



everyday

paul shippee



everyday

a workbook of poems
& voices

by
paul shippee



FRONT COVER DRAWING
BY PETER COYOTE

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these
works
are
dedicated...

to nonpossessive loving

*

to
everyone who has ever touched me...
also California Colorado New Mexico
Arkansas Vermont Maine even Connecticut...
also the Sun the Moon the Land the Stars & Jupiter
and Henry Miller Pablo Neruda Jean Genet Allen
Ginsberg Peter Berg Tim Buckley Peter Cohon Gary Snyder
my brother & sisters their children & my mother and father
the Buddha family the Digger family the Bolinas family
the trees the rain the sky the deer the elephant
the turtle and the big mind
the late Zen Master
Shunryu Suzuki roshi
Chogyam Trungpa rinpoche
Provincetown for being a friend
and elaine

*

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I AM YOU

SUN
★

dirge for a motorcycle death

MOON
★

VENUS

soft hitch hiker in the sun the wind

i am dreamed in
women

W O M A N

AND EACH PARTICULE
of female spirit
that opens
itself to me
opens

itself
to me
to me

is not only a barbarian
g e n t l e n e s s

but that part of me
that rises
and knows to feel good
somewhere inside your
smiling eyes
& belly

"i'll jump out here"
& i watched you go along
the sidewalk soft in the
eyes i remember
soft in the walking
soft soft
in trailing a hand along
tops of the white picket fence
-how well i know
the whole world is better

and better off
 in the soft walk of you
 going home toward the Chatham
 Light

reminds me of the Zen story
 of 2 monks travelling - one
 helped YOU across the stream
 the other asked - we aren't
 supposed to get it on w/women
 are we?
 the first answr- i left her
 back at the stream
 you are still carrying her

sexy is a word the
 feeling is indescribable

a
 little crimson tangerine
 patch of sun
 shivr'd across your lips
 (the
 (feeling
 (indescribable
 just as you said the word

virgin
 as in virgin islands
 St. Croix
 New Mexico
 Colorado
 California

MEETING

the beauty of your hands
 their gesture of opening
 taking
 oh but the thorough illusion
 i place there - - -
 let's see,
 thunder
 clouds crouched pregnant
 w/ rain
 storm bruised leaf
 your hand moves
 and the bones beat
 forth submerged
 in sacral fear
 fences ringing from
 when they were trees
 you do not know
 your own beauty
 and i cannot know you

a hundred & five easy pieces

promiscuity is a loser

a cream waste of lovliness
in depth

the moment passes me by
caressing ea illusion

hah!

did i love that tree
confused by sun set
beaten
by a mind
loose
and fornicating w/ images

did i lose the morning
thinking it through

it was yr softness made
me think of the waste
in prmiscuity

i celebrated
i loved
it was the very
enjoyment
carried me away

i could astray
be led
easily
& never pay

i know nothing is free

what can i carry back ?
when i take from you
and cannot love

RETREAT

love heals
sex heals
someone loves me
i stare at her nakedness
 amazed
 by infinite qualities

images rush in
 they preoccupy my life
i sink back into body

 feeling
again the unprepared
 raw precipitous
 touch

 where it starts
 out there
 on the edge of my body

that is where it starts
 you
 and
 me
 and my images
and yr qualities
 and my desire
and yr face
 and my wild fornicating wish
and my past
and you're still there

when i get back....

verses next to the sand dune heaven

"freedom"

I WANT

let's start from there
i want that
my god, those tits
i was in the bar and looked at her tits

like someone drove a spear thru
my neck
my person bled all out
and the next night i sat near her
we didn't talk i looked at her tits
it may not be so interesting
but look....

desert

I IMAGINED I COULD WATCH HER NAKED TITS
in some bed for hours fold and unfold their
smiles & caresses THEY would point up hard
and form a lovely brown wart in a sea of tan
milk THEY would slowly move like anemone into
lush soft pools ANOTHER hour would go by
i would watch carefully savouring meanwhile
beerdrinking glasses clinking & smalltalk
and lick the spot with my tongue to change the
hue the movement wet and glistening
my body's a wreck from
all this thinking
but...

sometimes

in meditation
a flood of warmth
comes into my belly
i recognize myself
and the gap i am reaching over to reach you
is a mind web wedded
to clever punishment
desire
inflamed
crevices so....

naturally

we seem to come to
 a real erection next
 to a real tit
 real nice
 our skin
 & a flood of warmth
 jubilantly disarms
 the imaginative chase thru your
 pubic wonders
 the dis/ease
 coming apart
 and i'm fucking you
 again now
 in flesh spirit blood

i want all of your love
 it's break/fast in my breast
 sperm threads
 i am writing
 about it
 it's about all i need
 a human being - a heedless
 recording of where i go

March 72

there are poems
going through my head all day
long
and visions
and browneyed girls
smiling in the sun
a smile that blows
across the universe
a wind
that rips up all the asphalt
in the world

August 71

A Love (that didn't work) Story

I

Rose room 58 Swiss
American Hotel

call her - she's beautiful
and skinny

II

Dear Rose,

I should have known when I saw your pale luminous face approaching from half a block away this evening that tears would interrupt my sleep at night. I've tried to explain your beauty twice now to you and am still not sure you believe me, or care. When sitting over the soup in the restaurant I kept looking at the line of your shoulder where it showed under the black velvet. Such exquisite shape - not beauty in any conventional sense I want you to know; you're nowhere near perfect - but grace. A gentle almost weakened exterior and underneath a strange rugged clarity that shines with your Sicilian sureness.

I am totally captured by what I can call no less than a noble grace - of movement, of change - that must go back centuries. The agony I feel of wanting you is only tempered by the love that grows each time (each rare time) I am with you. Grows maybe more preposterous because each time I see you you seem to move farther away. What a situation. Rose, I love you so much. I want you so much, so very much. And somehow now I feel I will never see you again. Just right this minute I had that feeling. After so much chasing after you. Ahhhhhh!

III

in the alley
i leaned the motorcycle carefully against the parking meter and chained it there. She woke to my knock on the door. the shades were pulled down in the small room and i waited for her to get dressed.

outside in the warm sun we held hands as we walked.
 i paused before taking the chain off and leaned
 against the bike feeling the warm air in my face.
 she leaned against me and pushed her slim leg in
 between mine. when i kissed her she put her tongue
 all the way into my mouth. I caressed her long
 black hair and felt happy. such treasure. we
 headed north on the warm roads into a warm ecstasy
 of warm hills and flashing trees.

IV

with real understanding
 comes no bitterness
 somehow I am grateful
 for the trees, meadow
 tall grass
 and deepening shadows of the
 afternoon when you leaned
 against my body
 I followed your line
 lost it again (then lost it totally)
 fed it with images
 that you blew smoke on
 (the sound of their breaking
 again and again
 like little glass figures
 gave me a bellyache)
 all day long my images
 my incredibly hopeful and naive
 expectation of that one response
 turning into deepening bellyache
 What is that one response you asked
 and I said what makes me feel good
 what i didn't tell you
 was that i want you to feed me
 but you wouldn't understand that
 or am I too stubborn to accept?
 Romance, the hardest pillar, the great
 pillow hardon of my life, the stretched out
 yearning
 (oh, the pain) died today some measure
 and yet not a portion of bitterness
 to kiss it goodbye

how can we in fields and meadows
see with monstrous clarity
the death of illusion
how wonderful!
the slippery dark spaces
of the city only helped our hard game
how could it surrender
amidst these unrelated boxes of pursuit
and desperation
these slippery surfaces
dark glinting gems of opaque
vision
paths twisted through my brain
burned in by some parched
and crying need
I imagine you to be there
and you are in some other place
I turn to touch and
hear the undeniable complaint
the glass walls of your
uncertainties staring from their prison

it's not any fun to write
this in your now permanent
absence
you died today in that meadow
I died death and let it
thank you meadow
thank you lady
it was accepting pain
body pain
that ushered in
the true understanding
that space of unexplained hurt
kept it's appointed round and
delivered understanding

April 69

everyday

it was in the morning
that i went from store
to store
looking for the ny times

i couldn't get it
so i sat down
with a cup of coffee
glimpsed through pages
looked at dirty books

the girl minding the store
was doing her homework
the girl minding the store
was doing her homework

going out the door
with groceries
i said hello
to the most beautiful
girl in town

January 72

MARS

POEM: SPELLBOUND

thunderbolts across the sky
like all hell's about to break loose
any minute

wonderful bad weather outdoors
a long grey sky with sleet in it

I spend long hours with colours
and paper trying to repeat my name

because a long journey is about
to start

last night we burned a bird carcass
in the fireplace and the smoke re-
turned to the sky

i would rather have put the thing
in the garbage

I have to break a spell
my name is written beneath
the corners of the mouth

I have to break a spell
and urgency is the enemy

I have to break a spell
of calm and this debilitating
concern with enlightenment

I have to break a spell
of energy bound with thought

energy caressed with smoke of self
smoke obscure smoke of who

energy urgency spell
energy urgency spell
energy urgency spell

I have to break a spell
that frees the ghost
(beads holy hip man show
(mark man mad hell

I have to break a spell

faces/street

there's a nod
from the body
coming toward me
it turns
doesn't meet

*

it's moving
it's open
it's turned
and it's turned away

*

it's tentative
it's wanting
not wanting
to meet
it's walking on the street
it's in the town
where we live

*

it's refugees from unfinished
business

&

it's my friends

January 72

Winter in Town

i find

oppression

sauntering down the lanes of winter

on the street

i watch faces

howling with loneliness

& hunger

i shall not describe them

i am among them, make no mistake

in the dark breaking

of the year the answer

is here

somewhere among us

as easily as sap

drawn downward

into her roots

everybody's hassling

(blue morning)

"the note the landlord left was nasty," she said to me on the street leading straight up to the beach. the stinging midmorning winter sun held that peculiar hard low angle. M. is crying because i make it with her friends. she plunges into lacerating corridors of neglect, turning envy into selfpity into war. we are both sorry. tears flow unarmed from her face. she screams. down at the beach the water lulls...a body at rest just like yesterday. the wind jumps on it's surface and ripples spread like wings. i hear the peaceful lapping sounds at the edge... Such temptation. i can see i am not that body at rest. I'm hassling too. But the possibility...of blue water at rest.....(gentle liquid...)

the sun going down
the sun going down
the sun going down
the land lord the
land lord the land
lord smiling smil-
ing asks me asks me
how I am I am and
how can I say How
can I how can I
say to him to him
the truth that I
can hardly can har-
dly say to him the
truth into his
smiling smiling
face that I have
nothing to do to-
day today to this
long long day that
I am imprisoned in
some imprisoned in
some deep space deep
deep space of unex-
plained unexplained
hurt Where where
O where O Lord can
you be you be now
just now and throughout
this long day now when the sun is
going down going down the sun is
going down And I vowed seven
times seven times this
morning after medita-
tion after this morning
meditation to meditate
this afternoon and I
hammered and sawed and
measured wood hammered
and sawed wood wood
and lost faith and
got it back carp-
entering shelves
and a place to hang the
coats in the kitchen
and the landlord
came and asked
and how terrible
it is in my face
the feeling was
not there not
there and there
is meditation
and to do it
now that the
sun is going
down down

Winter Storm II

the
changing
of the light

a thorough freeze
 choppy feelings
 rushed
 sex instead of love
 the spirit clipped
 to serve the Demon of
 american ambivalence and aggression
 tantalizing

the women never looked better
 in their bodies
 (the faces dead)
 tits, bellies and succulent hippy hips
 disengaged
 provoke aggression
 and receive it
 and then try living and fighting
 off so much pressure

succubus cripple demon
 SEDUCTION (by the fantastic)
 a strange machine
 made in america
 where
 the pomp of pop records
 is only equalled by
 the impoverished, lame and oppressed
 and groovy consumer
 who is continually
 being fucked by his commodity
 -more like a cocksucker
 where
 after the imperialist
 slayings we are left a straggling
 brigade mopping up
 some kind of bloodless blood
 captivated by the vagrant memory
 of a promised
 feast

меркуриу

wandering over dunes

following the spoor of
a single deer for miles
soft edges of pitch pine

i could hear the crunch
of his feet in the sand
kept neatly in place
by american beach grass

didn't lead me to
the waves in the ocean
like i wanted

after taking my life
into his feet
we crossed mankind
i became expectant

and how many times
felt i had become lost
to a winter in solitude
a line in heaven

January 72

On a Desert Knoll in Western Nevada

POISED TO SHOOT THE RABBIT

COYOTE

surprised to see me
brown furry cheeks
and amazing warm wide and alive eyes

the eyes STOP (beauty pass)
floating just around the corner
of the sage bush
feet planted in the sand
(i've touched his velvet pads)

he has sniffed the danger
face to face
TURNS wild softly beautiful

and looks up along the sights
of my double barreled shotgun

THE GUN poised (pearl bead
centered
at
his
head

POISED to shoot the rabbit

WE chased over the knoll

where we all stand now
mystified in wonder
in Prairie life
in Nevada

We Need More Land

in the old engine
i loosen and tighten
a million nuts & bolts
my sockets fit them all

the crackd bearings
worn thru layers
of metal scored
by low oil pressure

greasy black hands, clothes
oil drip in my eye
crankshaft, now there's
a word with work in it

no humour here
bloodskinned knuckles
the cast iron wonder
chevy 235, 6 cylinders

needs new oil pump
piston rings, main bearings
rod bearings, gaskets
a part from the junkyard

how will it ever
run again
humming, bearing
my nomadic soul thru america

carrying men & women
from city to commune
high into mountains
grass to steel to land

all steel it seems
whispering thru rainstorms
pistons hum when
they are new

the work of eight days
brings the song
of the american chevrolet
in tune once more

timed perfect with
a red strobe light
i can sit staring once more
at american neon road signs

eating revolutionary ice creams

running together

downstream from the first house there
are people what are they doing
they put the stone in place first then
littered the yard with lumber i brought
the saw table up from New Mexico and
a roof grew on the house the bread
that was baked in the oven had flowers
in it we laughed a lot in the afternoon
hauled water until the spring dried up
in August I walked outdoors with her
and ached in my heart to see the moon stand
up on her breasts some people drove
miles into town for money and it wasn't
there others went to new york for Spring
i walked up the mountain & crouching on
a rock pinnacle hail flung from clouds
i could touch sizzled into my face i
constructed an adobe fireplace in one
corner of the house warmed
me when i got

back in

january

September 69

We live on shifting sands
By storm driven seas

at the high tide
waves beat upon
thin walls
in the House of
the Sand Piper Sleeze Queen

OCEAN
push coastline back
170 ft in fifty yrs we live
on shifting sands

By storm driven seas

February 72

O L E M A

the goat and
the chickens and the dogs
and the cars and the trees
and the hills and the cows
and the birds and the little
dead
fawn carcass

the naked people and the lovely shoulders
leaning over the dishwashing sink
the serapes draped and the hair long
and funky
and the little babies sucking at the tit

the young coyote and his long legs
the timber wolf pelt - huge & thick
the singing in the morning
the food and the work and
the laying around and the moon
coming up at night over the hill

the sun and the breeze
and the cool and the fires
at night time

the travelers and the sun
and the fog laying over to one side
on the shoulder of the hill

*

Come graze with me in the front
yards of our mind
Let the private spaces dry up
there is no time for shame
All the colours of our voices and all
the grasses on the hill
All the loving holocaust to come let
loose from the tongue
of the true
dragon
All the whispers true
The touches real in the body
The birds joyous being in the open trees
The step that follows the skin is open
The voice a rooster crowing
Up his throat

FROM THE SWITCHBACK

(i see a great space)

"...find the unity
within the unity."
-Katagiri Sensei

the Mountains
turned to me

& spoke

Swift Sloping edges
of trees catch the morning sun

GREAT SPACE
great space
tilting
ridges pitched
above frozen granite signatures
OPEN-VAULTED rhythmns
hold 3 flitting sparrows
highriding
the split blue shafts
of morning light

the People
in the camp below
hushed in close near the loud creek

hammering curled steel
from wood splitter wedges

(clear ringing sound
of iron
creasing the sky)

& Hands loosening the earth
so plants may breathe

they do not see the piled up
grandmagnificence
watching over them

SUM

When we trust completely
this is our true nature
Suzuki roshi

like running full speed downhill
shouting
letting the voice spill over
into the grass
leaving the belly
free

like leaning over into expectation
-then sever the cord (don't fall!)
like whispering love's voice to another
(fall!)

March 69

we talked about it

(i saw moonlight
reflecting on dark
water

(he saw it blasting
from a rock

(we talked about it later

January 72

ROSHI'S GARDEN

this afternoon: Pushing
tugging Sweating twisting
(having abandoned the machines)

a half ton stone bowl
mushroomed in the garden

balanced on a stone perch
a rose stem laid there
Bamboo leaves chanted
the Heart Sutra

some tea was served
from the new steaming bowl
Quiet ecstasy was (people) laughing
the close of the day

November 69

Mathew is one of the old men living in Northern Maine. He has lived beyond all the questions and doubts of belief and selfsufficiency. He is at peace and does not worry about whether or not he will survive. Questions of how or when or why are behind him. He comes forward without fear and without judgement. He is a man who walks in the light of God. After 81 years of living he speaks with an open declarative voice which is never overbearing, never pushing except out of kindness or an unabashed willingness to communicate. To reach another. He is wise. He has localized all his wisdom so that every movement he makes is sure and without effort.

He is not superlative in any way. He is just unfailingly himself. I lay in the hammock in Bill's yard one day and listened to his voice. He asked about the hippies. What is a hippie he said to Lydia and then proceeded to offer all he knew from watching television, reading newspapers, etc. He went on to draw up his own conclusions. He said that someday maybe they would see that God is not dead at all. Raising his eyes to the space of open trees, grass, sky he said, Why you can see God everywhere. And he extended his hand out over the arm of the wooden chair, gently passing it among the tops of the tall weeds growing out of the earth at his side.

But the movement of his hand!! It struck an infinite balance between the gesture of extension and some force that was outside him. He brought something alive that came part way to meet his hand. He brushed closely an unhurried contact with the whirring presence of the Great Force of the Universal Essence. He shook hands with God.

teacher

I know i am only seeing

in two dimension
i met Tada-san
walking by the river
he seemed pulled along
 by his eyes
up, over there, around
to here

he pointed out
with brief movement
of both hands
and a very quick flashing
full smile

 the relation
of tree overhang
and rock slope
i saw the warmth
in an instant
and was opened inside
transformed
by lightning
light
love

April 71

RHYTHMNS

walking slowly thru the mtn forest
a time sense vast enough

to be illumined

by the spiny shoots on the grain grasses

a sense of slowing down
responding to the vastness

complexity

to single things each

in a quiet zone

of it's own life

transient

passing the sun
passing one round moment
passing eternity

July 71

TASSAJARA JOURNAL

november first

evening
pleiades (the deer) rising
from the EAST

setting
in
the
western

SKY just before dawn

ACORNS
falling

to the ground all over the

SANTA LUCIA

range
from

BIG SUR to tassajara

hot in carmel valley midday

ORION
bold & bright

in southern sky

before DAWN

november second

SUN

disappeared

behind mountain

3:30 pm

THIS WIND WE SHARE

that deer over there

BREATHES

WARMPFACE

DEEP

in the mother's neck

DO YOU UNDERSTAND

FUR?

over there
in the brown winter grass
and bleak wind

high up on the mouth of the River

she's black at the nose and tail
and around the long ears black

the herd is grazing
on the hill hidden
eye
eyes
eyes eye eyes eyes eyes

I'll take the ROCK ravine

down to the sea

EAT seaweed; GAZE & listen

come back surefooted

& give YOU this message

foam white Blue (eye) sand

TAKE STRENGTH

from this wind we share

I AM YOU

I have come from far away
to call you

I am the Great Brown Turtle upon
whose back you walk

I am the Eagle that flies higher
than any other bird

I am the Rainbow Woman, you sing
of me in your appreciation

Do not hide from me
I am not deceiving you

I am the Earth you can never
depart from

the Rock that gave you rest
in the churning waters

the Buffalo you followed
on your bicycle

I am the Air you breathe

the Sky and every bird
takes flight in me

the throat of your Speech
and the Words are my flesh

I am the Fire that warms
your blood

the Watcher standing
in the shadow of the mountain

the Stillness in your heart
with keen and loving eyes

I am the flowing Water of
your emotions

the legs you Move

the Seed that carries life
under the long winter

I have come from far away
 Do not hide from me
 I am not deceiving you

I am the Ways you learn
 of digging in the Earth
 of loving those you Hate
 of singing some new Song
 of feeling good at Noon

I am all the Ways lost
 & buried in the Graveyard
 of Self-consciousness & Gain
 comin' alive green
 again in Hands

Do not hide from me

I am the Brother and the
 Sister

I am the common Lore asleep
 in Wage mediocrity
 & buried deep in
 superiority

I have come out from all
 the Elements once more
 to receive you & I am bound

I am the Manure that you
 throw out upon the Ground

Believe me and you shall spread it
 around through
 conversation
 poems and food
 buildings and your movements

I am the Darkness

 the Return

 the Seed you shall
 sow again

 the flowers following the Sun

 the clearly Seen, the decisive

I am What Is



MOON

dirge for a motorcycle death

remember the afternoon
split asunder by death

i thought i was
going somewhere

the afternoon did
have a thread to it

my mind's careful
construction of reality

so carefully unhinged
by your surprise death

*

motorcycle
a new orange one

23 yr old boy
carrying wet swim trunks

from Stinson Beach
along Rt #1

coming out of an S-curve
above Bolinas

under eucalyptas trees
overshoots the double line

at the crest of the hill
we're both doing 45

*

an instant i see you
an instant later you're dead

for you it's like hitting
a brick wall at 90

i hit the brakes
but you're coming on fast

sliding into your death
sliding head on into my truck

rear m/c wheel locked
drifting thru the hot sun

coming into eternity
only surprise on yr face

i hear the crash
watch you die

suspended in midair
out over the hood

*

somehow you don't
come thru the windshield

but thrown back
face down in asphalt

the immediate silence
fills w/ cold horror

*

peter said, "he's dead"
& got out of the truck

the disintegration final
three things happened

your life, the afternoon
and the machines

have all come apart
in the smallest splitsecond

because of shock
you don't bleed

from your wounds
yr face is blue

*

traffic passes slowly
faces refusing to accept

your blatant posture
down in the asphalt

police come, doctors
coroner, wreckers

sweeping up, measuring
writing things, photographing

*

the next 8 hours i
spend in mild shock

exhausting reasons
blame, karma, my hands

freed by Inga who
realizes things happen

and reasons, well
there are none

*

i went back there
to that crest of hill

built a little thing
of stones & eucalyptas acorns

chanted in the hot sun
squatting by the roadside

the traffic didn't know
this time either

*

