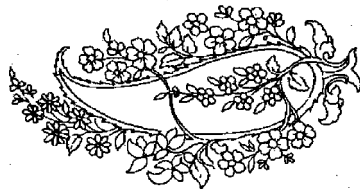


The Purchase of a Day



Shawn Lynn Walker

The Purchase of a Day

by Shawn Lynn Walker

handwritten press 1999

Copyright © 1999 Shawn Lynn Walker

Poems contained in this chapbook have previously appeared in *ixnay* and *Take 20: New Writing*.

Photographs:

by Aaron Levy: 1 - House, 3 - Beer&Books, 5 - fruit and vegetables, 9 - Antibiotic, 12 - Bloom!

by Aspect: 2 - West Philly block, Philadelphia, 4 - chair, 6 - fridge, 7- coffee, 8 - bed, 10 - ashes, 11 - measuring tape

Handwritten Press is edited by Kristen Gallagher. Assistance for this volume from: Aspect, Al Filreis, Erin Healy, Aaron Levy, Laura Smith.

Please feel free to send us mail:

Handwritten Press
3805 Locust Walk
Philadelphia, PA 19104

The Purchase of a Day



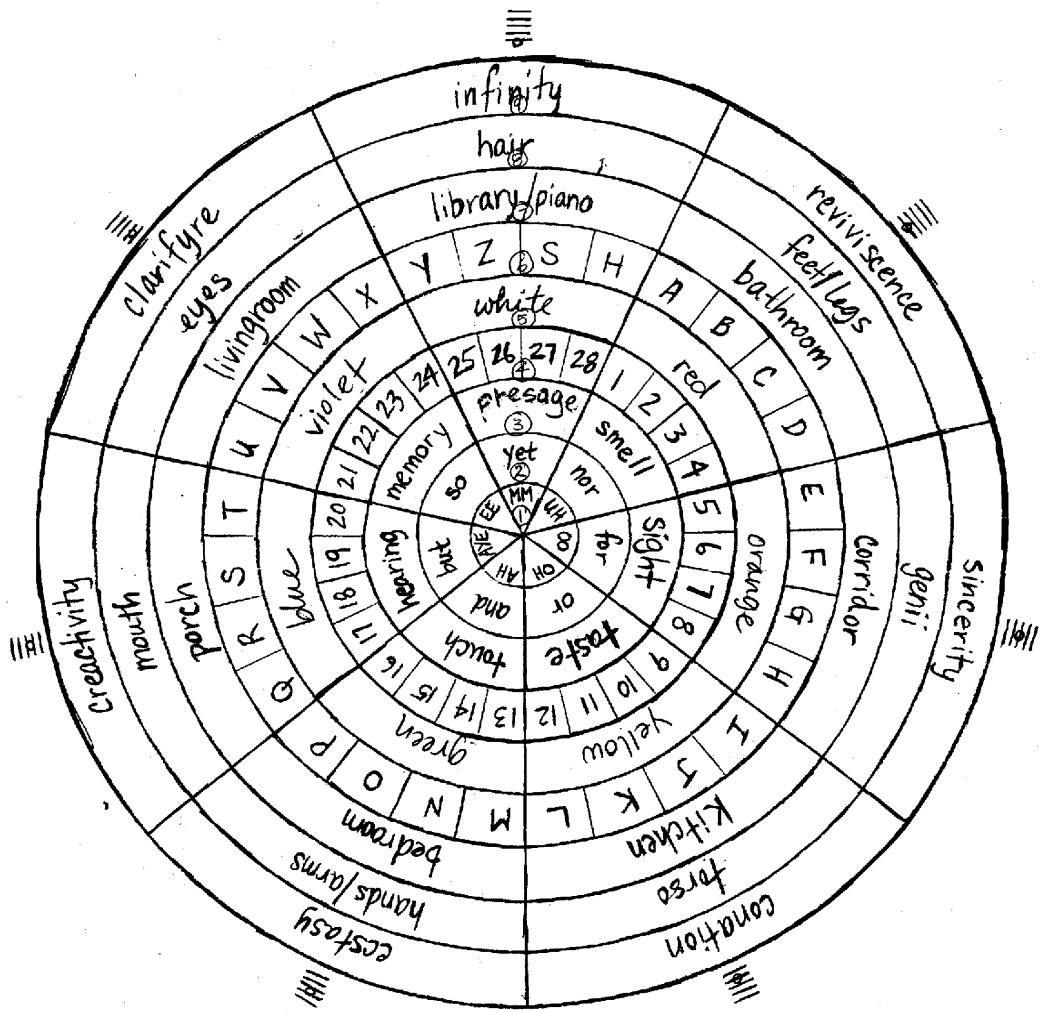
INTRODUCTION

If, as the poet laureate of Britain once pointed out to me, it is impossible to exist in a state of constant epiphany, let that impossibility be our only goal.

To record every purchase is documentary, confessional, and self-examining, and I did so with that spirit over a period of a few years. These poems use the numbers in those daily purchases and a six-sided dice to determine lengths of individual lines.

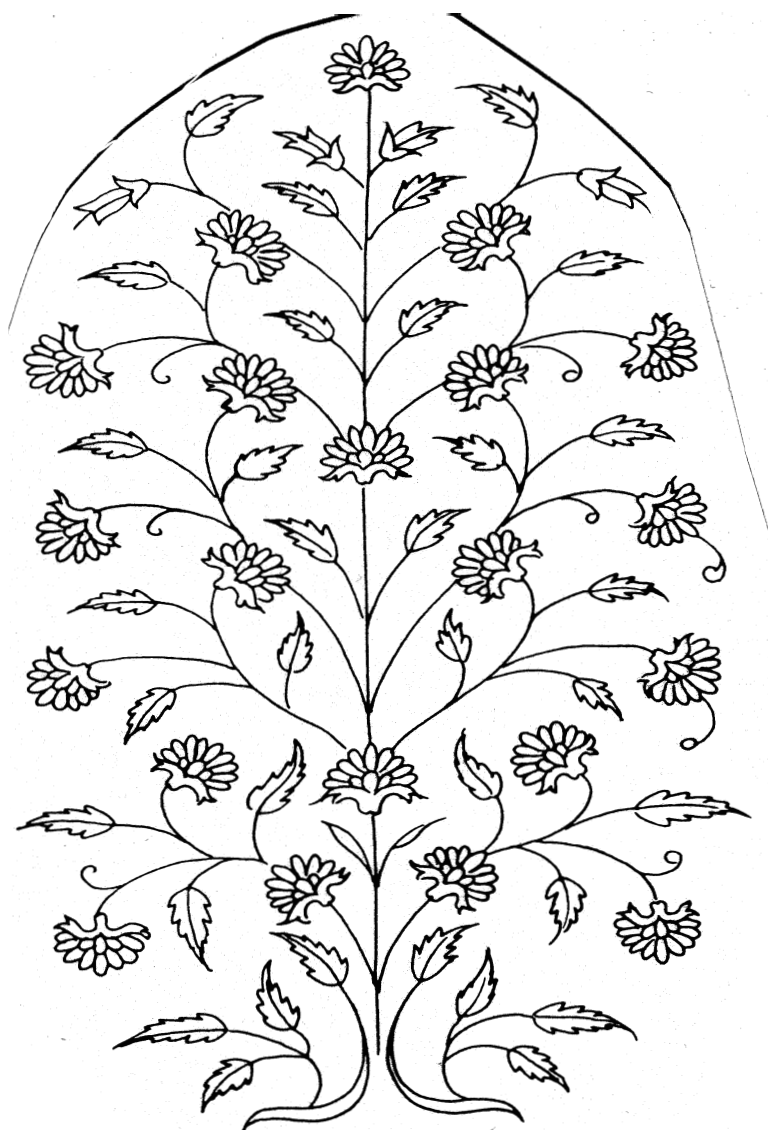
The other determining structure is the wheel in the front of this book. Each day corresponds to a segment of the wheel, according to where that day falls in my menstrual cycle. (There are 28 days on the wheel.) I wanted something contemplative -- within -- to meet something practical -- without -- in the space of the poem. All layers of the wheel participate as formal constraints focusing each poem as well as daily habits such as the color of my clothes or where I meditate in the morning.

These distinctions may not matter, but the intention -- a more conscious existence -- always does.



*What is the price of Experience do men buy it for a song
Or wisdom for a dance in the street? No it is bought with the price
Of all that a man hath his house his wife his children
Wisdom is sold in the desolate market Where none come to buy.*

-- William Blake



Begin

a
non-directional sense
had picked up the presence

certain
shoes and
their socks carry with them.

but there had been no mirrors.

so there had been no bodies.

just the solid orange thought of someone's there

had begun this walking into a waking dream,
birth's open rings of preoccupation

with beauty with beauty with
beauty with beauty
with beauty with beauty with

December 3, 1997
£5.35 (itemized, with total)
Breakfast @ Zuckermann's, Unthank Road

every step a lightened one

have
not asked of grace of being
nor which odd joy descends us now

nor which sun-day
we turned

from learning under arms abound
nor which broad-glassed

time
 takes epiphany with tea

nor which winsome waters bless this glee
nor which hot hands we hold to feel
ourselves in always burning here

nor which dream upon an unearthed porch
maps these lokes through some metropolis

nor for quickest brights unfolding there
nor for calamity's sweet fall in



undulatory living
space

nor for constant lightedness in place
nor for queerest body-touch that
comes down of up uncrying one

nor for accent
of revel-mouth undone to lead

nor for
kinder here this

more weave kind tree of mine kindling
nor for grace-joy a more to
spring

January 6, 1998
£1.78 Marlboro lights and matches @ UEA Post Office
42 p coffee (in yesterday's Styrofoam cup) @ Bowl
84 p tomato soup, orange, coffee @ Diner
£8.89 groceries @ Somerfield, Earlham Rd.
£1.07 broccoli & grapefruit, Fruit & Veg shop
99 p Orangina @ Train Station, with Ira

One Day Out

Afterwards is not a facing so the desire of
memory for itself tomorrow wherein we dance
our bodies from their blue images so to particular divinations which may
validate the individual genius thus abandoning it unto its for
replicating ever self continually holding self up to so to love so

loving most dearly that which is most also like so
that it may be and see that it be so at be and be so self going be most in-
timately here so here ourselves speaking so finding
to have been the me which pulls me

into me pulls me says me sews to the eye that sees
in memory so situates eternity so
clarities when not our beings

acquire volumes thus illusiveness so still hold to
such effacings leading we to

we

January 24, 1998
£2.00 Blake's *Poems and Prophecies*
inscribed with the date May 16, 1941
@ a used book store in Cromer

play



you can't be polite with hands that big. you
can't be polite with hands that big. you can't.

in other worlds we
stand to wait our feet under

standing undo steps.
watch me said the camp little king.

chess on the monopoly board —
protect
you me.
the house unfolds. the queen is a

maniac, yards of orange unflying
from her, longly, tongue. thus

humanity in thus
square is killing me.

January 30, 1998
20 p coffee @ UEA Chaplaincy
57p, 69p, 88p, 22p groceries @ Coleman Road

alling o'er

volition knew the face a glowing or wrapped or road
gone to attract of me the centre or the impossibilities of easy
or very centre of thetford twig or sky of leaves
lake of trees which wore the body

as its horizon or grow as branches go from we
into

.

nation

soar under me or we word you then you word we or

bring it or or bring it flow full
seeing doors through or association sacraments
lines unto such going knew the out co-lowing mystery of eyes in opening
or rapt or red come glow of face knowing this union

February 6, 1998
£3.50 ABC taxi to train station
£11.80 return tickets to Thetford
£1.70 coffees and cakes @ Thetford Art Gallery
75p creme caramel from Boots
80p bus #35, Unthank to Rosary Rds.
Total = £15.55

inherited her glasses then

preoccupied
with the fallout of distance

isn't this
this street is not as I had
remembered it the kindness you always liked to drink
but everything's bigger where you do keep in America
bitterness a

larger thing
than
I can now accept
sleep soundly
in the room you know

July 19, 1998
\$6.21 @ 7-11, 38th & Chestnut
\$1.50 *Philadelphia Inquirer*
\$2.79 gallon of fat-free milk
92¢ bananas
\$2.14 Doritos, OJ @ 40th & Locust
25¢ to ice at CVS, 39th & Walnut



4834

silence being in a glass
lingers the dense metropolitan foliage love thy
neighborhood of soft din possibilizing
we stop between the blue
imploding as history paints the porch
in high-pitched summer block voice

bowl wherefore artist thou siren
time which ambles the well-rooted sidewalk thy
variegated sizes of living where
marbles above the red so
be tidy be tight be open pedal
a long seed our home

July 22, 1998

\$5.75 subway tokens @ 15th & Market

[also \$1.60 copy of Christy's key, W. Phila. Locksmith
35¢ soft pretzel @ steakshoagies truck 34th & Walnut
\$1.00 cherry-flavored Chap-et @ 40th & Locust]

the god we must own

The god we must own is
possibility. I am
burning: dropped so fucking fully of
myself everywhere
I look the explosion of godliness conspires against
me landing onto this levelling

Leveller take
levelling care
of me someone level level

level but tell me level levelness
where am I
to level this level off

leave me
in a level to go on levelled and
asking how one may commense

crawling again
under the
hovering blanket cloud of fear

August 13, 1998
\$6.35 two hoagies, Pete's lunch truck, 40th & Locust
\$2.85 Marlboro Ultra Lights @ UniMart, 40th & Locust
\$2.25 slice of cheese pizza and coffee, Allegro's, 40th & Spruce

towards a larger



for this breakfast participates in my hangover -
one fine walking egg and cheese of cup of me breaking -
hyperaesthetic morning of last night's love - blow quaff with the no one speak endlessly
too - primary socialization - morning of violent overhead plant growth - ought
I to avoid them - get I way too excited to contain me - frontier absorption

bloat - hyperaesthetic morning of last night's excess -
end me over coffee my unnecessary voice - wise woman, word me found - I can't
see anything for I'm drowning in the tumbleweeds -
hyperaesthetic morning of

last night's successive love - oh its overinterflow
this glow cracks me - into glorious pain-full morning -
story - see my monumental

stupidity drags me by the hair - and from way down
here all I want to do is love

you.

October 30, 1998
\$2.00 egg and cheese @ Pete's Lunch Truck, 40th & Locust

spring, water

for this water paradigms my
cleansing – how I wanted to refill the plastic with
backwashed words – redrink endlessly
my economy – RedeemeRereadmeRedeem
this – how many syllables of
redemption can we now contain – dust the bottle for
fingerprints – scan for DNA –
pin up the label’s red maple leaf – fuck the painting
you wanted to buy last night – there
aren’t enough words for that – you
are running out of justifications – (soft echo
of Ham’Diya – loving caution –
hear the constant dissolution of plastic into
the water) – a parallel truth –
cleansing might involve a commitment to glass bottles
and their requisite slow careful
consciousness – money finds water clearly – endlessly
an idea I always want
to touch.

October 31, 1998

\$1.99 Aberfoyle 1.5L Spring Water @ UniMart, 22nd & Walnut

Toothpaste

For
this non-basket-full participates
my excitement, which I have never

learned to contain precipitous
basket case is my uneven

weave apparent?
trash of my ex-

citement
this is a
nice confinement this constant writes my

sanity
and

Now
here's an episode – Last night after
pacing up through down and out the day,

going to where, I decided
to visit Books Through Bars and send

letters and books
to prisoners.

I thought
it started
at 6 and so rushed my dinner and

sanity
and

ran
over at 7. But it started
at 7:30, and was still dark

and locked. I went next door to the
Co-op and signed out some Tom's of

Maine Cinnamint
toothpaste and a

Rice Dream
nutty bar,
passed my half-hour wait in contentment,

sanity
and

wait.
At 7:30, the anarchists
were open. I made five packages,

including one for a man who's
serving a long sentence. He sits

in a small cell
all day, twiddling

his thumbs.
He writes – *I*
like to learn. When I left I noticed

sanity
and

my
toothpaste – the tube was no longer
there
in my jacket pocket! This morning

as I put some washing away
I made another decision,

that I needed
some more hangers

in my
closet, and
I thought about how to obtain them.

Sanity
and

them.
Then I opened my backpack and found
inside it the tube of Pepsodent

toothpaste listed at the bottom
of this piece, which I bought at 6

last night. How – *how* -
did I forget

in 1
hour's time that
I had already bought some toothpaste,

sanity
and

such
that I had been needing for many
days? I repurchased it with Tom's. Did

my state of being-in-need-of-
toothpaste outlast the fine logic

of (no-toothpaste)
plus (toothpaste) is

equal
to zero
need. Was it the story I in my

sanity
and

plans
had been creating: "Next time I am
at the Co-op, I will have toothpaste."

I must have imagined myself
in the Co-op several times,

my desire for
my very own

tube of
Tom's toothpaste
being fulfilled according to the

sanity
and

lines
of a certain script. Now then
did the story itself become a

need to be fulfilled? I did not
plan on the eye-catching display

of Pepsodent
on sale when I

stopped at
CVS
for cigarettes. I did not plan for

sanity
and

my
mistake to land me in the Co-op
on Tuesday night instead of Wednesday.

Am I circling around my mind,
or is my mind circling around

me? I went out
to the front porch

at 7
a.m. to
smoke a cigarette and ponder this.

Sanity
and

my cigarette stub found a pile of perfectly fine
hangers in the neighbor's trash.

November 17, 1998
\$1.99 CVS notebook
\$.88 Pepsodent toothpaste
\$.44 Necco wafers
\$2.39 Camel Lights
\$.31 tax
@ CVS, 39th & Walnut



resolution

we quoted
ourselves in the process of going. every day upon every day an up and up
of lines. we said that we would. we scheduled our
macrobiotic lust. we said that we would.
twelve months a merry wish. twelve to

own.
we said we would see ourselves do it.
we came to a yellow door, diving into it, ideas

all lined, eleven dots to bag. we said that we had to do it.
we scheduled our lemons and bells. we said it and did it
and said that we did it and now we don't say it anymore.
we say something new: we
say something new again. that english mustard is fine, and tea.

our thyme is at hand or at plea.

a rhyme. an inflatable bed of perception. a draft. we ran
into jabber kinaesthetic, leading us right



home.
inaugural jut keeping labia in line. we said intentionally. began two.
we began. we began.
we began. we be going, two.

tow the many
lines into one, we would, a lined thing. we would, a windowsill.
we would the cabinet-maker be. we would, the bag of bags.
we would, the small table.
or — we would sew a silence round the joyous plant. cathedral of conation,
this desirous scribble bends to
us. we cooked up a recipe: the usual meal for twenty-one days in a row.

January 1, 1999
\$1.94 orange juice and everything bagel @ Broadway Farm
\$135 Sister Christina
\$4.75 half dozen bagels & veggie cream cheese @ Bagel Café
\$20 to Mike – Housekeeping
\$8.60 pagado for pizza, pasta and coke @ Italian Mexican Restaurant, 103rd & Amsterdam Ave.
\$16.00 macrobiotic cookbook @ West Side Health Food Store
\$17.97 various, incl. string beans and ice cream @ 2383 Broadway Fruit & Veg

gallery

most of all, we come clothed, as buttercups

are clothed by the bodies of other buttercups as they lie upon the broads.
our breasts are your breasts, by admission.
Monet is a delicate stomach-bloom; we must

appear to tend.

here, growing
around the dark lake of a dead Picasso, we see ourself

as nine useful circles. here we hang our honest knees. here we hang
our expectant shins. here we hang innumerable
small and painted feet before
Buttercup's mirror, mirror: bare white wall.

January 2, 1999

\$5.00 added to Metro passes

\$8.04 salad bar & two coffees @ 1657 Broadway Gourmet Deli (50¢ tax)

\$13.00 two student admissions to Metropolitan Museum of Modern Art

\$4.55 California roll @ Daikichi Sushi, 86th & Broadway (35¢ tax)

milk

lunarvolent

idyll juice, kind lips with warmth in mine: this is the diary's soft confession.
this is how we hide

our industry. this is how we show.

In jumps, kicks, licks we warm our mines. this makes the shelf.
we caress, exploding
the torso of our tell nation.

January 3, 1999

\$1.60 trolley home

\$3.68 half gallon milk and potato bread @ Fresh Deli, 49th & Baltimore



coffee

here we are two poles.
we would like to see you today. we would like to
talk across a round thing. the distance between us is a round thing,
a group of twelve. we are drawing

you, a floating table

close.

January 4, 1999

\$1.34 coffee

\$1.00 Chamomile tea

\$10 to Mike - Housekeeping





bed

with thanks to Askari Sohrab Samimi

for this participates in our thirteen-layered body. it is good to feel us
bulbous, covered,
passing us through boys and dreams,
a glaucous spreading

through the vulnerary presence of glow-leaves. there are three pots
we could call our place, and then the overt lappings
at various girls and tendrils.
everywhere is the floor. everywhere is the window.
everywhere is the bookcase upon which we are arranged.
for us, a cup of tea in the morning, a cumlunary contract, our bice pool.

January 5, 1999

\$4.75 Three-layer enchilada pie & Moroccan chick pea soup @ Magic Carpet food truck

\$7.65 dinner @ Beijing, 36th & Spruce, with Kristen

closet

on four fours, in unlit form we
are excessively polite, color-coded and dancing
on the tender grass

within our smallest ark.
and ties and belts and socks and skirts
play different parts at deferent parties, the emerald

palace reports. we too are stocking well for time's big turn,
storing our secret shoes and water bottles,
shelving our transparent fantasies, canned
greens and cash. questions, joys, fears, and grace in each of the hangers.

may not openness police this queerly vibrant song.
may not ordonnance papify this form.
may not office panache this giddy, ecdysic crown.

January 6, 1999

\$4.75 veggie meatball sandwich & baby lima bean soup @ Magic Carpet

\$1.25 Pepsi from 2nd floor vending machine @ 3401 Walnut

75c Starburst from vending machine

\$6.00 "donation" to holiday bonus for Tammy

antibiotic



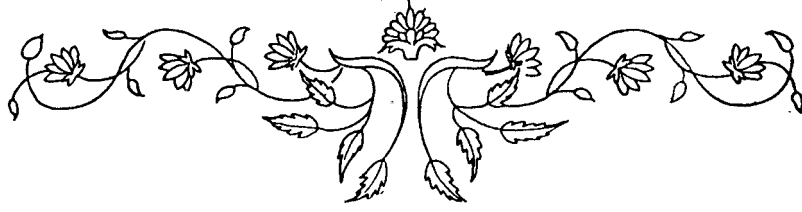
and you all day.
counting your years and blessings as we should.
again and you to leave and soon but walk quickly.
again for the people have laid plans, you and on benches.
we turn like this, anticipating

and even in the flock of jubilee pigeons.

oh yes it is and again. they come
and it is you again. we see it and return
and like a form of memory, approaching itself as a model.
and again the you with what surprise
and with its expectation.
a fan of many boxes, fine garden opening and fine,
full of intangibles.

and you all day
a felicitous pleonasm. make no other present of yourself.

January 7, 1999
\$1.90 soft pretzel & sweet mustard @ Auntie Anne's
\$4.00 masala dosa, Indian truck, 38th & Walnut
\$9.53 zithromax & wart remover, CVS
\$1.60 subway home early from work (sick with antibiotic)



bowl

we are engraved
vocals along the rim

January 12, 1999
\$12.00 group meditation

friend

there is a fixed hole about which we spin our torus. a fixed hole
about which we accumulate,

perigynous, singing our rose-song to the infinite icosiseptahedron.
each of our words is a

memento.
each resuscitates the hole.

January 20, 1999
\$4.09 sushi @ Food Court (27¢ tax)
\$17.00 dinner @ Genji, with Christy



soap

once
you have it

it is yours, all of it. its packaging, its properties, its history upon you.

January 25, 1999
\$11.07 Mike, trip to VA

cab

will it. the bus will stop at the next block.
twenty and a little gasp, consistent.
opening – some people have said
that and then other people will. a little gap.

placed
such the chairs scrape closer.

a haircut

is a big step but is
made so

March 9, 1999
\$4.83 groceries @ Thriftway
\$13.00 Dave Douglass trio @ The Pie, South Street
\$1.00 iced tea
\$11.00 cab fare, home



mutual spacematic punch, no. 27

if we write a cheque, but the cheque is written.
cheque. maybe. cheque. not. cheque cheque spent.
our blue images cheque. every carbon thing is recorded.
then of course goes missing.

March 9, 1999
\$250.00 HouseCheck home inspection, left off the first list

highway

for Kristen

the wise woman embraces her wisteria
 loves it as it grows
 climbing among her plans and faithful alleys
 loving that written weave written
 for going for her wisteria so growing –
for she words a planter
 she blooms in her
books

weave seem papering roots her garden
for fun
looks

for precision
a reach-enthusiasm always growing over
 into production spreading
 into wish tearing a line
sun-shy vine records rewinds handwritten vine
 hand-stitched vine stitched into our ribs
 weave grown with her loving her wisteria
gathering sound weave
 swaying into hardy conversation

weave seem the longing scarf entwines us
for hours along wisteria
fence around such hair leaving
 the porch standing
 the couch green
 the room publishing

the best of our wisteria

for our spines are stitched and by hands
whose mines stretch whose
vines will trail after her

for we watch her watering why
her lovely wisteria as she goes
for we watch after long leaves from windows
we gather her under our arms from windows
we watch the long vine follow her feet

March 28, 1999

\$8.21 various @ Dollar Store, 48th & Spruce

\$3.21 socks @ Food Rite

\$2.99 Camel Lights for Kristen @ Brown's Thriftway

\$3.29 asparagus & grapefruit @ Thriftway

\$215.00 April's rent

\$3.25 Bugler & ice cream @ Fresh Deli



keyring

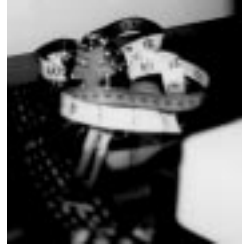
sometimes we wish we were a jazz musician
an already packed train a quality

which is
listening while speaking

these keys what hangs us on
quality

of life so that
people villagers many philadelphians the south jersey native
the georgia transvestite might find this useful
when dragged into the street what we are doing closing
around the forces chopping

us voice
listening while speaking



singing this the lock-weight
of meaning

at least be entertained pounding on the apartment door
gertrude's genius
forced to strip while looking
while being looked at so

find us
listening while speaking

with so few in times when
one should speak

April 1, 1999

\$7.00 falafel lunches for me & Kanthi @ Magic Carpet

\$1.77 three keyrings @ West Philadelphia Locksmith (12¢ tax)

\$9.31 quiche, coffee, apple juice @ Good Stuff Café w/Chip (61¢ tax)

newspaper

we had most
likely expected to hide in the forsythia
America does April: serving the bloom
bloom force dressed in walls of yellow bloom
our bell full bloom sky
a long the graded street

(flowing
under iron bloom sweeping) residual street
who tree-lined could church-bell
not upgrade the sidewalk could

bloom forsythia
fortify the body (white with this air of bell)
who could not hide from the
concrete bloom descending

grade expecting
the forsythia or ascent or bloom

everywhere yellow or
bloom under cover

bloom red lips

who could not translate

who could not hide
the century's last
forsythia

bloom levelling bell bloom

April 2, 1999

\$1.49 egg & cheese @ La Boulet

\$2.50 cheese sub, right cart

\$2.80 Parliament Lights @ Wawa, 36th & Chestnut

\$2.50 MAC withdraw fees, 2nd St.

\$6.50 dinner w/Kristen @ Nick's Roast Beef

\$6.00 lagers @ The Khyber



rice

when there is much room and there is rain and a morning which breaks
the darkness touching the body which breaks the darkness
and sometimes even in much room and rain the darkness will
not be broken and the touch becomes the darkness of morning

when there is much room and rain and when we touch
the doorframe as we enter
the house which breaks the ground and sometimes the ground will
not be broken even as we hang agape in the doorway
and entering with lightness of much room and rain if
the green ground will not be broken we will

brush and become the ground
and then after much room and rain
when we move to hang a fresh window on the wall and sometimes

the wall will not be broken will not be touched and not be green
then even so open our arms raised in much room rain and morning
we become the wall

April 6, 1999
75¢ granola bar, vending machine
\$3.85 Xacto knife @ Penn Bookstore
\$3.25 falafel salad @ Magic Carpet
\$5.82 dinner items @ Thriftway

