

250. MANTRA

Don't freak out
You can do it
Don't panic
There's plenty of time
Don't freak out
It's not that important
Don't panic
Just be steady
Day by day
Don't freak out
It's not worth it
Don't panic
You can only do what you can do
Don't freak out
Don't panic
Don't worry
Please don't

12/2/1990

251. ADVICE

Keep calm
Don't gobble that roll
As if a little chewing time
Will be your undoing

Don't feel encaged
As if your lover's embrace
Is a life-sentence

Don't fritter away
The morning sun
In a whirlpool of worry

Don't punish yourself
For the vagaries
Of thought-crime

Don't be down
On you or others
Because the day
Didn't go quite to plan

Don't forget
The important thing
Is to be still enough
To love

12/2/1990

252. TEETH

More and more
I catch myself
Clenching teeth
Grinding out the dread
Swallowing the tears
I so fear
To shed

12/2/1990

253. AGENDA

Last night
I rolled over
As our bodies met
I shuddered as if
I'd discovered
A stranger in my bed

'I'd forgotten you were there'
I muttered, half asleep
'That's nice'
I think you said
That's nice?

Now you've gone for a while
I feel like sex!
Having repressed all desire
For two days and two nights

These are dark days for us
As I play games cruel and demanding
And you respond, feisty
In kind
Am I testing you?
Or implementing an agenda
Hidden but well rehearsed
About me
Relationship
And a future rewind

19/2/1990

254. TEST

Another trick?
Another test?
Your oldest friend
I found attractive
We flirted
As she reminded
Me of another

19/2/1990

255. SELF-LOATHING

I'm a power-seeker
And I seek to destroy
Vulnerability is my mask
It's a hoax and a ploy

Don't you see my darling?
How things have changed
How my insatiable need
Has been tinkered, rearranged

We're at the reject place
And because I've given so much
It is time to rip it all back
For it's a demon you clutch

The more you got
The harder I pull
My brain screams no!
But my body's a tool

It fucked animalistic
Now it won't fuck at all
My muscle screams why?
What's changed is so small

Your monsters have gone
I gulped them all down
I scream not again!
But soon I will drown

Your love gets more desperate
The more desperate the better
I begin to hate you
And I'll hate you whatever

With B I cut with a knife
Not a tear did I shed
She paid for her sex
I played with the dead

Now I'm trying harder
Within rages bull-storm
Insignificant (you, anyone)
You all play the pawn

Even this verse
When I show you, I must
Do I know it's not part
Of my perpetual dust?

16/3/1990

256. BIRTH

Very soon
I will be thirty
The age my mother was
When she had me
Yet I feel so little
Like a child
Struggling for
Maturity

27/12/1989

257. NEW MUSIC LIBERATION FRONT (NMLF)

How sublime to work hard and sweaty
With people you love
Musicians
Building the moment
Inching forward
Inexorably, religiously
Each in turn
Adding, subtracting
Arranging the nuance
Searching the perfect way

When it clicks
We all feel it
Hairs I have never seen
Twitch and prickle in delight
On the back of my neck
Tears well
And a wondering smile transmits
Through us all
The moment is delicious
And rare
And we hope replicable!
It is the happy coincidence
Of four peoples' life-work
Four sets of abilities
Four unique foibles
Merging together
Through energy, trust and slog
To form a simple union
A perfect song sung

13/4/1990

258. NMLF 2

To liberate
To set free
I doubt anyone
In today's world
Can really be free
Nor perhaps ever could be
Maybe the hermit
High up in a cave
Mantra chattering against
The demands made
By those sadistic captors
Mind and body

Or in an improvised moment
Musicians
When playing together
Or the music-lover
Engorged in a favourite
Fantasia
Fleetingly knows freedom
And senses the reason
Behind the work
And the kind of place
Utopian, intuitive
In which we may live freely

18/4/1990

259. RESOLVED

B

After all those years
And a few tears
You are still solid for me
Part of the weave of my life
Its richness, beauty and meaning

And after all these years
And crippling fears
I want to thank you
For sticking by me
Helping, caring, loving

I want you to know
That in the years to come
I trust you
You are dear to me
And wherever I am
Or you may be
It's never very far
That having covered
So much distance
The rest is joyously easy

16/5/1990

260. ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM

Livid
'I don't want to see you'
Well actually...
(Surprise, surprise)
I don't want to see you either
Not like this
Haven't for a long time

So you weren't prepared to cop some shit
To deal with it
To listen
To heal
No, stubborn to a tee
You played power until the end

The grimace that you greeted me with
(Yet you unlocked the latch and let me in?)
Then you take a phone call
No 'I'm busy I'll call you back'
You take your time
Talking, laughing
Waltzing around me like I'm
A second hand chair
Make me wait
Draw it out
Play the tired old game
What style, what panache!
Probably the best thing you do

Then the mask of silence
Resonating with so many past times
When you blocked me
Until I begged

No more groveling now
My sad, unsorry one
I've chucked that caper in
Discovered I don't really need it
After fourteen years of your way

So actually B
Actually possum
I'm out of here for good
And you can stew in that remnant juice
White hot

17/5/1990

261. HUE

In Hue
Overlooking the Perfume River
Obscenely lush
I think of you

Your gentle manner melded
With that rod will

I think of this crazy separation
And the risks I make
For my relationships

I hear the sound of firecrackers
On the far bank
A wedding in Hue?
And I remember a weekend
We had in Bendigo
And a laughing Chinese dragon

Memories like that
Seem perilous now
They place all we shared
In the past
Closing off a future
Receding instead getting closer

In my listless uncertain state
I want you be certain
Your gentle manner
Your strong will

15/6/1990

262. SHAPESHIFT

When you travel with friends
Loneliness can still find you
As you combat a myriad of
Microscopic betrayals
Magnified by the intimacy
The inability to get away

Snared in that hothouse
People you thought you could
Never dislike
Shapeshift

Wavering and ephemeral
Unable to grasp
The solidness you sourced
In them once
Appears increasingly sparse

Time for a reality check
You think
And taking note of the stresses
Such tours bring
You console yourself
With the thought
That two short weeks
Can't possibly undo
Years of scaffolding
Rust

15/6/1990

263. OBITUARY

B, my talented friend
My problem with you
Is the problem I have
With many men

While I struggle to reduce
My ego-menace
You seek attention
You like to prove yourself
Especially before others

So you easily appoint yourself
Spokesman for something
You know little about
You click those snappy fingers
And announce to us that the car-horn
Is most definitely an F sharp
In front of our minders
You trumpet the idea for a new arrangement
But the idea wasn't yours to claim

In many ways, every day
You busy yourself with ego-construction
What galls particularly is not your effort
But that others around you
Scaffold the endeavor
That can be infuriating
When you know and love those
Offering to be your laborers

Am I alone in my critique?
That this is the typical
Way men learn to behave in our
Competitive culture
I know I am not
But in this moment it feels desolate

So B
It is with sad regret
That I quietly note
The passing of our
Musical relationship

17/6/1990

264. SAIGON

The sad thing about Saigon
Is that it has a swarm
Of poor people
Dependent on a tourist-trade
That hardly exists

What makes me even sadder
Is imagining what it will be like
When it eventually makes
The tourist map proper

17/6/1990

265. HANOI

Hanoi is dirt poor
Yet the people shine with dignity
I'm hoping this is not a romantic fiction
But flows from the fact that everyone is poor
But everyone also eats

In contrast is Ho Chi Minh City
Where beggars swarm the night-streets
Where during a short cyclo-ride
Sleeping homeless bodies adorn
Every streetscape nook

In Hanoi
People look curiously at the tourist face
They may laugh, or stare, or scowl
Or walk insolently away
Many hawkers sit placidly under a tree
Watching over their entire capital accumulation
Five packs of Marlboro
Meticulously arranged in front of them

In Ho Chi Minh City the sellers accost you
At every opportunity
A stamp album, a lotto ticket, a map, a postcard set,
A painting
If you stand still or hesitate
You are suddenly under siege
Forced to swat them away
Your American dollar wealth is
An irresistible honeypot
So scarce it is worth the affray

In Hanoi the city moves by bicycle
Such impressive noiselessness
In a city of millions
A lotus of calm

In Ho Chi Minh City on a Sunday night
Hundreds of teens cluster together
On their motorbikes
Circling, endless circling the main streets
For hours on end
Burning fuel for show
In motorised mayhem

Hanoi is the political heart of Vietnam
The city that survived the bombs, the terror
The fear

Ho Chi Minh City is the commercial hub
A remnant colonial city, French
Reshaped with American capital

The choices for Vietnam appear
As stark as the contrast
Between these two cities

20/6/1990

266. JEALOUS GUY

Well I guess it is my fault
Bewitched by a caring manner
And fey insights
I idealised our friendship
But now you show a side
I cannot anoint there

A pettiness that settles for
Fairness and denies generosity
Some kind of conceit
That craves attention, praise and adulation
In unconscious spades
(Strange for one of your profession)
A jealous zeal
Diminishing others if praised
A selfish petulance
Stamping feet to get a result
A concealing grin
As you hoard the spoils
And others sacrifice
A penchant for gloat
That your experience is best
A cloaked materialism
Draped in diaphanous
Silken spirituality

Yes perhaps it was my fault
I trusted you with something of me
Too soon
Against judgment
And I curl up and cry you
Out of me

20/6/1990

267. RESURRECTION

B

You are right again
Once I felt betrayed by you
I thought our dance had ended
And I know out of this worst
Of all possible catastrophes
Can emerge a more solid trust
A deeper love

Fragile
I still quiver with anger

Fearing the risk
Of investment or loss
Wondering if what we have
Is worth replacing?

20/6/1990

268. ASIA

One month today in Asia
And I'm tired
Tired of the poverty
Tired of the smell
Tired of the extremes
Tired of the pollution
Tired of the bargaining
Tired of the crowds
Tired of being a tourist
In a land where most are trapped
Like the caged animals of Petchabun
In the steel of poverty
Tired of meeting travellers
Tired of seeing the wealthy in this country
Walk around the poor as if they are invisible
Tired of feeling outrage, anger and impotence
Tired of thinking
Tired of futility
Tired of not belonging

1/7/1990

269. TREPIDATION

One day
I hope these poems
Will be open to you, dear
And you can browse my life
At your leisure
And without fear

6/7/1990

270. GREEK GODS

Greek gods like to make noise
Greek gods like to gently tug the hairs on their chest
In public!
Greek gods like motorcycles without mufflers
And German shepherds on short chains
Greek gods laugh loud for no apparent reason
Greek gods yell jokes without fear
And are doted upon by mothers for whom
They remain forever infant
Greek gods sit in cafes together
Stroking their unselfconscious nipples
Or sit with their others in tavernas
And get their nipples kissed
Greek gods hang out lazily
Sunning, drinking, ogling together
Greek gods stay forever boys
Prisoners of those who do their chores

8/7/1990

271. MAKESHIFT

Lying on makeshift bed
In makeshift room
With makeshift boredom
Waiting
For lines
For B
To speak Greek
To feel hungry
So I may have a reason
To venture out
Into the warm twilight

A makeshift patience
For an instigator
Used to decisions
And consequences
Set aside for now
By waiting
Patient waiting

13/7/1990

272. HAIRCUT

Today
I risked a haircut
By a Greek barber
A native of Piraeus

I walked past his shop
Three times
Each pass trebling
My nervousness
Will he rip me off?
Have the three men inside noticed me?
Will they laugh at me?
Will they snicker at my toddler Greek?
Maybe I'll wait until tomorrow

No!
Tossing the paranoia
I walk in
He's all smiles and fond courtesy
Of course
It usually pans out thus
But it makes me wonder a little
What once happened?
In my mythical age
That cautions me
That it is better to assume the worst
Of people
Rather than the best

13/7/1990

273. APPLE

The apple hidden
So long ago
In some dark neglected crevice
Where I supposed it would rot
Bounced back
Crisp, red, delicious
Unspoiled and delicate
Firm flesh unmarked
As if it had never been lost

Resplendent it glowed
And I craved cover
But it was magic unshakable
It would not let go
Despite my foulest curse
That it would perish and rot
When all the while it knew
It was me that rotted and curdled
From the inside out

Contaminated and confused
All in tatters
Caught in limbo
Tainted
I took a small pleasure
Surrendered
Respite from the battle
And admired that exquisite fruit
And sank my tongue deep into its
Sublime apply flesh

15/7/1990

274. THE FUNCTION OF FRIENDS

I realise
When I am alone
For a time
As I am now
I do not miss friends
Too much
What is difficult
Is the confrontation
With parts of me
I loathe

This terrible struggle
Contaminates time
Eats like a cancer
Devours the serene
Transplants loneliness

It is this
That friends offer
As antidote
Calling goodness
Back to me
Day by day
And without them now
My sanity
Rests alone with me

15/7/1990

275. STRANGE FRUIT

In Greece
A simple kindness
To make me smile
The woman next door
Who yells every question
As if my dumbness is deafness
Who looks at me with suspicion
As if my foreignness is fearful
Who tells me off
For not locking my door
And for leaving the lights on
Who gets impatient
When I can't quite understand her
And at my miserably slow responses
With a conspiratorial whisper
Says 'παρ' το'
As she gives me a big bag of
Peaches, tomatoes, cucumbers
And apricots

17/7/1990

276. ΚΥΡΙΑ ΦΟΤΙΝΗ

In July, in Piraeus
It's hot
And during the hottest part of the day
Between two and five
She sleeps
ΚΥΡΙΑ ΦΟΤΙΝΗ
Then after her siesta
Still in her nighty
She sits on her small balcony seat
Overlooking the street, ΠΡΑΞΙΤΕΛΟΥΣ
Where she has lived for countless years
Exchanging pleasantries with passers-by
She laughs
A woman asks for a glass of water
To take a pill
And another passes it to her
Through the window

Around seven
As it begins to get cooler
She leaves her balcony
And dresses to go out
She walks with sure steps
Even though the pavement
Is a war-zone of cracks and excavation
Mostly she avoids the footpath
Preferring the road
Reclaiming it from the cars
And boys on bikes for a moment

She smiles as she spots a familiar face
And swerves back toward the pavement
And a καφενιόν
To talk a while with a friend
Someone who like her, remembers
Who like her took the long journey
From Constantinople (never Istanbul)
Where she was born
Or someone who lived in Tirana
Or from her village before the war
When Albania was still Greek
An old friend with whom to affirm the past
And discuss the present politics
Papandreou's four wives
Or was it five?
The probable return of the king
The trouble with communists
(Even her own son)
And most importantly
Her recent eye operation

For cataracts

A young couple passes by
Arm in arm
With a skirt scandalously too short
And make the mistake of kissing
Within her earshot
And so the youth of today
Replace politics and heath for a moment
Then she moves on
For there are others to see
Even though her five closest friends
Have passed on, by God's will
Now just memories

She walks by the sea
To catch the cool air
While oblivious to the roar and smell
Of motorbikes the boys prefer
With a girl clinging
Or another boy enviously looking
She leaves
And finds a seat at a table
At an outdoor café
Where most sip frappe or ouzo
She drinks her sprite lemonade
And begins to talk
She knows I hardly understand
But tells again of her life
Of how the men of Constantinople
Loved her, and she loved them
But their mothers wouldn't have her
And how she married ΚΟΣΤΑΣ
Without love
But grew into him
She talks of the wars
And of her family
Children and grandchildren
Dispersed over the world
Of ΜΑΡΙΑ her daughter
Who lives just two doors down
With her nineteen year old son
And whom she barely talks to
Of Β, her other daughter in Australia
And her nerves
And C and his RSI
And why at thirty he isn't yet married
And why for that matter
Either am I!
She stops and grins
'You my boyfriend'
She says and laughs again

At the idea
And what little remains of her English
She learned during her four years of purgatory
Living in Australia

Then the laugh goes
She pauses
She stares into the distance
And I see a familiar look
And I ask in broken Greek
'A penny for your thoughts, ΓΙΑΓΙΑ ΜΟΥ'
She leans into me
Touching my arm gently
And speaks tenderly of her
First-born son, ΚΟΣΤΑΚΙ
A sailor who died in New Orleans
An accident at sea
And only twenty-four
How when he was just fourteen
He joined the merchant navy
A single tear rolls down her cheek
From her good eye
After all these years
There still is pain to be felt
From the memory of him
And in death he becomes
All the things
The others could never be
He would not have abandoned her
He would not have betrayed her
He would have loved her
Her first-born son, ΚΟΣΤΑΚΙ
But God took him...

She sighs and says
'ΦΤΑΝΕΙ', enough
Shaking her hand
And emptying the glass of water
Under the table
She pours the lemonade into the glass
Throws the straw away
She drinks
Tips the waiter
And gets up to go home
To read once more
In private
His last letter
November 1962
And dream
A private dream

17/7/1990

277. THE DAY OF ΠΡΟΦΕΤΕΛΙΑΣ

They say the church preserved and sustained Greek culture during the four hundred years of Ottoman rule. But perhaps the chaos of Greek culture was simply untamable. And nothing is quite as chaotic as a Greek church on an important name day.

First the traffic jam as people, cars, buses and taxis all converge on the prime piece of real estate in the area, usually the peak of a hill, or mountaintop. Then the entrance, already narrow is clogged with stalls filled with an odd assortment of plastic kitsch toys, books, icons, hot and cold food, clothes and embroidery. Add to this those beggars able to make it up the hill and a high proportion of Greek grandmothers-in-black dragging a colorful granddaughter or three, and the scene is complete.

Of course the church itself groans to overflowing and two police are posted at the entrance, guns on hips regulating the rate of entry. Seeing the guns, those in the front line stop when told, but those behind continue to push.

Once inside, grasping an unlit candle you jostle to kiss the three icons and then head over to light your candle, to 'ΑΝΑΨΣΕ ΤΟ ΦΟΣ' – open the light. At this point a woman accidentally sets alight the hair of the woman in front...hair doused and singed, she then complains that she couldn't light her candle! 'Shhhh, this is a church', ten women turn and say to her, as if choreographed.

If you are brave enough you will stay inside for a while to catch a glimpse of the ritual and hear the singing. But it is very hot in here, so for the faint hearted or the bargain hunters, they broadcast the proceedings outside through a set of well worn-in speakers, that nevertheless manage, through their sublime distortion to blend in perfectly with the tenor of the event.

It is clear the Turks never really had a chance.

19/7/1990

278. GREEK

At times
This language
That over the years
Has become so familiar
Yet remains incomprehensible
Is like a secret treasure
To which I have only
Just discovered a
Crusty corner of
The map

22/7/1990

279. BALCONIES

The woman opposite
Who talks to the pigeons
And feeds them lovingly
Then chases them from her balcony
With an angry sweep of her broom
And a devilish chuckle
Who stares frozen at her open palm
Then rushes inside
Who at two o'clock in the morning
Can be seen in the cool night air
Looking out to nowhere
Or pacing anxiously back and forth
Across the three or so steps
It takes to cover her balcony
Who in the heat of the day
Mops it out gleefully
Sluicing water over the edge
Oblivious of those unfortunates below
Probably thinks I am a bit crazy
Playing my two weird flutes
Every day at the same time
In the same order
And for the same length of time
In the heat of the day, airless
With my balcony doors sealed shut

22/7/1990

280. DWELLINGS

In Greece
When you live in a block of flats
As in the cities
Most people do
You become part of a community
Neighbours actually visit one another
They talk
Help out
And argue the toss

In Piraeus
I've lived in this block of flats
Just three weeks now
I've met most of the people around me
Some feed me fruit

In Melbourne I lived
In a block of forty flats
For more than a decade
In that time
I never saw the inside
Of a neighbour's home
(Excepting the bedsit of a friend's grandmother
Who lived next door)
Or for that matter
Had anyone inside mine

One nice elderly lady
Once turned the sprinkler on me
As I read a book
Sitting on the garden bench

22/7/1990

281. BALLAD

I took a long walk tonight
Alone but hardly lonely
What a pity as I walked
You weren't walking there with me

For an hour or more I swam
Undressed against the sea
What a shame you weren't close by
Swimming naked there with me

With my kaval I sat smiling
Playing an ancient Greek threnody
How sad I thought softly
That you weren't there to sing with me

Sitting timeless on a rock
Watching the sun set me free
How sweet it would be to share
This moment of rare liberty

Craggy mountains rise up behind
For miles no scrub nor tree
Greece that rocky panorama
That for now alone just I see

My tongue on my sea stained skin
Tastes warm, dry and salty
How I wished it were your tongue
And a finer ecstasy

Yes I walked that eternal path tonight
Time alone with Aegean Sea
I thought of so many things and yet
They were all of you and of me

I wrote a poem that soft dusk
A ballad to send to thee
A verse of promise and whispers
To bring you home to me

24/7/1990

282. PERFECT PLACE

Today I found a perfect place
High atop a mountain
Overlooking a wide, beckoning bay
Embracing the heat shimmering walls
Of Karystos

If the town be the child
And the bay its mother
Then the brown weatherworn mountains
Must be its father
And as I climbed the face
Ancient and true
I glimpsed its crowning glory
The old Venetian castle

I passed a shopkeeper with impeccable English
Who gave me icy cold water to drink
I passed a gigantic gum tree
I passed the small village
Half way up
Whose women patiently gave me directions
I passed the cold running stream
And the shady pine forest
To the perfect place
For making love

25/7/1990

283. KARYSTOS

A mountain
A hostile sea
A castle
A life
The Kastro keeps many secrets
Tight within its rock
But the darkest
Is how many died
Over how many years
For its birth
Defense
And final destruction
Now a testament
Like a poor necropolis
Told only in scattered rock
And a hostile wind
Howls for revenge

25/7/1990

284. HANOI CONSERVATOIRE

At the Hanoi Conservatoire we had the rare privilege of hearing a sixteen year old take her end of year examination. It was hot, very hot and humid and the sweat dripped from us as we sat in the crowded room with about sixty people and a few feeble fans swishing madly against the torpor...but failing! The young girl got up (she looked about twelve) and thundered her way through the first movement of the Grieg Piano Concerto on a piano so out of tune you cried for her and so dilapidated you crossed your fingers willing the whole contraption to make the blessed distance.

Yet the playing was exquisite; the energy, the tenacity, the perseverance, the hopelessness, the absurdity created a sublime performance. In the next room we heard a folk ensemble play with the same fire and soul-wrenching spirit. But the contradictions: Why Grieg? What does it mean? And then all the crass, imitative bubblegum pop music we heard juxtaposed with a state that seems to have a sense of what Vietnam is but unable to realise it in the present historical context.

It is a perfect illustration I think of Sartre's idea that 'existence comes before essence'. Vietnam is on its own (as are its musicians!). There is no higher authority, no essence just a pure shaping of existence from nothing, from scratch. It is absurd but also exquisite.

There is nothing that appears mystical about Vietnam (contradicting romantic occidental visions of the orient). It is simply all there to see. It is an open wound with regal blood. It is a chance (maybe our last), it is a glimpse at a future and the past simultaneously, it is the energy of hope, it calls for sacrifice and love and a clear and rational head, it is the collective struggle of an entire people to rebuild and redefine blind, it is so close your skin tingles, it is different to anything I have experienced, it is an alternative, a model...it is poverty and laughter, poverty and laughter, poverty and laughter.

25/7/1990

285. KEY TO THE DOOR

An old woman
Legs all thickly stockinged and bandaged
Struggles with her key
She twists it back and forth
And twists her face too
A counterpoint of concentration and muscle
Her hand a mystery to her mind
Hesitating in an action it has performed
Perhaps one thousand times before
In the other paw
She balances the weight of her body
On a stick
Too much flesh perched precariously
On a trio of wobbly legs
Her faces relaxes with relief
As she feels the correct click
Of the key turning in the lock
And she smiles as she checks
The door is securely locked
Then she turns and slowly hobbles away
With her string bag and stick
Focused now on coming tasks to complete
Not realising she has left the key
Still dangling from the lock

28/7/1990

286. MIXED MEANINGS

'Having a great time...'

Today I received the second card from you
With these words
In the first the metaphor was understood
As I was all uncertainty and chose
To risk practically nothing
And as your life was
A merry-go-round of lovers
Of which I was the latest pony
Too dizzied to ask for more
We both knew why you were going
And what for
There was no attempt at control
On my part
And a little of the 'enough rope' psychology involved
As well, to be honest, some of my own
Loose ends to rediscover

The second card then had a mixed meaning
Since we made this pact
Sealing our trust in each others luggage
Was it an affirmation then?
Of a past memory shared?
Or a laugh
At how things had changed?
Or a sublimated plea
For a past easy idyll?
A tear perhaps for the loss
Of a perfect freedom?
'Wish you were here...'

29/7/1990

287. MONOGAMY

After so many years
And passionately constructed arguments
I finally seek monogamy
As a solution maybe
To my insecurity
Yet monogamy
Also perfectly describes
The reality of my sexual past
For despite my mouth
I was monogamous
Even the pain of betrayal
Was monogamous

Still I am uneasy
That these limits
Become prison walls
That escape becomes a fetish
That lies become rope ladders
That running wild and free
I trip and fall
Into a hail of bullets
The holy guards
Of monogamy

29/7/1990

288. FANTASIA

Fantasia in A major
Fantasia in D minor
Fantasia in Mi minor
Fantasia Mi minor
Fantasia my minor
Fantasia my
Fantasia
Minor
Minor Fantasia
Minor fantasia
Fantasy
Fancy
Minor
Fantasy minor
Minor
Minor
Mi
My
My fantasy

30/7/1990

289. THREAT

Out of a breach of trust
We were born
And danced with all the heat of
Abandon and thoughtlessness
And free spirit
So I can bear no malice
For a parallel promise broken
But there will be no tears either
Just a simple farewell
A wish you well and thank you
For an honest enough confession
To preserve two dignities

But if you deceive me
Willfully, or out of fear
Or because of some stupid notion
Of protecting my fragile skin
My anger will explode
With a frenzy and passion
That will make our first dance of erotica
Appear like one thousand years
Of sleep

31/7/1990

290. BAD PERCENTAGE

Sometimes it is better
Not to think
Not to feel
Even though things done
Remain done for good

When 95% of things done
Feel OK
Is it right-minded?
That 5% remains
To harass the future?

31/7/1990

291. Ο ΚΥΡΙΟΣ ΠΑΝΑΓΙΟΤΗΣ

Ο ΚΥΡΙΟΣ ΠΑΝΑΓΙΟΤΗΣ

Sits now on his balcony
Chewing pumpkin seeds
Spitting saliva soaked shells
Onto his bonsai garden
He lives alone in his rented flat
And in sixty-five years
He has not married
A curiosity that
But he has lived
The life of a traveller
Like Odysseus
A sailor
Now he looks toward the sea
Wistfully
A loner
Ever without company
Some dizzy spells
(Possible dicky heart?)
And a poorly tamed spirit
Have confined him
To his painted balcony flat
His little garden
And his seeds
Of memory

31/7/1990

292. SURROGATE SON

‘ΔΕΝ ΕΙΝΜΑΙ Η ΓΙΑΓΙΑ ΣΟΥ
ΕΓΩ ΕΙΜΑΙ Η ΜΑΝΑ ΣΟΥ
ΚΑΙ ΕΙΣΑΙ Ο ΓΙΟΣ ΜΟΥ’

A mother
Searches for her lost son
Cruelly taken by the sea
And so young
She finds him in every smile
Or simple kindness
Forever searching
Forever finding
A cruel choice
Broken heart
Or blindness

31/7/1990

293. POEMS

In a land of strangers
And stranger emotions
These short poems
Are my friends
From me
They none-the-less
Find independence
As a child builds
Personality
Then with the separation
Of time and place
They return home
Prodigal
Those little nothings
That prompted their being
Advice, laughter, reflection
Love, tears, frustration, anger
Sadness
My trusted friends

1/8/1990

294. TUNNEL

What can I write?
During this quiet time
A lullaby?
Swinging wild
Between cancerous doubt
Don't care complacency
And slithering trust

What do I write?
From this core of stillness
Where what words I possess
Are now merely historical

What must I write?
Nothing
But this in which
One thousand hopes and fears
Jostle and spit
That I exist
Daily, hourly by the minute
Despite the distance
A little note
A little sign
A little tunnel
Insecurely lit

1/8/1990

295. BIRTHDAY

Alone
With a sad memory
That in time
Made me smile

8/8/1990

296. ME

Sometimes I think
Too much of me
Or too much of me
Is entwined in you
That too much of me
Is also never enough
That too much of me
Has let go
That too much of me
Fears an improbable
Paradise

22/8/1990

297. CONTEMPT

Sometimes I wonder if you care
I annoy you, I feel that
Old rivalries are re-enacted
From a past imbalance
When as teacher
You obeyed instruction
But resented the oppression
Implied in all learning
And now
Neither equal or oppressed
There is hollowness
Where I expected friendship
Or mutual respect
Nothing left to learn perhaps?
So a little contempt grows
When I sense you bored with me
Yet laughing and showy
With others
I am confused
Is it me?
Or us?

3/9/1990

298. AWAY

Take me away
It won't mean much
Take me away
Few will notice
Take me away
The sun will still set
Behind ancient rocks
And glass skyscrapers
Take me away
Far away
Where my anger
No longer bleeds
And a simple smile
Is all the understanding I need
Where my worthless existence
Can be free

3/9/1990

299. ABATE

Little by little
I am learning
Not to fight
You contradict me now
Because in the past
I was always right
When this battle is played out
Finally exhausted
Our egos obliterated
I pray something will remain
Of our promise
And the music we played

3/9/1990