstore) before it  
disappears in the summer  
night's fleeting coolness

in the summer night's  
fleeting coolness the heart is  
filled with salt and tur

quoise and the words are darkening in  
the woodland why should i be a

fraid of that? – after all i have al  
ways known that my ashes are to

be scattered here deep  
inside where a heavenly  
breath sighs o'er the dust

a heavenly breath  
sighs o'er the dust which swirls up  
and forms small clouds from

the hair of the dead (their allonge wigs)  
full of pine-needles and pollen

small eddies of incorrupta  
bility stronger than iron and

the word of the mo  
ravians it sires all spir  
it now descending

it sires all spirit  
now descending over the  
quartz of the letters

illuminating them at their  
centre like poems without words

because all poetry writing of poe  
try seeks its own destruction like a

catalyst for re  
ality in jesu's name  
let tongues be aglow

in jesus's name let  
tongues be aglow : 'pang' that put  
paid to the hawk – there

it lies with wings outstretched in my  
poem among the other small words

how lovely it is even  
the visible spirit now i wear na

ture invisibly  
in my heart now gleams the sun  
in all its glory

in jesus's name let  
tongues be aglow burning the  
words down to the po

em's root from which it is re  
surrected from the ashes of the un

utterable as more than stillness or  
the tarnished silver of sil

ence as more than the  
words themselves it sires all spir  
it now descending

it sires all spirit  
now descending over the  
poem's dewpoint and

condenses into words that cannot  
be learned from the outside (like

by rote at school) but more from the  
inside or not at all – like something

confided deep in  
the heart when a heavenly  
breath sighs o'er the dust

*for hans*

a heavenly breath  
sighs o'er the dust quite liter  
ally on this par

ticular day on which my old  
friend has been cremated burnt to

potash to a wing of silence and  
ivory that slowly un

folds over tempor  
ality in the summer  
night's fleeting coolness

in the summer night's  
fleeting coolness of crushed em  
eralds that have been

stirred into linseed oil as in a paint  
ing by memling the longest

moment grows visible with spi  
rit like the poem's invisible

nature day grows out  
of darkness: now gleams the sun  
in all its glory

now gleams the sun in  
all its glory – i write while  
the rain comes pelting

down over hedebovej soon the  
reverse will be the case then the

sun will gleam over heartland while  
it is raining between the lines un

til it is neither  
true nor false in jesu's name  
let tongues be aglow

now gleams the sun in  
all its glory – i sing in  
søndersø church and

listen to the steadfastness of  
the words to their echoing back and

forth across two centuries to their  
echoing across the silence

and across the a  
byss of time in jesu's name  
let tongues be aglow

in the summer night's  
fleeting coolness furthest in  
among the covets

where the words and the world have not yet  
been separated from each oth

er silence reigns as it does in  
the poems when they have been reu

nited once more and  
day breaks forth now gleams the sun  
in all its glory

a heavenly breath  
sighs o'er the dust and murmurs  
earthily in the

leaves 'plant three hundred roses' i  
once said and now they are standing there

in a ruler-straight row down towards the  
wood sprung from darkness's root

word to another  
word for word in the summer  
night's fleeting coolness

it sires all spirit  
now descending speaking through  
the poem itself:

i have dreamt about three hundred  
roses i have planted three hundred

roses and i have written them in  
to a shubbery a device

into a uni  
ty of words – a heavenly  
breath sighs o'er the dust

in jesu's name let  
tongues be aglow when the words  
encounter the world

and the poem heals them to real  
ity a unity which nei

ther can nor shall be written further  
because it is both the poem's

prime grounding and its  
final cause it sires all spir  
it now descending

in jesu's name let  
tongues be aglow where the words  
no longer get in

the way of each other or block  
out the light of the poetry in

the depths of the forest be  
hind all the trees and behind all

the convincing for  
mulations now gleams the sun  
in all its glory

it sires all spirit  
now descending over the  
poem and raises

up the words in incorruption on the  
divine field of the paper

so they can enlighten something other  
than themselves and their own fair

ytates and their self-  
quotations in jesu's name  
let tongues be aglow

a heavenly breath  
sighs o'er the dust so why be  
mournful why not just

rejoice and dress oneself in clothes  
of finest green and yellow and blue

instead of viscose grey and shoes that have  
a sour stench of vinegar

why not give in or  
simply yield? – it sires all spir  
it now descending

in the summer night's  
fleeting coolness i follow  
my own lifeline through

the woodland and undergrowth  
from my hand in amongst the seven tall

est pines the line runs out to where the  
dew falls and the dark like a

letter from god print  
ed in braille – a heavenly  
breath sighs o'er the dust

now gleams the sun in  
all its glory down over  
the pulpit my dead

line is a different one from  
the one the vicar and my edi

tor have parcelled out stretches  
out behind the far side of the poem

where the words slowly  
lose themselves in the summer  
night's fleeting coolness



my male and female  
cousins do not have  
any green blood in their veins  
like the noble cas  
tilian fami  
lies or any blue blood like  
a romanov they have quite  
ordinary red  
blood in their veins like  
the larsens and jensens have  
like the johnsens red  
as my own blood is

on my spear side (with  
the icelandic fal  
con in the coat of arms) i  
found that one cousin  
had become a ge  
ologist specialising  
in petrochemicals a  
nother a dairy  
engineer and a  
third an inn-keeper while all  
my female cousins  
had married farmers

on my distaff side  
(with the bohemi  
an garnet in the ring) i  
found no nieces and  
nephews with high cheek  
bones and a fiery tem  
perament no slavic fer  
vour because i am  
the last of the fam  
ily on my mother's side  
which thus defini  
tively dies with me

i call all the dead  
together in me  
my entire family as  
a final defence  
against extinction:  
'make my words come to life breathe  
life into them for they are  
all that will survive  
of us all for pos  
terity i am speaking  
in the name of you  
all' i say to them

come now sing in me  
let us chime like church  
bells among the words let us  
spew fire like firethrow  
ers like a sicil  
ian dragon let us rant  
and roar like electric saws  
let us hum like power  
pylons let us jud  
der like automatic ma  
chine guns let us screech  
like a cock pheasant

or whisper in me  
more sweetly than the  
grass behind langesø chap  
el whisper to me  
with your mouths full of  
earth through the cobweb of the  
ear fill my poems with salt  
and ashes and the  
holy spirit let  
us kiss each other goodnight  
and to rest tell me  
the truth without words

this too i have said  
before and this too  
i will say once again: 'the  
poem is the wound  
through which that which  
is most beautiful leaves me –  
the wound through which i release  
the memories so  
that they will be a  
ble to live their own life and  
so that forgetting  
can commence in me'





when the words are plumb  
and the world level there is  
not really all that  
much else to say on  
such a clear september day  
with me now approach  
ing my seventh dec  
ade at an alarmingly  
rapid speed there is  
not really all that  
much else to say at this point  
in time than thank you

what more is there to  
say? – that my favourite col  
ours are malachite  
and madder lake that  
i love hamburger with fried  
egg that i prefer  
rubies to sapphires  
that my lucky number is  
thirteen and lastly  
that i am an ex  
pert at the alechin de  
fence when playing chess

my love is like moz  
art just as straightforward just  
as perfectly ob  
vious as the roses  
as the birds and the clouds as  
the brief nights of sum  
mer as all the pi  
ano concertos ever written  
put together my  
love is the dia  
metric opposite of death  
and vanadium

if i were to choose  
a metaphysical coat  
of arms the second  
quarter would show a  
cross white on a ground sable  
the first quarter a  
bishop sable on  
a ground white the fourth quarter  
a rose white on a  
ground sable and the  
third quarter a red admi  
ral on a ground white

at the last moment  
i wish to make use of the  
opportunity  
to promote myself  
somewhat in this myth between  
that which i would have  
liked to have been and  
that which i became that myth  
which when everything  
is said and done nev  
vertheless possibly gets  
closest to the truth

høeck commercial:  
høeck medium høeck light høeck  
strong høeck de luxe  
høeck's black label blue  
høeck red høeck green høeck with and  
without filter høeck's  
liquorice allsorts  
høeck for illiterates høeck  
with and without pre  
positions høeck with  
lots of 'crunch' and 'yummy' høeck  
king size and høeck gold

høeck commercial  
høeck's sonnets are more seduct  
ive and høeck's canzo  
nes are far clearer  
høeck's haikus are far higher  
høeck's love poems are  
far more profound høeck  
to relieve sorrow and pain  
høeck for heart and mind  
høeck to prevent mi  
graine – if you want fortune and  
luck then read klaus høeck

høeck commercial:  
invest in høeck there is a  
future in høeck – høeck's  
good security  
(hand-made and gilt-edged) høeck gives  
ten words interest  
you can tax-deduct  
høeck høeck assures you a safe  
old age høeck is your  
guarantee høeck lasts  
you all your life there is e  
ternity in høeck

høeck commercial:  
did you read your høeck today?  
one poem a day  
keeps sorrow away  
one poem a night keeps your  
heart on the flight – a  
thousand and one days'  
poems a thousand and one  
nights' fairytales from  
klaus høeck and gylden  
dal 'klareboderne one  
thousand and one – k'

høeck commercial:  
høeck's bargain poems and re  
duced poems høeck's sur  
plus stock poems høeck's  
reject poems and low-price  
poems høeck's every  
thing-must-go poems  
and throw-away poems høeck's  
discount poems and  
fast-food poems høeck's  
long-life poems høeck's bingo  
and full-house poems

høeck commercial:  
about 'fairytale' the press  
wrote: 'the book is a  
murmur a dream a night  
in the woods in life's hands hans  
christian andersen  
would have nodded in  
appreciation' – take a  
fairytale trip with  
høeck take a dream and  
reality trip with høeck  
take høeck at his word

høeck commercial:  
høeck's poems have a leakage  
barrier that en  
sures that the words hold  
water stand firm and solid  
høeck keeps the words real  
ly cold and the po  
ems really hot høeck keeps the  
soul really dry høeck's  
poems have got the  
lot høeck earth sea heaven and  
hell høeck forever

peeled of all abstrac  
tions one's selfsame self (under  
stand it he who can)

i cannot get clo  
ser to it than this poem  
which can only be

written with words that  
contradict themselves and can  
only be read without

words like a drawn sa  
murai sword that eventual  
ly gleams in the light







is the sun's tall quick  
silver column its icon  
not seen gleaming in  
the garden's pink snow?  
haiku in haiku name in  
name hidden in a  
calculus in an  
elision the paths guessed at  
can we recall if  
so if so can we  
then heal ourselves make ourselves  
whole in jesu's name?