

# New Gravity

Richard Denner



Out there—  
you walk on air  
in your new gravity

no matter how  
heavy  
you'll keep it up

ignoring signs  
moving with your heart

•

A new gravity

Disagree, it loses  
authority

•

Overheard— “Those people,  
are you one of those, too?”

A leaf, you move out  
into the open way

You have important things to do  
and don't want your life wasted  
on detail.

Live deep— summon  
laziness,  
a breeze, the shape  
it comes forth in

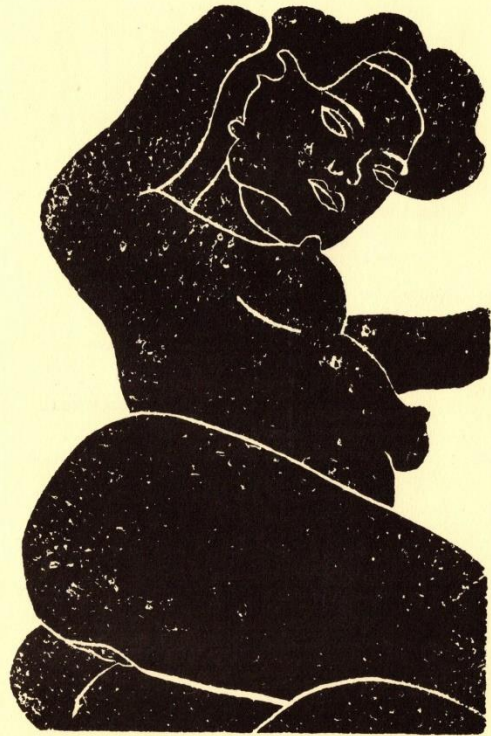
•

Some go  
the way you think  
they might.

So a leaf  
in a warm wind  
starts out—

these are  
orange rocks.  
These are also

rocks. That's the  
sky, and that's  
also a flower



Æolus operates—  
lips moist, veins  
filled with sunlight.

Wind strikes a chord.  
Skirts bellow, and bodies  
dance whether they want or not.

•

Wind affects a single figure  
so many measures of one scale  
then so many of another

Wheatfields augmented w/backroads

•

Fields come to meet me,  
wires loose, the light harsh

I await a late bus

A sorrel gelding dreams  
Hind hoof cocked under an apple tree  
Bright apples against the leaves

A herd of herefords steam and stamp  
Chew their cuds and crap in place  
Magpies pick the warmed grain

A John Deere tractor lugs up the track  
Meeting a girl on an appaloosa  
The ploughboy raises his finger to his cap  
Eyes clouded she trots past

•

At rest, I stay at rest  
until you enter

Do you have a date?  
In a manner of speaking, you say  
leaving for the Corner Stone

Sunday night at Rodeo  
down on all fours in the shoots

The grass was brutal  
compared to your caress

The mint rank  
beside your scent

The creek's chattering  
overwhelmed our words

Earth loved us

•

Overhead  
green shadows follow  
the late afternoon

To my eyes  
a field between  
two firs

I listen to grasshoppers  
Their thighs make clear sounds  
in the stillness



The bobwhite bobwhites  
and a bird called purplewreath  
purplewreaths

Another, purple crepe, purple crepe  
the chitbird's chit chit chit's heard

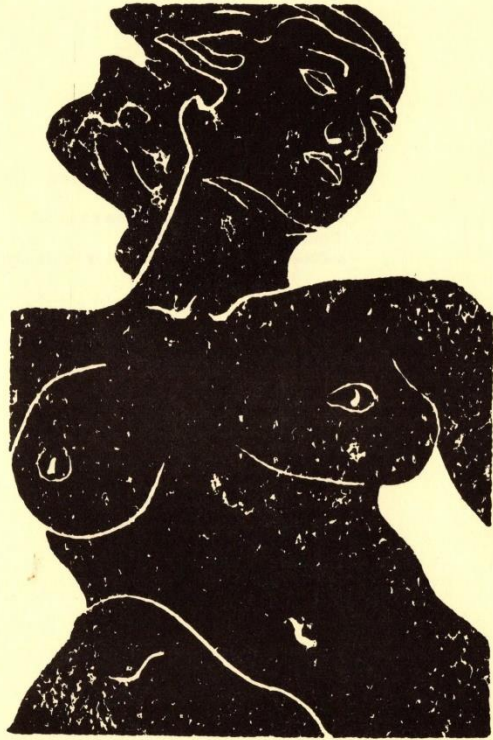
One sings drinkyourtea  
one, takeoffyourunderwear  
its spring

•

I hear voices, I see visions  
but no matter how disordered my senses  
I'm no fool  
or if so, in the grand tradition

Knowing all lovers change  
although I'd be the last  
I try again to impress  
my heart in yours

Let me move within you  
by the reading of my gift



You will fulfill your goal  
and be acknowledged, although  
you may absorb much that is wrong

You will, by instinct, become an artist  
if that is what you want  
and be remembered for what is yours alone

•

You've got that bod

•

You are sensuous pleasure  
your lips are beloved  
your clothes, doubly liquidfactious

You were made to be laid  
no matter some find that shameful

You have a rare, divine gift  
to give love, transforming  
what is base into grace

Hand on hand  
smile on smile

I think and think  
I do as I do

Unhealed, the hurt hurts

•

Everything in the past  
was in the future once.

What's next?

"Tell me," you say  
"It's not just DNA."

•

Cool your feet in the Yakima  
Salute the sun  
heat and dust

Let it pass





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Photo of the author as a  
sapling by William Morris.  
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**FLAKE UPON FLAKE**

Richard Denner

For Alia

Jesse

I came from England.  
Where did you come from?

Bessy

Why, Ellensburg, right here.  
Where did you say you were from?

Jesse

England.

Bessy

Engleburg?

Jesse

England.  
English, I'm English.

Bessy

Oh, English, you're English.

Jesse

That's right, I'm English.  
I came here sixty years ago.

Bessy

I'm from Ellensburg.  
I'm a native.

thru this valley  
where robbers roost

I strive with systems  
to free myself from systems

easy to see the irony—  
implementation's more severe

find a place where rent is low  
gardens grow, mushrooms blow

•

in the end  
it won't matter  
we can settle on a small

farm in Berkeley—  
just a radioactive cow  
and a few chickens



ordinary adventures  
are composed of  
remarkable  
instances and strange  
coincidences

Over the top—  
the chickens  
fly the coup

•  
leaps and bounds  
the heart's a kangaroo

a pouched animal  
with a punch that'll

knock you on your ass  
eats grass

natives call'em  
boomers



Grandfather  
I speak for you,  
I speak that you may live.

Of old  
I did not mind the death.  
How long he had sat there,  
the hunter with his sling!

His eyes on my every move,  
he lured me near, and I went  
that he would be fed.

But now  
they munch on spacesticks  
(I can read their litter)  
and dress like billboards.

Trucks with 4-wheel drive  
rut the roads.  
Their radios cackle doom.  
Their rifles scope in.

Outside the Steppenwolf,  
I finish off the wine.  
An alley. On the wall  
are words by madmen.

Panhandle a turkey san  
from the grotto,  
hike up University  
and crash in the bushes.

I awake with fingers  
in my pockets, roll  
into Strawberry Creek—  
up the bank and to the tracks.

As light illumines the bay,  
“Hey, man, let’s smear that queer.”

Feet, do your thing.

Love is its own  
warmth and strength.

Truth and mystery cross  
on 3rd & Main. Rigs

gear for the coast  
with cargoes of hay.

•

Thru a vale  
across a pass  
down the trail  
my ass

The map I was made  
must've been meant  
to get me lost  
as the crow flies

I make camp—  
the light gets dark,  
the dark, darker



Hard to see  
the truth. Shaggy curves  
in a fuzzy country

Realm of the densely packed,  
in turn, a town with streets  
that aren't on any map

•

I'm here  
to glue pictures

These bricks should look  
like a baker laid them

If it doesn't look  
like a child could build it,  
it isn't

•

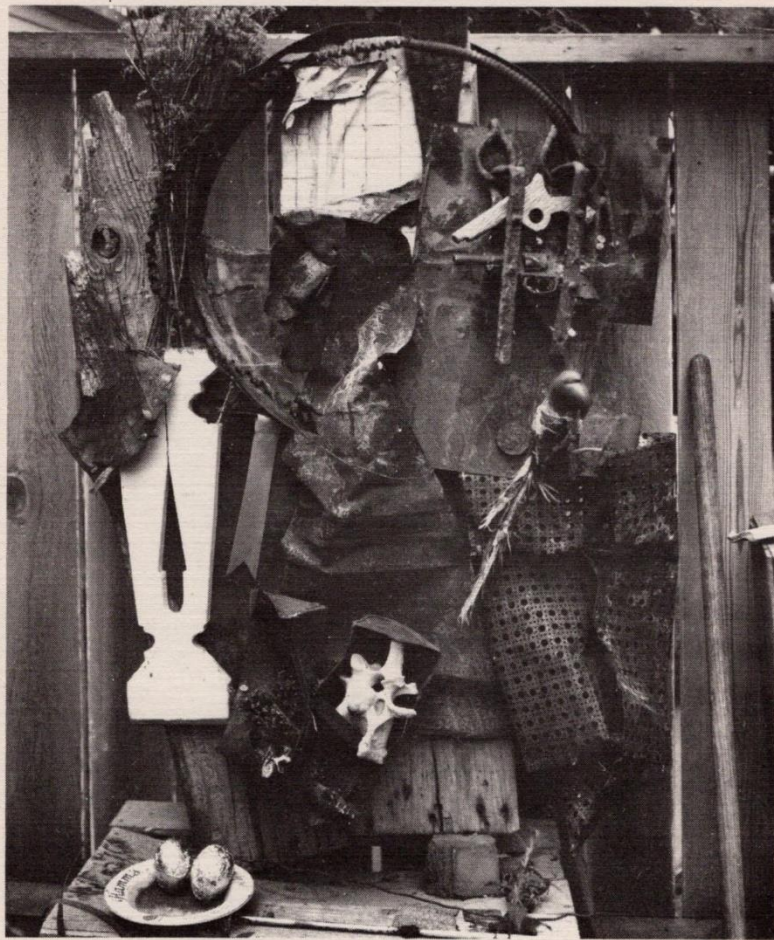
Something modest, to start  
with the smallest

Dirt, water—  
the motive, a tangerine



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Cover drawing by Luis Garcia.  
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# SAID JUST SO

Richard Denner

for Luis

*"Here's splotchy velvet set to hide a  
door in a wall and there—there's the man himself  
praying!"*

## NOW THERE THEN

Organically rising out  
of common motor pools of 5  
we find a new world  
speaking a new language

Let's look at it—  
sky cloud bird  
mountain ocean sun  
smoke house man  
street dog bike

No Bike Riding  
On the Sidewalks

While visiting our community  
Please adhere  
To a meatless, eggless  
Non-alcoholic diet  
And abstain from smoking  
Mind-altering drugs and  
Unnecessary nudity

Dig in— be happy  
this bizarre circus stretches  
beyond metaphysics beyond  
meditation beyond your great  
grandmother's condominium



## RODEO OF THE EQUINOX

There's an urgency  
to his line, the  
tension meant to hold

a wonder. Orion  
lassoes an Atlas-bred  
heifer by the hoof.  
Nearly tugging free

Sterope is tied  
hard and fast  
with hemp.

Not too shabby, all  
agree, and space is  
taut in admiration.

The Olympian buckaroo puts  
a silver buckle on his belt.

Sterope licks  
her burn in  
the calf pen.



## IT'S A MESS

by the creek where I squat  
with nosebleed after smacking  
my face in the slash

a crisscross of firehardened  
barbed sticks, o mama  
the dead forest  
and the hills  
lush in bitterbrush and ceinosis  
sea of noses

o mama  
there's no hope for the trees

slashier slash  
rockier rock

this little unit  
has snow on it  
and's unusable

out of shoot #1  
it's Flaming Hoedag  
ridden by J. Root

o mama  
there is hope for the trees

Orpheus instructs the treeplanters  
Watch those scalps  
Keep an eye on spacing  
Don't plant too deep  
No J roots  
I only want to see asses and elbows

We plant ahead of progress rates  
into full pay with laurels.

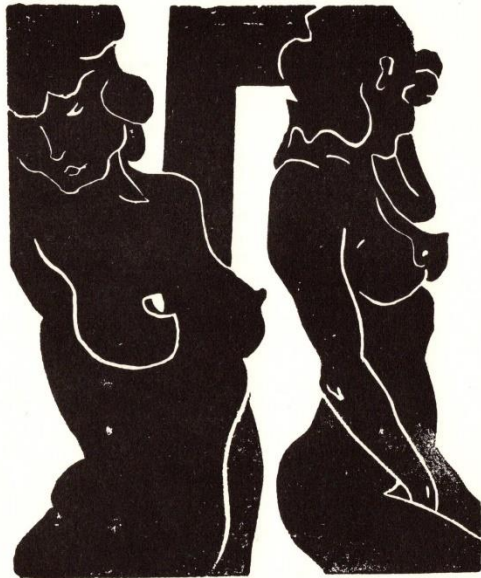
We're paid to plant a tree,  
and we'll come back  
and back again until it grows.

The trees—  
out of their depth  
with this logic,

driven around in vans,  
debated about like dots on a map.

Go Fir It Reforestation  
in the Land of Many Abuses  
it's well

trying to plant in a week  
what, destroyed in a day,  
took 100 years to grow.



## THE WART CANNOT BE COERCED

*OE* *dott*, head of a boil  
a small lump, clot 1570  
a minute speck, spot, mark 1674  
roundish mark made with a pen 1748  
a little child or creature

it was not the act  
by which a dot is made  
until 1858

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

## OUR GARDEN

At first  
there was time  
and we agreed.

Summer bent into autumn,  
then snow covered the rows.

If you go,  
I'll be left the coals  
that were the snowman's eyes.

## AFTER THE VOLCANO

No need to go  
outside— there's  
just ash out.

Quite a scene  
at Joe Albertson's  
during the ashout.

A man with a towel over his head  
wearing swimming goggles  
stocks up on beer, another  
wearing a surgical mask  
carries an umbrella.

It's dark.  
We stay indoors and listen  
to Orson Welles'  
*War of the Worlds*.

After the Martian smoke settles,  
trees drop their pyroclastic debris,  
and birds start a new day,  
although it's a bit gritty.

## WHAT ARE YOU UP TO?

Here it is, your birthday  
and you're 34. Four  
is before five, bunnytoad

and three is one  
before four. Remember,  
too, I'll love you,  
never counting the decades.

I see you see  
beauty as we

share sunrises  
join silences

sounds pathetic  
but back there

a goose merged with a gear  
a tick developed a number



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Susan Barto.

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