



# IRON: 4

## I R O N 4

I asked a child to describe poetry.

I said:

Begin then with this image:

A child's head beads in the light,

ships like a star across a man's mortality.

He and his garden and reach for a word.

Among stars, a man becomes a giant.

Take this image:

The misty face of a child,

momentary of light

A word found,

a child's voice--

the length of gold

that first enters the empty edge of light.

The child says, 'Dare you, it will be so.'

and my hand trembles like a tree

first planted in clay.

Here the words sound a child's joy.

What is specified.

Here the word turns as a word of metal precision.

A shape that was like him.

Here the sound inhabits the word,

to lie in an orchard.

The words stand against these.

## THE SNOWS STARS ROCK

Yah its a picture  
the green boughs bow  
the snow down  
the black night fills  
the top bough the tree tops  
its a picture the world is  
thrown down snow castles  
from the night above the snow  
above is filled with stars  
are filled-in warriors  
and dogs

silences

the hill side  
sidles up as I  
up the sky I move through

the switchback  
trees white moon  
baby hang on hang on

the rock clear dark fir boughs

wet fir boughs  
dark wet fir boughy roads

in the dark and under your blazing timber sun

down the mountain

through sideways the switchback  
roads just made for skiing down

language  
four feet above your silken grass sides the bark flies from  
the pitch sticks

yes, mud  
yes please hang on

the boots names thereupon icfield rock and top

uh huh a picture  
I is eyes in the stars  
I look at I could be  
a ceiling of soft dark  
height....

the hill the rhythm moves

truck the tires black rock-pocked rubber gravel dust  
the road

the road it is on (length) the side (where)  
west

move over it (the road) the mountain slopes

the way in an edge it is  
the trees cut  
away the right-of-way

wynds

into the shape the hillside is  
the 'up' of it  
at the round of my back behind  
down before where I was

the creek up  
the hill beside  
the road by  
under me

and then there on the top at the mountain in the trees blue sky green light

at noon the logs marked (volume) by us (hot)

turn and take under the road and the creek beside down to the lake's shore  
and highway

at the creek mouth  
the color in the water is the trees'  
blue sky green light from the hills up

## THE LEVEL

In a mind of mountains  
the topography is cocked for disguise  
the heart expects  
everything moves as a level  
surprise trips and turns the eye  
the big boot starts in the underbrush  
so readily stupidly  
to follow the mind  
which is tricked. What stick  
but a fresh-skinned log wet  
can start the foot slip lose  
the elevation of the line a  
cliff creek stop  
what the compass-eye intended?

What earth can so undermine  
as well as gravely roots  
your ass in the air? Nothing  
so much as the mind's line  
the map to make the mountain's  
trees the roads locate the eye's  
desire to hold  
the mirrored compass  
to the eye to sight  
the button push record the crown of larch  
or branch or bark or granite rock.

In the mountain's mind  
in the forest  
there is no mistrust the intention  
of the topography to be true  
is as much a level  
of the heart  
as lines to place  
a map the mind locate.

## ALL THAT WINTER THERE

We are gone outside  
you and I  
through our door into the cold night  
that is like icicles between us.

Your face is white also  
as the powder snow  
out there behind our faces.

A complete cold lies all about us  
now the door and cold air  
the stare between us freezes  
then you walk outside alone  
on your own white snow  
into all  
that winter there.

## FURS

Fur

is the woods

fur

the body slat (down by the river

laid out like

fur

the dead dog the dead fur stiff stuff

corpse

1846

"it was no longer profitable to trap the beaver"

1834

1820 1821

like a dog's yelp

beaver

horses

tracks

but not beaver

dogs

are our fur's the same thing

the same reach

for beaver

and rivers

go where

the men go those trappers those lyrical

trappers

song-minded americans

like dog's yelping

to Astor

sittin in new Yawrk

sippin gin &

beavers and boats around the continent

not fur

not where

the missouri is not a starting place where

the beaver is

is

(they no longer have any names those george simpson's men's journals crossing the continent by water by portage by grease pemmican & tallow, the fats the meats made possible the "inland" voyages to the sea (and beaver?) the columbia and down the wide land to port land and back up the interior to the trails and furs)

spreading

those pierced nosed ones

ponies

bickering posts

it was not for money

it was for men

and their fur

was 'land'

geo-

fur

is the overland is the river the portage

where I sit up on a dear bear run

no longer a trapper's trail

and think that I have discovered

a language in the warm afternoon breeze

inside myself I feel the kootenay to issue

from out of

as vapours

and the clouds which shuttle the mountains' peaks

where the beaver builds

he moves up to the head

at the back of the place

and makes that where the water comes from

before the flow

there the beaver builds  
a pond of mud and birch  
which becomes a creek after that  
No - - - anywhere he can do it he does

anywhere

build a creek song

build something

but that fur is like warmth  
is a lie

## II rubeiboo

the murky soup

a mix-up

somewhere

the incline of

Howser Ck.

toward Taurus Mt.

four squatters to my left

starbird glacier on the right

9 cabins

2 decades of winters

muskrat martin

Hans Rasmussen

his my snowshoes

summer

in an old age

veteran

all cabins stocked with canned food

the trap-line

his talk.

III

the fur

is as clear as can be had

as trans-continental

or men of which virtue

they occupy little space

in a canoe

not fur

at all

for Jack Clarke

May, 1966

Fred Wah



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1495 Mountain Highway  
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Iron 4 is dedicated to Amor de Cosmos and the Runcible Mountains, that they reappear.

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