



# Watertown

Sketches

Watertown

# Melting Sunlight

Be free. From the east a river seemed to flow between the forks, except it was melting ice the setting sun had burnished, near Sag Harbor the old whaling town, where Cat summers with her two dogs, her brother, father and mother.

Sorrow seemed to drain into the sun lain across the road. Your car flowed through a liquid yellow road touched with shade like a witchcap mushroom. It was water spilling out a vase, bars of sun on the highways to Montauk. You drove on and on, then turned North when the turkey crossed the road, its wattle shaking in monition.

Cut your door open near the bight.  
Sheets of ice tiled the bay. The tiles starred with powder.

The hem of your pants graced the snowfall, which began to freeze your ankles. You crossed the snow, to the foreshore, and looked out over the water.

An apricot sun lowered into the hummock across the water. The sky faded from yellow to deep blue then, as the sun slid under the horizon, it rolled a pale winter rainbow up the night.

Walk around.

# Mascot Dock

“Is there something in the bucket?”

“That’s seaweed.”

“It’s sinking, it’s sinking.”

“No I got it on the rope.”

“Hold it!”

“I know!”

“Oh-kay.”

Their father creaked over the boardwalk to his bag of fish heads. He pulled one out towards his knife and began making small, precise cuts. After a minute he said:

“Look, look—” and shot the line into the water.

Vriss. Plunk.

He pulled up a fish a few minutes later. Its black and orange body shined on the planks, flopping and smacking its fins.

Fadunk dunk-dunk.

His finger pulled the barb out of its shrinking mouth. Dunk...

He kicked the fish bayward, bent, it hit the water with a plunk.

He returned to gutting. Further along another fisher shouted:

“Yo! Yo! What are you doing? You got my line!”

They grind the reel like organs, their lines spooling.

Women walk by in pairs. Shimmying, gabbing, wearing bright Pink sweatpants.

Hriss. Plunk.

“What are you doing? Emily!”

The little girl pulled her collar out of her mouth, and shook her pony tail free. Her brother kicked at the gravel adjacent to the boardwalk.

“Are you guys going to behave?”

The sun crept across the sky, above a thick veil of fog. A ferry came from Fire Island, out of the gloom, drifting slowly across the water.

The water chuckled and chopped.

# The Atlantic Ocean from Smith's Point

Tiles of waves charge in one after the other. Some are grey, some are green, foam boils before the quivering drop. Hrisss they crack forward, up the sand, and fall back, pulling a melting blue through bubbling sands. Icy dungeons of water: green, blue, white, opening, as you watch and think. Wave-webs, bubbles hissing, curl, splash open. The orange edge, the blue edge of your glasses.

A seagull lands in a footprint. It pluck plucks a crab leg and, blinking cautiously, plucks again.

The poodle swings away from its leash, its tongue lolling out its mouth.

The owner tugs the leash and they troop along the beach, the dog skipping towards plovers.

The sun flies west, a dragonfly after the night, contrails and distrails etched into the clouds.

Evening is seeping in. My journey stops here. Deserts and mountains, dunes and forests, the ocean crashes. Its salty kiss wafts through the foggy air. Hear the tides swelling and drooping. Rising blue, when I was young I paddled through rolling emerald waves until the beach shrank and rocked away like a hammock. They were cold, and dissolved on the prevailing tide of years. Claw yourself out of this bed of ooz, for a moment, breathe. Younger then, still I paddle through an ocean of days. I am rising, turning. Come waves. Break in. Give life.

Make them run.

# Montauk Highway

The truck's bed juts with equipment and a stack of grass clippings. The wind shucks emerald blades off the pile, over the road.

Rocks jumping from the material truck onto the road. Hopping out the prison of their tarpaulin, ducks and drakes skipping down the highway. Crack against the windshield.

Cars peel off highway exits. Bend, follow the path of the sideview mirrors. The sun, a creeping spider, slides across the windshield, and the world straightens. Merge.

Emociones, the Mexican Bar, All Coastal Practice, Satellite Pizza, CVS, Flower Gardens, hurry, hurry...

The brakelights flare like fireflies. Red squares gusting down the highway west, curving lines of headlamps jewels.

The roads are crowded, she leans a hand in. He grins at the sifting traffic...a soup...oh my god!

Alone, dual, two motorcyclists slide up the road parallel. Thundering exhausts, scorching metal.

Under the bridge yachts press fluffy white trails into the inlets.

East to Riverhead. From Riverhead west. All nodes of the island railroad to Penn Station, belly of the city, scuttling rat.

Lights scramble on the roof of the cop car, burning festively.

A truck glides to the side of the road, rolling to a stop.

# Nightworld

- The black night
- Streetlights, petals
- The drift of night
- Slowing rhythm
- Anthony's face in lime light
  - detached, isolated
- flogged, cursing
  - of the city
  - Hou Hai Lake melting ripples
  - The earthshine dancing on the crescent
- Their conversation taking a hollow tone
- Cyril's
- a pink afro dominatrix!
- Moonlight tattered in the branches
- Her spirit fled
  - Face me
- b
  - Blue Point
- Streets Cole scouted
  - Nec timeo
- tinged with orange
- murmuring curbs, they stand around...
- Everyone's standing around
- Voices draining out the windows
  - Curve
  - Sorbet
- summer in the city!
- Dark island nights
- Boat, guitar, strumming
- L'eau claire, like
- Nappertandy's
- Croxley's
- Hi Lindsey
- concealed and shifting
- Ice, amber streets, through
- pipes, unending labyrinths
- London
- Night in Jamaica
- Amanita
- nec sperno

The Christmas sun had risen. Melting frost off spears of grass and shining on the bare roads it began to float through the cage of trees, casting beams of light and shadow through the

# Lakeland Avenue

At the fringe of the lake a

green

trees

The rain taps rings into the glass  
of the water, spreading over reflected tree  
crowded tops and shelves of algae. The mist  
settles, dissolves, the wind blows a  
group of shimmers into the  
surface. A Canadian goose idles, its black  
webbed feet below the water kicking. Drifts

beard

and tulips

framing

and

of scum like platforms of lilies, a

spaghnum

mottled archipelago over  
dragonflies, white bellied plovers  
with tide flight patterns. A

trou

house across the water, the shutters beneath

its belvedere gazing at the water, at reflected  
lawns and windows.

cakes

of

A low dry wind soughs  
in the branches; stertorous, shaking loose yellow leaves drift of

a klaxon,

clusters

roads sigh, cop car and train horn

cry distant the water, the dabbling goose.

of leaves,

A firework explodes

through the fringe of trees

and sheet clouds fuse together.

Posed for summer, an algal bloom  
beneath the surface waits on summer's

touch. In love the waters

brood, solemn and waiting, on a movement

of air to deposit

salt. Petals ring the house,

wrap up the lake, sit

between the fenceline and property

that no boat casts over, awake

sedg and aconite,

two nerf

shanks,

green

with

tipped purple

children's war

from

darts

# The Green Balcony I

Leaves, one drooped over the other like the tags of clothing; and pine needles poking the sky; and stars of maple leaves. Past the screen of trees lies the road, sighing and morning-gray, while lawnmowers cut up grass. Balconies of the condos: fading gray planks. White clusters burst atop the trees with an apical crown of flowers. Humid day.

## Sketch of a Sister

—I'll do a sketch of you. Is that ok?

—Yea ok.

Light shines off the peak of her turban, a white towel holding the sun. Past her head are blades of grass, a field of green spikes. Her striped shirt tucks into mustard colored pants. Curled up and looking in a book for ways to write a script. Her wrist flicks the pen across the page— She looks into the fold intently.

—Yea, yea!

Her hair is thin, brown, and a wet lock wriggles past the line of her towel; others curl around her ears, small and red from the water. Her right lobe bears a small freckle like a dried flake of onion. She extends fully, shakes and settles.

Blinking and turning her head, she mumbles a few words to the pug lying under her chair. She turns back to her book.

—Oh that is like the beginning of a movie.

The sun glows on her skin. She turns the pages...

—Ummm...

She exudes an air of prudence and confidence. She reaches a hand down and thumps the broad side of the pug.

—Laa la la.

## Self-Portrait in Poolwater

The slender column of my neck widens to my jaw, then curves to my ears, handles on a jug. From the tips of my ears the frazzle of my hair puffs out and bevels, running in overlapping tufts then straightening and breaking sideways across my forehead. Thence it curves to my ears and cheek, to my jaw and neck, an upside down pear.

# The Knots of the Northern Roads

The car slides over hills, bars of light pass over the windshield, and houses blur through the screen of trees, a tunnel to Sag Harbor.

The road forks and widens at Long Beach, wrapping around the bight. Crowds of people are out for the day...shuffling across the highway to the beach, a strip of rocks.

Watch them tread upon the rocks. Soft and hard, coated in algae and silt, egglike lumps press into their feet.

Sag Harbor: a small town beneath hilly lanes of colonial houses.

Step in. Dark wooden rafters, a low roof. Gaps in conversation bloom open:

—I published eight books, but haven't written a word in years!

Move on, inland, southwest. Transfer and change direction, northeast, slide between the lanes. Trace the sun eastward again. Pass through wineland and farm-stands, country foison, grapes, sunset.

The sun shrinks over Gardiner's Bay, its piercing rays slanting down.

—Ah, these goons came into my email with demands...

She waded out of the water.

—You were only in for one minute!

# Blue Point

Blue: in the wavelets pulsing to shore and the growling cars; above the black line of the horizon and mixed with the draining wash of twilight.

The reel chitters and its hook waits in the bay.

—Good luck my friend.

—Godbless, you too.

He trudges off the platform, through the pavilion to the parking lot, his flipflops smacking the planks and asphalt.

The other, his elbows on the rail, lolls and smokes a cigarette. The ember glows against the blue of night.

Behind the waters mumble, breaking on the shoreline, breaking apart.

Dogs bark; cars park and leave; footfalls shuffle through the parking lot. Shining their ghostly headlamps on the pavilion they wheel backwards, peel away and drive off.

The night sky's humid blue stars. Aircraft flicker through. Sighs of the land and the road and the sky mixing.

The half moon reigns. She infuses the water with silver; under the moon the waters ebb.

Twitching and speckled, a helicopter floats through the sky, alone in space with the waters below.

The air tastes of flowers tonight...musky white bay laurel—floating over the dock like a perfume, a scent of the bay rising from the planks below. The odor of cigarettes...starlight, the waters spiral blue, blue, blue.

*Cold pale moon,  
All that your light dissolves;  
Put fire into the gloom  
As the world revolves*

*None but myself will sing this song  
Though many lips will carry it along;  
A song of moonlight in an icy cave  
Spread across the fields and the graves*

*You raised me up to the moon  
And made me good as new  
The years will fade but light remains,  
All will fade in beauty contained.*

# A Tree in Northwood Court

Slender pole of the trunk, gray with white fingerprints, streaming from a crowd of black-eyed susans. Disappearing pale leaves. From base to apex the shade underneath brightens...red-streaked branches. Hooking out from the trunk, slender arms hook towards the sun and, spaced, the leaves seldom overlap. They bob up and down with a low breeze, star-shaped and drooping. The topmost branches rises straight up, stirring the air beneath the clouds.

# Noon at the Library

The bell is ringing noon. Cars, trucks, airplanes thud by.

Bumblebees hover above clover patches, flitting from petal clusters with blurry wings.

Sun piercing the crockets. Solar wind, mycelia twining, the shore two miles south.

Cars, thought to thought signaling.

Blue ironed across the sky. No clouds nor drops of rain, stretched taut like on the first day of creation.

Cars and oceans, snapped some pictures while away. Mountains, deserts, the First Highway. Watched the tidal pools.

Stir breeze, stir. From the fields rise buildings, cupola-capped, with roosters and weather vanes. From here the funeral parlor's solemn entrance and the offices, with columns and lamps chained to the porticos.

As the cars rush by so their glances go: to home or work.

I pass too, leaving nothing but words. Stained glass warped: colors and image melt together.

# Hunting Dragonflies

The birds are fishing an ocean of grasses for dragonflies! Swooping out of the sky they descend on fast-flitting wings and carve their way through the stalks. Erratically pivoting, the dragonflies nimbly change direction, the fuselage of their body providing ample camouflage from their featherier foes—but not that one!

See the blackbirds fly in on dark wings like kites. Flitting and gliding, they open their mouth—plop—and change direction. That's one well-fed bird, and there's plenty more where that came from.

Below, in the bushes, crickets rub their legs. But above the stalks and fallen leaves, black wings swoop down...

# Backhoes

Under a late-summer sky, backhoes shoveling mounds, their fat chassis in the sky. Standing tall over the mucky water of the bog, wind sweeps the willow branches, their fronds stroke the water.

One backhoe pivots. Its treads wheel forward, winding it up a pile of earth. Then the shovel hangs in the air, swinging. A small white-and-orange one moves up the trail... The large yellow hoe pivots around...

Flowers haunt the air; a breeze from the bay stirs in the reeds. And a late summer sun cooks the pavement.

# Blue wash

Gentle water of the bay chops towards the dock as sunlight reflects off the pointed tops of waves and I close my eyes focused on breathing while light gathers around warmly and when I open my eyes the bay flickers blue.

# Heat Exhaustion

Confusion puzzled her face. The eyes gazed out vacantly.

—What's wrong Grandma?

—Where's Dick?

I looked at her in confusion.

—What?

—Where were you?

—I wasn't anywhere. I went to pick up food hours ago and ate. I was downstairs.

—What time is it?

—It's 8:42 Grandma.

—8:42 already? What have I been doing all of this time? Is Dick here?

—Grandma, I'm going to get you a glass of water and turn on the AC. Where's the AC?

—The AC?

—Alright Grandma, you just sit back and take it easy. I'll be right back with a glass of water.

—Did you eat? Don't forget to lock the door.

# Mannino's

Cool AC.

In the strip mall across from the bars and appliance stores, bordering the schoolyard where I gamboled during recess, looking at the high brick walls.

—Good afternoon.

Inside a wall of openwork mahogany separates the parlor and dining room. To the right embossed leather seats, the walls a gold tapestry, mats form the entrance to the counter.

Behind the counter stocky Frank manages. The employees bustle about him, men in blue ties pinched between black collars, women in all black.

—How'm I helping ya today Beth?

They bumped fists.

—I'll take a regular and a spinach pinwheel.

—You got it.

—Who's up next? asked an employee as Frank pivoted towards the oven.

—Are you being helped?

—Hey boss I'll take a Grandma slice and two knots.

To the left a dim room with slender girandoles. A cushion above the bar—bottles stacked in the window...come in for a drink. Slender bottle-necks, festive red labels. And wine glasses, hanging like bats.

Frank Sinatra oozing.

—You're meant for me, sooo...

His crooning hangs over the restaurant. Up the murmur of voices and clatter of silverware.

The door swings open. The receptionist scratches her neck.

Sour Apple Tini

Lemon Tini

Sangria of the day.

—Alright, you take it easy... Have a good night.

# Night

## I. Night Blue Sky

Bones knocking in the depths of night. Shooting star, inkspill universe, passing lights. All my particular atoms stars, my mind welded to yours in space, time, thought.

## II. Starry Night

The blue green dots of the universe. Canopied, fused in spills of rich indigo ink. One and all. A branch of the galaxy, a fragment of the spiral.

## III. Indigo Water

Indigo plains to the barrier island, houses in the night. Melting blue waves on the shore. Venus glowing like magnesium over the sallow island.

Dying pastels in the west, over the highway of burnt pine trees, our windshield spattered with raindrops.

Sea-scattered: the lights on the water, pen and writing hand: indigo-rinsed dark blue night falls in.

# Midnight Gazpacho

The minced garlic burns my fingers again

Starlight on the roof, I make gazpacho

In the mountains chopping cucumbers

Slice off cucumber skin in thin strips. Forest green. Mushy green tube

Fingers swollen. Skin a rising balloon

Pale red tomato juices and yellow seeds. Jalapeño: sharp, bitter, slightly hot

Glugging tomato juice: pouring over chunked vegetables and olive oil

Chunks of bell pepper. Yellow sweet orange tangy green hot red crunchy

Caleb and Megan sit at the table of deal unwinding as moths strike the windows

Good night Boss. Good night good night

I put the gazpacho in the fridge

The crushing, peeling, burning, cutting, dropping, pouring, stirring, chilling

# The Blue Point Dock Saturday Morning

I know that if I get this one right it will all lock into place.

Fishers drop their traps into the water.

The wooden wall of the dock is pale green and white above the water line.

On the margin of the dock, on the strip of concrete, people crab.

The water this morning is ribbons of dark green, silver and blue.

On the flank of the parking lot the heads and tails of cars.

The mailman's truck turns at the entrance of the dock, pulsing golden lights.

The wind stirs up the water, which begin to rise.

A pewter bay, with soft white thumping layers—tumbling eggs of the waves.

The air humid and silver.

# Boardwalk Above the Water

Beneath the planks the waters ripple. A current draws it forward, a current draws them back. The water in the marina moves against the pier.

Past the rail which looks out into the bay, the waters glow with sunlight. White and yellow fire shimmers from the wavelets, light spread across the open plain. Ascending, the sun moves beneath a thin mask of clouds, its light coruscating upon the bay.

Cool breezes descend from late summer day, tangling with the rigging of the boats. On the shoreline the waves continue to break over one another; overlapping, each break emitting a pensive sigh.

The planks of the boardwalk, weathered gray-green, feel soft underfoot. As one treads they neither creak nor moan. Copper nails rust in the wood.

Tall black lamps, spaced evenly, rise off of the boardwalk. Their empty metal cages fill up with the gathering sunlight. At night they shine above the waters, putting an amber glow into the water.

Seagulls, floating dreamily into empty sky, call to one another. Their yellow beaks open—

Drifting and tugging, the waters move with vigor from the bay to the marina. As they enter the cove the waves flatten. Slowly the tides change, blur, and the marina swells with wind.

# World Songs

I.

I walked along the road to the bay  
Rising stalks of flowers  
And pebbles crushed by wave

An arc of sunlight rests in your hands,  
A breeze strokes the bobbing fronds  
And cuts through the land

The morning sun dazzles my eyes  
While waves lap the shore  
Beneath the moonrise

I lay out on the rocks beside the bay  
And watch the waves breaking in  
All scattered with day

II.

The island dips under waves breaking blue  
Let them fall under the spell, and carry its tune,  
Of water peeling open atop a wave  
An endless expanse, on a clear summer day

The world opens like a flower, bright as day,  
The hot summer's power has chased away  
Shadows rolled under the trees and across the streets,  
Cool patches of shade where glances meet

We crossed empty streets too hot for life  
We hunker in cool buildings, scared for our lives,  
The sun zooms in, the waters rise  
Water rising over the world wide!

Oceans they pulse and begin to churn  
Heart to heart, a rhythm slowly burns  
Of opening seas, and cut-up sky  
A blue summer day, the last of our lives.

# Poolside

Every half hour the train runs behind the trees blasting its horn. The wire sway lazily when it rushes by.

The tree's shadows lay flat in the pool water.

The water above the jets ripples.

High and silent, sunlight reflecting off its wings, an airplane like a fish drifting across the sea...

The train bellows on its way to Patchogue.

The sun continues down the slope, creasing shadows on the pool.

The evening cools yellow and humid.

The red and orange trees shine in the spell of twilight.

Breezes, through the filter of branches, rustle and spill.

Besides the tracks plantain lilies bloom, lifting their purple buds to the full moon.

The trees wear spots of lichen.

The evening is full of peace.

# The Ribs of Twilight

The indigo rumbles across the universe

The ocean, deepstained

Orange and dun ribs

Seen over the field

The place of green where we looked

At the world blossoming beneath our feet

A pale floss of apricot clouds

Soon the light will all drain

Into the plains of night

Net to net, the city lights

Cup the rising sun

Sinking twilight, what end awaits?

## The Ribs of Twilight II

Ribs of clouds above the bay, lilac waters, smoky and gray. The sunset leaking orange, pink and pale yellow.

Yellow peaks of cloud. A savannah, a cream field, leaking pale blue. A breeze touches the crags going down the wind.

The waves come in peeling gray.

Curling silver holding glimmers of the sky. Ribs drifting and slicing open. A pickup truck moves by.

A glistening airplane, a long auburn sunset, a little orange boat that slices metal waves.

On the horizon the colors darken, and the rings of clouds resemble lines in raw fish. Incarnadine and sliced open.

# The Heat of August

The lamps along the highway, a pale cast of amber, blooming through spaces in the branches.

The heat of August slowly drifts out of the night. A cool dark air, in ribbons and bulging gusts, filters through the leaves. The cicadas and crickets, huddled under the bushes rub their legs together.

The clicking and rubbing and whirring tangle into one impression of night. And the breeze cuts across the needles of trees, hissing, knocking into the windchimes.

The season decays. Cars pass solemnly on the amber strip. As they drift the sound of the insects renews: clicking, whirring, rubbing, armored plates sliding over one another. A melody of insects and street, knocking into the air with each strike of legs.

# Moonlight on Don's Dock

Dear Moon, help to banish this darkness. Where there is turmoil, light, where there is confusion, elucidate.

The unending tides within me are thrown with the bay water.

People and their ways, show. Weakness and hesitation, point out. Fear, eradicate.

Let me glimpse things hidden to the world.

This heavenly draught of light, converts all to truth.

In heart, in mind, in soul, join all of my disparate wanderings, pour thoughts into one song of moon and water.

# Seacrest

Flecks of light spark. Waves rise burning phosphorous, quavering.  
Waves fall like axes. The tide boils around the sand, ebbing.  
The waves beneath the clouds. Fog and vapor, thin, floating.  
Blossoming yellow, umbrellas down the beach.  
Grass swaying on the dunes.

—Do you think I'm a weirdo or something? You look at me like I'm crazy.  
—You act a little crazy.  
—Oh boy.

The buildings, hotels, mansions, and zigzagging staircases between them. The sea's waves, paint and photographs, cachets, film. Blue umbrellas, Mycena caps, opening to the sky.

A car disappears on the sand, leaving two parallel grooves with runes of lines.

The ocean's waves crash down.

Bluegreen tufts on the dunes reach to the sky, their tips sliding in the breeze.

In the distance clusters of buildings rise. Silver-blue they rise into the clouds.

Emerald waves and gray balconies, the thump of a helicopter over the water.

Tan bodies in the shade, rubbing their arms, smoking, eating, lying with pages fluttering in front of their eyes.

Small waves roll in, the sun shattered on their peaks.

On the horizon slow freighters move, cities in their stores.  
Waves roll underneath their hulls, slowly pitching the boat,  
Cutting a channel through the water.

# Head Buried in the Sky

Switch. Crane my neck into the pale blue. My eyes could chisel the sky. Shreds of cotton drifting up. The bay beneath the airplane coasts along, lights flashing on the wingtips, paint of the sun melting. Off the fuselage a hummingbird, and a butterfly, bird and insect rhythm joined.

Swap. The pale blue sky darkens to teal. Teal leaves and needles wave. The sound of a low air plane crossing, pigment of a dream. A cloud, its edge covering the sun, darkens the lawn. A cool lone breeze of late summer filters through the trees.

# The Green Balcony II

August spiders have tied up branches in webs of silk. Glistening leaves and needles stuck together. Some droop crescents of green, while the others, maple leaves with yellow veins, bob in the wind; some show outspread blue-green needles, others trail vines with bright green leaves like chili peppers. In the lowest canopy mops of rust pet the ground.

Cicadas make their neverending flame in dark green places. An unvaried, constant flaring of staccato notes.

Cars on the road drive by sighing. They drive quickly and close together, slowing in unison.

The setting sun paints the leaves of the treetops. Rust, green yellow, wilting. Dark green shadows, bluegreen, tiles of. Branches spraddled, patches of evening. By strokes of the sunlight fading the leaves darken.

The breeze pushes up and down, scions, bending back and forth, sway. A heavy breeze gusts over. Flats of the leaves, overlapping, rustle one another's veins.

Shadows on the trunks, mottled to the base, wrapping into the grass.

The wind blows over the branches of the pine tree, floating.

Two doves wing past.

# Indigo

Bluesilver ripples drift over the waves. Spreading apart, dissolving and reforming on each swell. Down the current, lines crossing one another.

Indigo. Shifting under the dock, thrusting in from the bay, slowly loping. Currents drifting back out, to the deep blue water. Colorless forms rolling in. Thrusting, into the dock, sending a flux of waters backward.

The bay indigo motion. Pulling to shore, drifting further away and rebounding, weaving a tapestry of water!

# The End

The last periwinkle fades from the sky and Rose's life is at its end. All day her family members have come and gone: up the stairs to wish her goodbye; back down to the kitchen where they open the blinds to let light pour out of the house.

In the glow of the lamps mist is falling. The droplets waft and, far down the street, compact a veil.

Mosquitos zoom out of the tall grass. They tap a capillary, drink and carry off blood.

Into the night sky lemon light splashes the gables; it falls on the cars aligned front to back in the driveway, and all of Rose's family settle inside. They sit around the kitchen table and murmur solemnly, or circle around the bed.

The starcaps of narcissus burst, proffered to the night with a daylight intensity, the night air closing around the crown and the parts it warms for bees.

The cool night rings with crickets and, sighing, blows off the highway, peels over the fences into the yards, to the bay.

In the bluest hour nearing Rose will take her last breath and die.

# Dreamworld

Every evening at lighting up o'clock sharp and until further notice

The green truck bumps along the road  
I sit atop its bed, looking out.

In the California evening. Blue stretches over the streets, people sitting outside, drinking and smoking and rolling dice.

You sigh like a kalimba song  
Your heart paints the lake;  
Shifting memories long gone  
Chords of music make

Everyone is passing, a flame rises into the sky like a bonfire.

There were three in the bag  
And one like rotting meat.  
It was a white Amanita  
A warted toad's seat

A few bands of smoke floated into the sky.

# October Dawn at Blue Point

Bands of apricot rise over Fire Island and soar into the pale blue sky. When the train's cry recedes and when the locomotive goes west, when birds call to one another, sun lights the trees. Ripples spread over the water, pulled by its tug, others blown in. The water is charcoal and light gray. Sleeping houses hook round the bay, their darkened windows looking out. All of the sky brightens; the sun is rising.

## The Green Balcony

1. The crickets sound different.
2. It is nice to breathe in cool air.
3. The planks are gray.
4. The leaves begin to fall.
5. September has begun.
6. Warm breezes fall down.
7. Across the yards.

## Blue Point Dock

*Well it's peaceful, a lot of water.*

The setting sun falls on the bay, placing yellow in its ripples. Boats, white flecks, drift over the water, leaving trails on the surface, the sun shining on their sides. Behind the strip of land is speckled with houses and the faint skinny poles of masts. Dingy yellow-blue sits upon the bare branches, fading to lighter shades of blue.

Tufts of waves, sliding in, rinse over one another like tiles and strike the clay-brown sands. Refluent, the waves peel backwards over the reflection of the pilings and, rolled over by incoming waves, crash against the shore.

Dappled November sun falls against the guardrail, the parking lot. From its place in the reeds a mallard duck shoots into the sky, green feathers over the bay, flapping the brown wings on its bottle-shaped body. The sun, golden in the right sideview mirror, sets into the bulrushes.

# November Twilight

The sun sinks beneath the horizon. Periwinkle, midnight blue, violet sky with sooty drifting clouds.

The crescent moon. Passerby:

When you're on the road you've gotta eat well.  
Did you smoke?  
Just a little.

Drifting into the warmth of bars and restaurants.

# The Ride Back to Blue Point

I turn out of the parking lot and roll past the post office. Ramshackle houses and businesses pass, the alleys behind the houses.

I glide to the end of the road, headlamps slicing over my windshield, and stop at a three-way intersection.

The cars are autumn-colored: nightblue, silver, scarlet, as exhaust rises and their pipes drip colorless drops.

Pedestrians dart across the road. One huddled next to another, hurrying across.

If I roll by their heels one will turn and shout:

—Hey asshole!

While moving his hands.

But his friends will say:

—It wasn't that close.

—He knew we were here.

And he'll grumble it off the moment he crosses the threshold of Arooga's.

I leave town by the four-way intersection, mistaking the clocktower for the moon. Up the hill and past the delis, to the intersection near the graveyard, gas stations, bars, and pharmacies, on the coast to Blue Point.

I move forward, past the emptying highway to All Coastal Practice, then turn left. I point towards the bay, over the traintracks, then turn left at the Flower Garden. I tap the code which raises the gate, drive in, park, turn the key.

# Ooz

Melted snow trickles down the gutters.

It has fallen again, and dusts the branches white.

A violet sky, snow reflecting violet.

A splotch of light blooms around the cars, slopes of snow.

When a car comes, its beams light up the snowy road to the houses.

The downdrooping boughs of pinetrees waver in the breeze.

Fall yesterday, the world a pot of colors, now bleak and turned to snow.

Light spills out of Roses's house.

The tops of the trees sway in the wind.

I stand here with my reflection in the window, the sound of water in the gutters.

The windows below the gables stare back at me.

I hope I will never lose the energy which courses through every moment.

The sorrowful lonely dry and cold moaning gust of winter pushes through autumn.

I listen to the water driplets drop.

New Year's Eve  
2018