

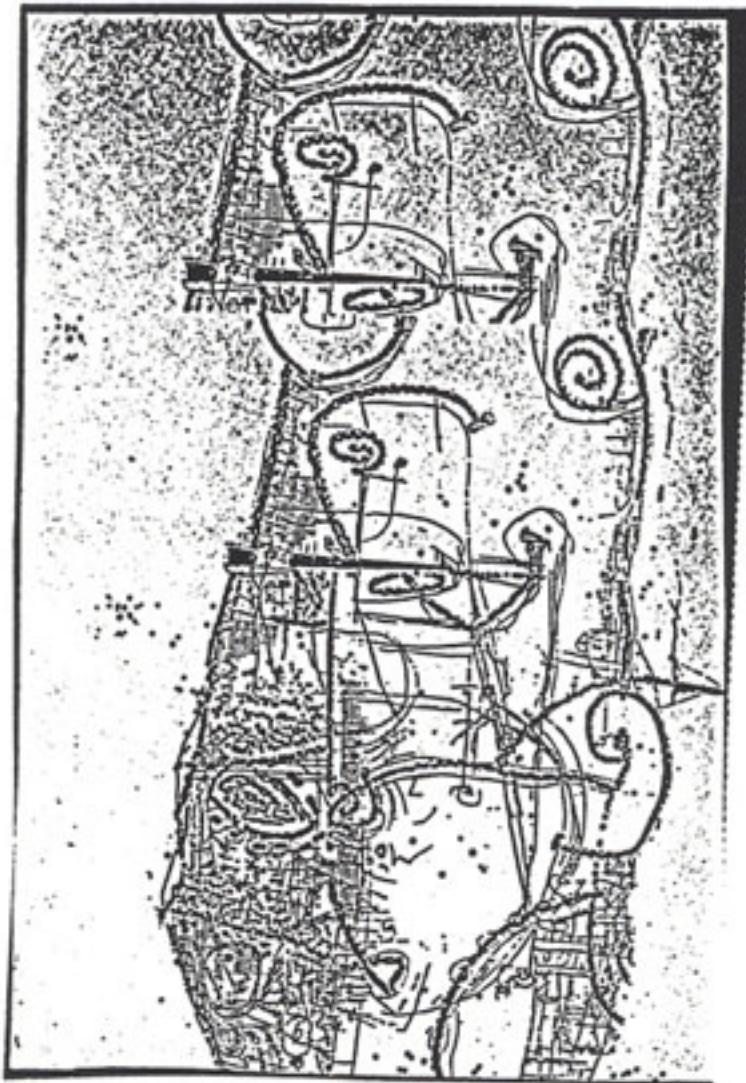
# **SECOND BOILING**

*Poems by Richard Denner*

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**D Press**

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## INTERCHANGE OF TINCTURES

Plutonium has a half-life  
of 250,000 years—  
and unless we can raise the tone arm  
and get ourselves individuated  
or differentiated or TOGETHER OR  
on top of it  
we won't have a millennium to stand on.

In Spring, bud out.  
Dovetails come later.

This is the later Kali Yuga  
The Fourth World  
The Iron Age

The Fifth Sun  
The IXth Hell  
The Age of the Hunchback  
The Era of Disillusionment

## ZERO TOLERANCE

Cumulus clouds cross the moon  
above this trepidatious dustball.  
I watch TV—another vengeance film.

I know this story by heart.  
I watch and listen as the heroine  
pleads with the hero—  
"You promised to serve and protect.  
Do this, you put yourself on his level."

City workers uprooted the spruce  
in Altursa Park, and I can see down  
Pine Street to the Liberty's marquee.

My window opens on a world.  
My TV opens into a world.  
The moon sends down a blessing.

Who wrote this script?  
The show's not over, even when it's over

## NAPOLEON WITHOUT A BONE

Politics determines our destiny  
along with MUD and the power of romance

tentative  
halting

difficult irresolute  
daunting

mystery, exile,  
a bone apart

Not so far to Corsica from here  
Not so far  
Not so far from here

You who lead me  
You who look on my pangs of  
cyclic loneliness and fear

I awake and say, "Good Morning,"  
to my bones

## IRRESOLUTE

Between thought and act  
Between cause and sequence  
Between fate and abeyance  
Between nature and our hearts

The parable of Self works itself out  
My myth unfolds  
Between the illusion and the confusion  
I swell with strength

To live Nature's force  
by emulation or by imitation  
to take Life in its green fuse  
with intention  
released from shadow

To study, map, decode,  
utter, know

Working ahead of all process  
continuously changing, merging  
while indecision meanders down the river

The root of poet is *poietes*  
Maker, make your luck

## OPEN ON ALL LEVELS

The moon rises  
in silence  
a silent rose  
of midnight

Hard enough to explain  
but I'm going to proclaim  
all it takes is a beak  
and a few feathers to fly

Shower me with care  
gifts common and rare  
health and happiness  
top my list of wishes

The familiar owl  
has not returned  
I search and find  
funky scat

## AUTOMORPH

Being in the body  
being in the world  
curves in space

I love it all.

A tree and a rock  
a sacred spot  
because it is  
it just is.

I look  
I think it through  
I do or I don't—  
two fish meet midstream.

## CALENDAR ART

*for Claude*

tIME IS.  
tIME WAS.  
tIME WASN'T.

Lunch Wed w/Tamara @ Slice of Life  
Poetry Slam Burbank Cntr 2nd Mondays  
Teens Against Violent TV tonight

I peek through a keyhole of soul.  
Been here and gone.

/we/they/dispersed thru a black hole  
into reckless space,  
leaving only a few after-dots.

## DO OR DOT

Don't dot it  
Do it

Dot Dot Dit Dot  
Dot Dit

What is more  
is code—

Dash Dod Dot  
Dash Dash Dash  
Dash

Dot Dash  
Dod De Dash  
Dot De Do

Dot De Do  
Do it

THERE THERE

The mirror curves  
toward my dread,  
and I start fading  
because I can't  
face the place.

This time, I know she'll say  
"No," and  
I fail to commit  
to this encounter.

I know there is no there there  
but there is a here here, even  
if I feel like I'm nowhere.

Nowhere, and  
now here.

## DOT

*head of a boil*  
occurs once OE  
16c. *small lump*  
*clot, a minute*  
*spot, speck, mark*  
1748 *roundish mark*  
*made with a pen*  
1816 *mark with dots*  
*scatter like dots or specks*  
*point used in punctuation* 1858  
*a little child or creature* 1859  
*a woman's marriage portion,*  
*the income of which is under*  
*her husband's control*

.

poets knew it (knew(i)t) little *i*  
newt, no(tat, tit for tat)ed  
knit it (knew it) dotted it down

## SPACE CONTROL

Since I cannot rise  
to omnipresence  
or tall to nothingness,  
dull orange sand  
fluorescent sheen of wave  
wave curling,  
I constrict  
and drip from far to near.

Trace tones replenish

with paratactic breath  
the objective world

The subjective itch.

## WAY THROUGH

All clam  
still stor-all  
my gift wrap  
tit, toe  
tell tore six  
live one  
without a muffler  
fuse count  
bell tower  
fake the rank  
wormwater  
former rag down  
the yellow voice.

## CRAZY AS POSSIBLE

Line must have *green* in it three times.  
Line must have reverse of earlier line.  
A refrain with time and place.  
A refrain of non-sense words.  
An animal with parts of other animals.

*with snow coming down  
like green umbrellas, I stepped out  
to buy some dog food for the cat*

## OPEN ON ON LEVELS

The moon rises  
in silence,  
a silent rose  
of midnight.

Hard enough to explain,  
but I'm going to proclaim  
all it takes is a beak  
and a few feathers to fly.

Shower me with care,  
gifts common and rare,  
health and happiness  
top my list of wishes.

The familiar owl  
has not returned.  
I search and find  
funky scat.

## STRESS IN THE FIELD

I'm waiting.  
I am exploring non-thought  
on Occidental Road  
as I hunt in litter for a piece for my collage.

(Silence.)

I am the world.  
The world is me.

(Sounds.)

I think to say something.

I try to say something.  
I think without words while waiting.

## WOODNOTES

*for David and Jim*

*Seek to realize the self—  
the way, the poets say, is difficult.*

We are situated in a cedar cabin  
built on stilts over the water in a cove  
a mile across Moser Lake from Deep Bay,  
our mail drop, Deep Bay 99901.  
Mail arrives weekly from Ketchikan,  
25 miles by plane weather permitting.  
Mid-winter—there is four feet of snow.

Elizabeth and baby Theo and I,  
helped by friends, take to the woods  
after reading Bradford Angier's  
*How to Live in the Woods on \$10/Week.*  
With my last paycheck, income tax return  
and promise of employment insurance  
we should make out—hoping that  
by discriminating use of ecological resources  
most of our material needs can be met—

*Selfless means to a selfless end,*  
as Ghandi put it.

So around this complex  
our routine flows—all activities  
merge in the pursuit, which deepens  
here in Deep Bay.

Schedule remains firm.  
Implementation of spiritual discipline,

Karma Yoga—wood and water  
wood and water, wood and water.  
Would you believe, wood and water?

Elemental—the meaning is subtle,  
but we're only scratching the surface.  
We have stored away necessary  
supplies, several cords of wood  
cut and split and stacked.  
Now we improvise.

.

Awoke to a 14 foot tide, high  
enough to float a forty-footer off  
an abandoned logging donkey.  
Tied on and rowed it to shore,  
breaking a rib in the dinghy near the stern.  
Tied up and came in for coffee.

Sometimes, I'm the ocean,  
man-boat-ocean.  
I wonder how hard the wind can blow.  
Whips us from the east today.  
Whitecaps in the cove, cedar bending.  
Gulls motionless in the gale.  
February is a windy month.

Can we use up our desires?  
Not that we don't have sense cravings.  
Food is Number One God here.  
And Shelter.  
And the twin god, a good pair of Boots.

Made a mixture of vinegar, water,  
cloves, onion, garlic, salt, mustard,  
sugar, ginger—for sauerbraten.  
Put this mix and a venison roast  
in a stoneware crock to marinate.

By the way, I'm told  
Ramakrishna uses the simile of the ocean,  
the ocean of *sat-chit-ananda*  
the ocean of existence,  
consciousness, bliss—dissolve  
myself like a salt-doll in this ocean.

Lu Garcia writes from Berkeley,  
"Things spin as they always spin."

Jon Springer, at this time, finds it  
"fetid in the Ukrainian ghetto of 6th St.

How did I get from selling *Berkeley Barbs*  
on Telegraph Avenue to this cabin?  
The old personality breaks down, and  
the world becomes pure—like Blake said,  
*as it is in infinity*.

It is curious how some moves take  
years to come about, but then  
done with full support of mind & body  
they move forward.

The wind gathers strength.  
As weather delays delivery of oil,  
as the *Coleman* stove is in parts,  
we cook over a makeshift grate  
in the Yukon oil drum heater.  
Elizabeth achieves bliss of sourdough  
chocolate cake, cerealmate bread,  
venison stroganoff, and fern frawns.

Living in the woods is a fruitcake idea.  
Can others be influenced by seeing how  
it's done?—expanding circle—friends,  
town, state, country, galaxy, cosmos  
returns me back to myself.

.

Snowflakes falling outside  
and in my mind.  
The temperature, 40 degrees.  
Nothing sticks.

I roam the woods.  
Tongass National Forest.  
Sitka Black Tail Deer. Beaver. Squirrel.  
A few bear.  
Much spirit life.

While dark, I take to the woods.  
When dawn cracks, I'm waiting.  
I'm a good shot, felling my game  
with a single round from a 30.30.  
Death, sorrow, sort of unreal,  
this tug of life and death.

Repression, exploitation—  
leaving the city to avoid the establishment,  
and, in turn, I become the Man.  
Good weather, one clear day in thirty  
in this rain forest—ego hunting—lots  
of weird animals in the mind—the mind  
itself a crazy monkey.

.

As I rave, the Governor of Someplace  
makes money in real estate.  
Dr. Leary attends Altamont, says  
it is a lesson to be learned.

Theo and I float in our boat, while far away  
Neil Armstrong takes his giant step.

Hunt and fish, wood and water.  
Today, eight crabs in the trap.  
Cut and stacked cedar blocks,  
using the tide to move them to shore.  
I came indoors to paint the cabinets  
until Theo knocked over the paint can.  
Put him down for a nap and read  
a few chapters of Thomas Á Kempis.

.

Field studies:

***Periculum aquillium***

a perenial fern, local species "hog braken"  
substitute for asparagus.

Theo gets up early to pick the frawns.

***Tiarella trifolia***

Quileut "gwaqwlatcyu'l"  
three leaves (*qwal'l=3*)  
Chew for coughs.

***Equisetum arvense***

"field horsetail"  
Used by Quinault to regulate menstrual flow.

While reading this aloud, Elizabeth  
starts her period.

We have no ailments in the woods,  
except when we go to town, we catch  
the "Ketchikan crud."

.

A whirly-twirly, sunny day.

Here it rains 200 inches a year.  
10% chance of rain means 10 inches of rain.  
Made ice cream and had mincemeat pie  
á la mode.

Watched a sea otter dive for crab.  
The sky *gualoises* blue, the water  
a shade of jade and now smooth.  
Buds and bugs and migrating fowl signal  
Spring—  
I feel like pulling the doors from the jambs,  
but I'm afraid of the ceiling falling down  
from a ton of newspaper & mattress insulation.

.

Cut and split another cord of wood.  
Supper of red snapper filets, scalloped  
spuds, and sponge cake w/berry sauce.  
We haven't seen a soul on the water  
for days—grooving on the isolation.

By kerosene lamp I read Lone Wolf Smith's  
letters to the Daily News,  
always a revelation—

*Not one new goat trail here.  
What for our Poor People and trollers  
more rotten Pinks from Creeks  
and let Coho go?  
Where o where is Gov. Hinkels  
Better or Bitter way?*

.

Not sure I want improvements.  
Sit and watch the deer on the beach,  
watch them turn their heads, twitch  
their ears suspiciously.  
A little bird settles on a branch,

listen to it sing.

## B IS FOR REFLECTION

I hover above virtual.  
I jack in.  
O O O O  
that Shakespearean tag—

My worm-worn voice sustains  
a single note, a ghost tone  
played on an invisible glass harmonica.

The note floats, folds, flows into color,  
lavender and wrinkled gray  
caressed by ash in the zero sky.

I plod the cross-plowed fields,  
a hard-driving, warbling, woodnote  
sort of guy.

## INTERCHANGE OF TINCTURES

Plutonium has a half-live  
of 250,000 years—  
and unless we can raise the tone arm  
and get ourselves individuated  
or differentiated or TOGETHER OR  
on top of it  
we won't have a millennium to stand on.

In Spring, bud out.  
Dovetails come later.

This is the later Kali Yuga

The Fourth World  
The Iron Age  
The Fifty Sun  
The IXth Hell  
The Age of the Hunchback  
The Era of Enforced Disillusionment

## ADVENTUIRE OF PSYCHE ON THE ASTRAL PLANE

Venus receives the file  
on the Psych case  
from Mercury, S.I.D.

Squad detached to precincts  
by Our Lady of the Myrtle  
c/o Aventine Hill, Rome.

The Reward—  
7 sweet kisses and 1 honeyed tongue  
thrust, exquisite and delicious,  
between the lips  
for whomever returns the slave.

Behind the right ear of Venus  
sits the Throne of Vengeance.

Psyche say she ain't nobody,  
but I say she ain't ain't nobody—  
she somebody—cursed with beauty—  
more powerful than the gods.

## HOW TO PROCEED

Numb and in a quandary.

Dazed, disengaged and  
stymied.

Here is your birth chart,  
which I have calculated  
and drawn by hand.

I deliver it by hand.  
One can't be too careful.

There is much here about  
fear and loss of control.

Take this mosaic, these  
jagged bits, disjointed  
and elusive, for in it

I see gossamer sails  
filled with the moonlost wind  
ride the ragged waves.

## MUTINY IS FATE

Five times I've left Berkeley.  
First, after my father told me not to  
show my sorry ass around his door,  
and I split for the Big Apple.  
After the University presented me  
with a 0.9 grade average  
for my year of protesting,  
and I regrouped in San Luis Obispo.  
After my bust for redistribution  
of capitalist wealth when I sold  
a copy of *Macroeconomic Theory*  
back to Cal Book Exchange  
without first buying it.  
After a jealous husband took my scalp

but left my eyes, just for for the glow.  
And on my own, kissing the sidewalk  
at San Pablo goodbye, I drove away.  
Then the weird poem of my life formed.

A sign says Hillside, but I should be bayside.  
No lights but an emblazoned *Blockbuster Video*.  
I ask a clerk how to get to Richmond.  
She says, "I hardly ever leave Pinole."  
Where's Pinole?

She asks if anyone knows the freeways,  
and a dude in a stocking cap with an earring  
through his eyebrow steps forward, and  
I know that I'm in a timewarp.  
Up the hill, the Parkway, four lanes  
with a street lamp every couple hundred yards,  
but no cars, and everywhere outside the road  
in total darkness—signs pointing left or right  
to Sanitation Depot or Landfill.

Listening to *Mister Mysterioso*.  
Around a bend, there she is, legs up to her ass,  
tight mini-skirt, bare midriff, a tousle of hair  
and hip bent as she throws her whole body  
into a wave to hook a ride.  
DAMSEL IN DISTRESS///DANGER.

I see the glitter of the *Chevron* plant  
as I sail by, and I know where I am,  
but does she know where she is  
and why she is where she is and what  
the odds are of getting carjacked.  
By then I'm a long way down the road,  
and she's a memory,  
bright lit against the cyclone.

Months later, I'm water chasing logs  
on a small island in the Tongass Narrows,

and I see her—never could a girl  
make my dreams like she did.

## THINGS CHANGE YET ARE ONE

Mountain Blue Bird  
Varied Thrush  
Starling  
Stellers Jay

A Jay and a lizard in a fray,  
Lizard tugged by jay.  
Jay pecks yet kept at bay.  
Clap of hands—jay flies away.

Porcupine  
Red Squirrel  
Shrew  
Wood Mouse

Lists never end, nor do difficulties  
and obstacles.  
Not easy to outwit the fox of desire.

## PRESIDENT BUCHANAN SLEPT HERE

Expanding Our Dominions  
With Might and Right  
With Axe, Rifle, and Plow  
With Computer and Hydrogen Bomb  
In the Course The Propagandists  
Mark on the Soil and in the Sky  
For the Stars of Empire  
With the Policy of New Possessions  
Beyond the Seas and the Atmosphere

According to the Logic of History  
And the Duty of Destiny

All for Power, Sex, Money, and Death

YOUR BONES KNOW YOU CAN  
*for Naomi*

Live upon the pulse.  
Drown in life's flow.  
Laugh at inertia.  
Resist—even if you're hustled,  
throw it out there,  
and let come what may.

Life's more than a love story.  
Life's an inspired gamble.

CALCULUS  
*for Sabrina*

In this formula there is no limit  
to my feeling— $X$  follows  $Y$   
across an ocean of space.

JUST WHEN PHOEBE DECIDED  
LIFE HELD NO FURTHER INTEREST  
*for Sito*

This game has four outs,  
Only you hide the extra out  
Under the mound  
Until you have a mound of outs.

Then, every fourth time up,  
You are already out.

## RULES

*for Mary Helen*

That which cannot be read  
Shall remain so.

That which we believe to be correct  
Shall, in fact, be correct.

## SPACE AND LONGING AND A FEW FLASHES OF LIGHT

*for Jane*

Early morning in the garden  
different intensities of color  
grass and stone.

So hot—no hurry—heavy air  
water-loaded air moving slow  
across the yard.

Practice no-resistance  
just a fan and a hammock  
in Tornado Alley.

## SUNSHINE WITHIN SUNLIGHT

*for Shannon*

Trees to see,  
sea to feel—friends  
of feather, fur,  
and earth

Magic  
and magnetic

I'm a leaf dangling  
from a spider's filament

Pointing.

## FLOWERS INSIDE THE PRESENT

Don't sob—  
it makes the boat bob.

*Yes* means *never*.  
*No* means *maybe*.

Moist words.  
Written kisses.

In place, I'm  
on a roiled lake.

I should shower,  
but I'm too wet.

Fill the bucket,  
and let me boil.