

— **steve benson** —
STEEL IDEA



— **MIAM 6** —

OH THE EDGE

for Kathleen

When I walk down the hill
I think slowly on these words
After you watch over several old stones
It's afternoon and I look over white buildings
Quite a thought I am having then
Never understanding you when you are speaking Latin
So why are you so soft and tender
A red bird a sky and sand glisten
Listen a gnarly floating raggedy black wet sound
My vest coats my chest and stomach
I've now broken the train of probably explosions
My ideas or notions are deeply weaving what
An boldly bored after let bad limb
Everyone has their sentence to be said
Nightly the white moon now shapes up
Hold on Sandy it's the real thing now
Your arm isn't bare anymore is it
That's for sure I say with a smile
For you I would say a thoughtful word
Well outside there play any group of people
Then there's several folks who may do anything

HOMAGE TO ASHBERY

He/I ride wide of you, whose head's so light, lined in with vociferous trees, Vermont/England, frayed tent over head, head washed in sunlight in red instamatic xerox natural process color, the filter. Which keeps over the drink hot and tired leftover from Sunday at our house. We own the furniture, fight the pets, declare our natural holidays. Ours is the only one. That's how we think and keep our sanity. The other side is yellow, over the you know one, saying is tea-red and wine-pink-yellow anyhow dark and cupboard-smelling chaste shaven backwards, black listening at night with the horses that take off at a powder-flash -- tapped in from behind, beyond the green-oxidized door. Why quiet down to rest? Of the little sculpture gallery on the surface: you get in and see tethered there a marvelous Shetland pony, wet and hassled and ready to dish you out, irregardless of your appearance. A nice surprise, you guess, and anyway a Sunday out. It is the first occasion you have had to do so. At last you have something all back into your effects and glean at something, regardless. It's really red infection, a nuance thrown out of all proportion left to its own devices. Take the shower. Now bathe in it holding it in your hand. Hit it tickles and the godawful just wash up. At last you have no less. Thinking yourself a race, etc., it is a bleak hatred for your race.

that open in the blizzard. It's a blown night. You sign for me. Grab at: the closed song clip/repertoire holding like a mountainside with little signs aiming at a useful description: bellow and on into the yellow blinkers to guide one drives from the back of the car, how ever. Basted on the turnpike make out a red sticker that was supposed to be properly defrosted, now never was. Folding in yourself bare to the wreck of a gape of soldiers home Sunday: there's something wrong with my mouth -- aspirin? funny taste. and change it, inspire it with wickedness grace and kick it on the road where it will forget us in black resentfulness which, you included, will never blame. is in conversation, Yayayayah I mean ballsy pure literal great in retreat, right but not so gnoshy as often one or the other of us is in conversation. It stops raining while I lost, which you took in my tobacco before we met.

STEEL IDEA

Preamble

Steal ideas. Sit w/ books you want to read & when you get a hit off them write it, from the book or yr distillation or inspiration. Imagine how Barry Watten wd do it. Write a series every adjective you think of -- change every noun that wants to end it into an adjective as you write it down. Call last night's poem "Diapers Call." Tomorrow write Flat Rock. Tomorrow night who knows -- Nothing, if we go see "1900" in the daylight. We're in the same business -- or secret society -- or we suffer & get off on the same perversion. So random is it? "Who" or "whom" I know. Like an amalgam of Barry's and Carla's, displaced by my own: gesture of throwing it up in the air, "here!" so it goes everywhere, anybody can catch it, moving off center enough to be noticed.

1/13

Well -- "well" he said -- one way he said was to write. He fell into the past tense as though a plane. Did you spell that intentionally? No one I know has come here, nothing I do could be as deliberate as what they're doing who are here... and yet I deliberate so much! I don't even know when I'm making works until I'm on the other side, and soon I'm just keeping busy again. When I hear talk of the flow I almost vomit.

When you come to a concert here they pass out publicity, in written form. The floor is highly waxed -- we're walking in our street shoes on the dance space. Lights dimming and going up and down again, makes me want to eat.

2) The most extreme honest intensity of this moment. Not "I warbled about my sense of rhythm" but "whatever the re-

verse" and fly into a rendition of the impossible. Next to me pauses, yawns.

In reality, though, I am in the audience, among definitions. Thank god for "art" which suspends my belief in that. Though it's not all that does.

3) A wicked kiss because hands at my chest like a swoon because what word did she use? The language-centered writer has so little reaction as he discovers how sexy the world around him: oh, there are one or 2 cute boys here and what difference does that make (Wrong again)

Then the only person I knew sat down beside me.

nice to see you
let's have a quiet time
lights out now make the bed
in your head see lights lining
up like stars in the twinkling
a light line brightening up your horizon
head out for disaster
make a film about it and come home
again you reach into the stars
you have no home
you are backwards you know that?
this happy fast busy busted writing
I can't stop now's the time to right away go
it's the hope for the future I'd say
you look along this line and with your toe you
shoot aim hard shoot into the bingo
the night falls like a wipe
I see myself in a cameo role in this one
as the little boy, just learning, trying on his first
army field jacket, his first razor, his first
mambo, he takes off his coat and reveals
covered with warts and penises his hairy body

2/12

It's hard to believe Jim's as dumb as he acts. Turning his apartment into a novel, yes, as a punk idea, but really expecting to get support on it? even from punks? It's depressing because he doesn't eat and is tired, he says, all the time, wants a job but won't get one.

2/15

It's coming to a couple times a week I get into frantic running walks around downtown, thinking what a great romantic city I'm living in, trying to get to work on time (& failing) as well as doing all the errands I have to do (failing these too). So I revel in seeing San Francisco.

I drive across town and stop in to see N
N has just birthed a new son, M
M is bouncing happily at N's breast
sucking milk and thinking God knows what

I want to go out for love tonight
If you want to get existential a moment
Fabricate a lie darling
This crisp determinate, silvery bill
Glance into the fat of my hand
Give me your arms and dance around holding me
Stand back I want to look at you
Precious you're wonderful reach arm around her
Him the man I'm sitting next to
Long after the sun has set
The flies of the kitchen have gone to sleep
Glass slippers begin to grow warm
The present moment -- wait, give me your hand
Beside me walks down through the dark
Heads bending beside us like so many monsters
Hold out your hand for the tip
There's a long line of dismay set ahead for you
I play with the food and throw it
Just outside the window what we call the yard
Don't finish I pray silently
I walk in on the middle of a game of cards
I'm in the middle of the table
You take off your clothes and climb over me
Be a basket, carry me off
Be dropped out in the open field

I am the same as I always was
Love and romanticism pour out of me
The lush stumbles the flooding street
I believe the red apple floating there
Or the red-printed cellophane in its place
Breaks through the resistance of his comrade

Horrible rank closedmindedness I learned you
Take it into his heart
Or he closes like a vast mechanical tank

TWOFER

Looking out the kitchen window
In the half dark for UFO's
Is it any wonder
The way a line comes into a Bowie song
Remind myself: I don't need to know what
Time it is, I'm going nowhere
Word broke in two less than half way
Through
Thank God don't have to get up in the morning
Or look across to the other side
Way up, out
Laundry day
Hit me
Stay home then with a thick head
And my sleeping bag full of moths mouths
Dogeared dogeared good books
Lose sight of home in the time it takes to
Get around to the other side of
This hammock hamburger

A good meal which did it
Let the record play off, spin
To a stop, drop the hand holding
You two don't have to sit there thinking
I had forgotten
I needed you to remind me
Oh cut the bacon & let's eat it
Comes but once a day, this pause, neglect
Seeing believable little anteating
Little whisps of drive, scooting
Two syllables for one-syllable word: break in
Aching to take you at your word
But I've played this game before
Half sore, half, red, more than bored
Went out as good as going out
Full star in the sky
Robbed me and stole my pants
Panties, used to say, before it was
My turn

The language bare and stomped out in the yard
he road in mush, he lay bare his leg
and the hogs stood out in the field of the sky
we walk watch out in the far field yard
or stay home with the moms and belt bombs
bet bombs catch rocks and bonds neck
you'll catch holy hell well, son listen listen
the berries'll catch you and you yell out ouch
ginsberg's new lyrics addressed to his son
we watch out in the beast frame of mind
couched in on our behind
the farmyard shading into twilight for us
bells busting in the belfries
waging war on a remorseless possibility
you let me in I'll let you out
the that's right, a holy bluff
he lays his toys out in all directions
stand on the corner shy in a snowstorm
he said now wait a minute that's impossible
repeat, realize the form
run true, little river, break out over the land's face
or quote me laconically
catch me out in the sunshine with paradise
the corner bends
this while I'm dying of hunger
figuratively, though I'd rather say literally
I hold my hand against the darkness
preying and lying
spitting wine behind me, trying to read
or furnish the house. Breaking over the doorknob
or more generally the doorway to the outside
where I'm sitting rocking thinking moving up
and back in the chair, on the floor,
delaying nothing, blam blam blam blam, dead
(light) white up
on the floor of the porch, just inside the door

1/6

Sick day. The pen I stole is hard to get the cap off of. I imagined stealing it from an impersonal store. I'm working on keeping the pen, manifesting my act. My act is writing now, then it'll be to read the end of the mystery.

2/11

Well I hope today is the 11th, so my bogus bus transfer may work, but the bus may take so long to get here I may peevishly "not care." One disappeared out of sight over the hill just as I came to Potrero, but I can't think of anything I wasted 60 seconds doing before leaving the house, and the fact that I didn't stop to call 'popcorn' to check what time it is would only stand in my favor if I'd caught the bus. Now, I have time to write and join in the history of reifying, if not entirely ennobling, the complaint. Jeff feels weak after a traumatically emotional night and I'm going in early to relieve him, trying to get to Jim's on the way to the Transbay Terminal, to see the novel he's made of his home and his traumatically emotional life before it closes up. Wind. Much better thanks. Floods in LA. Street looks like it's been skimmed by an archaeology student....

THE EX-COMMUNIST MANIFESTO

All right believers will be shot. This is the first memorable insignia. A vacant fear is not real. You have said you signed the waiver, but in fact you have signed this document by the very act of reaching it. Do not despise yourself; to do so is to despise others too. Sandy was waylaid on a side street of the poor part of his town. What has happened to my child? I regret to inform you

that your son has been subsumed in an important historical crisis from which you will benefit with your life. He reached up and shook the cat. Plugged it into his anus. Sniff the air and you'll see what I mean. Get that? Harm shook and knotted, grimly coked, suffered, stuffed -- it was a new day. You'll see. Harm's way. We sat about and shook as we waited for the mail truck to come with our meals it was not enough. The high light ironing board commented on us, draining the distant past of its obviousness until only the laborious awfulness headache John wipe my nose clean fawn whimpering ran down the hill less aches now right along this ridge you breathe the the you breathe here. All right all angels will be interminable. Which means the same as dead to you. This is the end. Now you hear it now you don't. Don't believe it for a moment. It's a con game. No! I will go home and collect \$3000 and run away from home and join the communists and change the system from within if I'm given a chance. Bougie-boy wants a chance. He gets pegged in the eleventh grade. No comment. Sign this wafer. Hands it into the box with an emission of sins, pink wishes stuck in toil crown the other side. Never mind, you'll do, says the winsome (goes out looks around gets in the other side) which is more than he'll do. He looks around his arm band. His arm is gone. It's been taken to the Navy. The Navy is fortunately obsolete. This is only the duration of his headaches. Time was when he couldn't say that. Now he's a perfect specimen of concentrated and redeemed remorse. Look at what? Well you can say that but what difference will it make. The name of his son. His son remains childless, not to be blamed. I develop a rash on my forearm. Take turns at concentrating. On this, will you? The poor part of town, his hate.

1/15

I raise a lot of issues with him. I write my dreams when I wake up in the morning and am exuberant afterwards. I tell him I want to sleep with him and be more physically affectionate with him. We dance together. He says fine but not tonight, says I don't feel sexually with you and my feelings about needing to air my feelings, and how awkward this is for me to try to do, with men, is evidently totally unfamiliar to him and he doesn't seem really interested and yet he acts like he wants to hear me out, curious, he will ask questions rather than drop the subject, as though

THE SHAGGY DOG

How cruel is life, he thought to himself while walking in and out the door to his house, trying to decide whether to begin or end. He drew a cigarette to himself, lighted it and walked down into the cold sidewalk-paved city. Desperate thugs worried him close to home more than they did when he was far away. I think I'll go catch a show or some sex, he mused to himself, pretending he hadn't been planning this

all day. Gotta get out, gotta get out! I feel my mind tumbling like dice in a gambling bin. Looking out of his left eye he saw a tall girl in high heels carrying a little poodle, black with red and green as trim. He held out his eyes and looked her in the face while tracing his profile against the lit distance of the end of the street in the city skyline. She held her breath and hugged her little dog. She wanted to tug him but she was too old. She knew better, he would probably want to tell her something or molest her. When she fell from her high heels he caught her from the curbside and felt her bare arm cradled in his right hand. It was white and fell away more than broke off when he let it go. I can't hold her too long. I have to employ justice; I have to let her decide. She'll grow up and make up her own mind. He stood a moment waiting. She, surprised he had nothing to say, bent and hugged him by the knees, since he was taller than her and she was on the ground.

This is where I forget what to say. He did it in his mind. He blew out a warm blast of air from his lungs and leaned down to help her. She had lost her puppy and suddenly started crying before he understood what she was excited about when she was so looking around. She was standing up and he was helping her, in his mind, by asking her what she could tell him. He didn't want to decide what to do to save the pup for her. I don't want to see that pup, he was secretly saying. He blew his cool. "Your dog will come back to you -- don't worry -- here, let's walk this way, and maybe she'll -- is it a he or a she? -- maybe he'll turn up." They walked on as though through the park with him wondering why he had adopted this girl and her alternately enjoying the day and worrying about her lost dog. They came to a swing and she swung while he pushed her and he saw something go out of her hands every time she went forward and up, he pushing harder every time.

Riding through oaken veiled Oakland unveiled station
like what he calls in his head a state of unhit likes
and piddlyshit unwanted discohip dislikes
he didn't live in here then
strengthening up amid the books Stars and Stripe and
Sheep Glow Bold Ace Burn
Reckoning
you swoop through the right of way with your
cavernous standards
Shake up on against the seatbelts
Brake through the hemming and hawing of your stupid neigh-
bors them stubborn foods if they eat
inching and sneaking along the ways of whoziz town
After you
By clown I'm clone and never more alone
Now inside my arm a tiny icepick
tones up for the big demonstration
as the clock on my face lights the path through a an-
nouncement of daylight savings time
Oh No Coldcuts
The pharmaceutical marriage: See here, Mommy,
I've got grey lips and a hidden cheek
a third cheek. Listen here the grapes are squeaking it's a
full moon
I linger by the cigar pump and beat on a guitar with my uri-
nator
Shock waves Life takes off on
no limit Incense
You peel off your outdoors
Why the ashtray? That's in the car. It's locked. You lost
you better ride back to town in the back of a bus
lower than a plate of glass
Now never mind your distress at the twinkling of a colon.
After you've caught your homemade dreg-lidded occupational
"glub"
your corner will press in and the hand'll tie you up
with a little chop.

the pedant summer hangs as from a bough
likewise the gauche flag drips from its moorings
you can see me in public if you have a mind to
or you will find me around your white horse

you read clothes your night off from the stars
say what you will, for supper around the supposedly
round table, what each of us wants is a big hunk
to fall off like a wrapper into the gutter

now this is typical of me when I'm trying to be cute
now I go into my grind of despair
now I let go a fit of excited silence
hoping someone's watching me from behind

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MIAM

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THIRD CLASS