

## **Rooms without language**

It's late December in West Virginia  
and already the trees are rusted shut

Cold tunnels under your skin  
The deer are speaking in tongues,  
banging their eyes against the sky

In mine #3, the walls  
are sharpening their teeth.  
The canary's shadow is  
filled with blood.

Last night, a billion stars filled the room  
as you slowly drowned  
in the mountain's black lung

**Clouds are made of:**

cows and masturbation and algebraic equations and  
piss and station wagons and fruit and winter and  
apple pie and John Wayne (Gacy) and clowns and  
drunks and garbagemen and Georgia O'Keefe and  
Aristophanes and stars and sheep and  
trapazoids and funk and trees and weed and  
snow and the Yellow Pages and Detroit and  
Hiroshima and porn and zebras and ashes and  
Bob Dylan and cancer and death

In the afternoon,  
in my stationwagon,  
in a drunken stupor

I moved to Detroit  
with the garbagemen in the rain

George Bellows painted clouds and  
winter and drunks and piss and  
garbagemen in the snow.

I did not invent George Bellows  
or Detroit or winter or cancer  
or death

## Poem for Nagasaki

You're driving home from work,  
listening to the radio-teardrop

The wind is on fire  
The birds are on fire

You pull into the driveway. The roof  
is sliding off your house. The clouds  
are on fire in the poison rain

Inside the wall, the telephone won't stop bleeding  
as your spine is ripped from your body

The poets are still gathering skulls  
that leak from the garden's mouth

The wind still rakes ashes into concentric rings  
and in the center ring a monk sets himself on fire

## **Baltic Avenue**

I.

Walk into the forest. Cut down  
a tree and carve it into a musical  
instrument with your Boy Scout  
pocket knife. Pianos are difficult  
to carve with a knife. You might need  
a chainsaw or a jackhammer or  
a set of hydraulic wrenches.

II.

Walk out of the forest. Make a map based on  
the coordinates you received from the aliens.  
Follow the map to the village where Tristan  
Tzara was born. Do not stop at go, do not collect  
one hundred dollars and do not walk down  
Baltic Avenue at night.

III.

Little friend of a strange song,  
I made a rock garden for you  
on the bottom of the lake  
with the cat's eyes I stole  
from the five and dime store

IV.

Winter's white noise keeps all its blood under glass  
Someone turned the snow globe upside down  
and stars are falling back into the sky

## Lunch Poem #27

A haircut of weeds  
A suddenness of light, the light  
That trees vein into  
A dimmer switch of sound,  
If a piano trickles lightly  
The over there, the Van Gogh crows  
I painted a rhythm of 'em  
Lamp-black, a run down song. song.

Gnome,  
I collected a basket of Mars-black for you  
That pencil thin riff  
A trumpet of sky increases the sky  
In shambles a shamble of clouds  
Falls apart in the lamp-black air

When a million skies converge  
In the clearing  
And the stars are building their  
Ghosts, let's build bricks of it,  
A stack of it