

This year moved through a series of rearrangements: divorces, separations, houses left and houses found, studios dismantled and rebuilt, countries briefly inhabited. There were arguments with institutions and the occasional victory over them, moments of study and moments of exhaustion, the strange persistence of continuing to burn even after burning out.

New people appeared, along with books, sounds and recipes. Families expanded and contracted. Children grew and mirrors kept their watch.

What follows is an account of these movements, gathered under the loose administrative weather of the Ocean's Academy of Arts.



A LETTER TO GOD  
MLK

the wing is burning wing is burning O burn the wing for the wing is burning

My heart is not in the things here.

Men have made no effort to live by your word or by the word of any Good. This has angered me always. Childhood had not the color of the beautiful but of poverty and learning to kill what was best to know and love or be. So I write out of an awkward shyness; not understanding the angel. And the way to be near you I understand not. And the methods of love and joy and light are not understood. Nor of hate and pain and fear is there any manner or need not known.

This black village. Houses, a lake and . . . (eye of fire O the Eye is on fire) gray loose frog

squatting on the arms of the Cross

I first went to school in a town of steel. The boys had faces like thin cats-the geography of evil; the history of monsters I want to remind you that I understand little in your sense. Some times I pick up a stone in the street, and just hold it in my hand. That may have nothing to do with present difficulties in the world; but it gives me pleasure and can cause no ultimate harm to anyone. I was fifteen before I got all of myself in. Until then I seemed to smile when I felt angry, grit my teeth together when expected to talk. My clothes never pleased me in color or in the way they felt when I took them off at night. They were like the skin of an animal I knew nothing about. The same with my teeth: often they were cold and felt too sharp in my mouth.

1915: Yellow snow in Cleveland. Lame woman swinging a rope.

1922: To kill of course. Don't stare at me!"

1923: And the flesh was made a ward.

1928: Her crying made me cry. Moved to new hungers. Like nosebleed.

1931: And the Church . . . glittering throats in a gray choir.

1934: It is not always easy to live a good life.

Water is cruel water is cold kind water deep sweet water O then let me be quiet and quiet and still. For stranger stronger art thou.

"Do you hate me?"  
"I know thee not-not even in fear."

Black tree . . . rust run house of darkness lake of evil

cabin terrible wren spool grin MILK leaf light

scrubwoman dip your mop in the skittering pail of heaven  
merchant sell on the playful blood of untroubling boys, you snake!  
king put your sword to the land of light and land the great fish

You God tame

O make tame what men call war

but is the only condition of their 'peace'

O loud sing the leaving lark

Yesterday I tried to remember the first time I ever tasted an apple. Then I thought of this letter to you and it seemed an unimportant thing to know. . .

But I'm not sure.

Certainly your patterns are bigger than mine. And . . .

Why don't you come down and carry on your fight? What exactly did you mean when you said

"Thou shalt not kill."

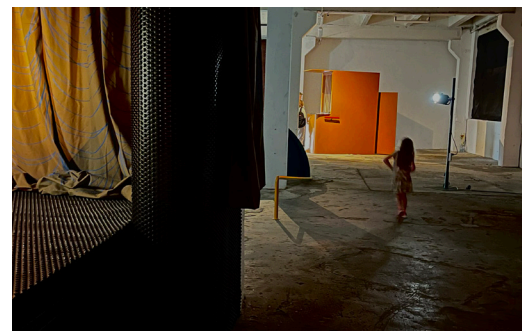
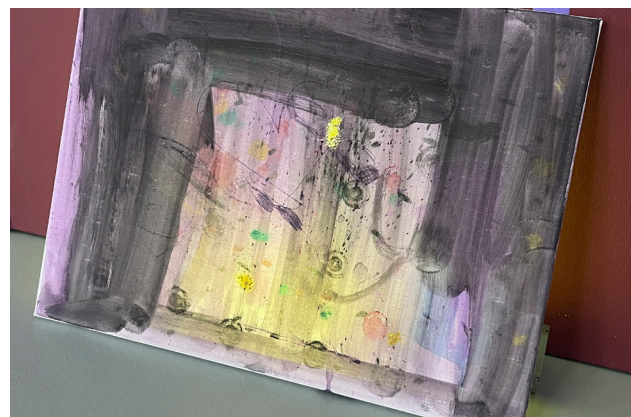
Come down God and continue your fight against this pious murder.  
-"Under certain circumstances; in order to properly defend; in event that no other method of survival is forthcoming"-

NO

"Thou shalt not kill."

And what right has anyone to make people think you were a liar.

My father used to say that I looked too long at people. It is true that they suspected me of not understanding them, and this made them want to make me



uneasy; which they did by gripping ping my shoulder or by turning suddenly away.

November 16, 1939: I am first conscious of another being in myself.

Banners

hoofs (O the swift graceful target)

a wound perhaps

I question not your authority.

Nor my own.

I make preparations to use them.

Has lived. Loves. In the world!

Just as there is no end to joy in life . . . an existence t resembling every beautiful. Cry not. Be not mean. Do not cheat. Make no money out of blood. Believe in man. Belief in man is God.

the use of guilt is death

People look out of the holes in their eyes.

The eye itself is of the spirit.

Not to see, but seeing.

O an inch from the rosebush or a thousand miles from this murder . . this being here!

Ghost, ghost upon the sea, have you tidings?

have you angels found?

O a tiny place away from the world where we may lie,  
my love and me?

Blockhead !

Dear God, I don't want to go to bed tonight. There should be a lock on what I have to think.

December 5, 1939: Visited by a man and woman from another world.

December 7, 1939: Wilbur (you would like him) broke a piece out of a poem by One of the Lads (can never tell them apart) and used it as the headstone for a gnat he had got fond of.

December 8, 1939: Spent the day filing a complaint against the U.S. Senate. Rather pleased to know I have a say in matters pertaining to.

December 9, 1939: Walked down Cornelia Street. Met nobody I knew nor did anyone else.

December 14, 1942: Planning a little surprise for my enemies. More about this anon, I reckon.

August 13, 1943: Wilbur and I discussed the policy of Our State Dept. To be sure. And How: You said it.

I have no children because I couldn't feed them. My wife never has a new coat and I may have to write novels. So do I do. It is a situation I wish you'd do something about because nobody else gives a damn. I can't take the rich. Means two things.

(How do you like this?)

The cave was lined with blue fur. A princess sat near the entrance, and in her hand she held a chalice made of gold. She drank of the wine and softly died.

Far away, almost to the end of the most distant land, her lover paused at his task of creating a new being.

Two things walked through the shadow which like a woolen shawl hung on the shoulders of the air. Their faces were streaked with yellow chalk and a single horn grew out of their foreheads. It was night when they reached the cave.

They did not touch her. They moved to a corner away from the world, and, lowering their beautiful, sad heads, wept.

(And this?)



No one supposed the chaining of that particular beast to a tree would bring the world to an unsightly end. Nor did it. But it did effect a curious condition in the lives of three people who had their home a score of miles out at sea.

It was the howling.

It was a sense on the air that terror had a face which could be seen. And feet really which walked in search of open graves.

The three were John Jefferson.

They had been so named by a wave which took them to mother. One was tall with box-deep eyes. One was fair, slimskulled and strong as thrice-heated tea. The third was almost a Christ - he . . .

O John Jefferson!

What will become of thee?

O what, what will become of thee?

To be whole!

--how we hunger to be clean!

-these dazzling messengers from white suns-

Is it possible to

You smile, God

November 16, 1941: "It's going to snow soon," I said

I ruffled her hair as she set the table. She crumpled back the bread-wrapper and cut five slices. I pulled up the chairs. The cat rubbed against my legs as we sat down. Suddenly we both laughed and I got up and went round to kiss her. She pushed me away and made a crinkly face. "Eat, you big silly," she said; but she sprang to her feet and pressed her body hard against mine. Holding her in my arms with a savage joy, I glanced out of the window:

"Ah Christ! will you just look at it snow," I said.

They moved into the circle

which a snail had drawn

on the forehead of a weeping lion

This marble casket. O laughing maiden . . .

war perhaps. Be not unwary, God. The war

draws no circle

.....

Killed in action,

Sept. 24, 1945

You know as well as I do

that . . .

It is without doubt unfortunate that the truly beautiful part was destroyed before anyone could see it. I know I would now like much to have even the dimmest knowledge of its perfections.

Whatever your hidden motives were, there does seem to have been shown a tragic carelessness in the manner of the defilement. Something else surely could have been done with use-even at the final moment-even in the white hour of your agony when you regretted your lowly creation, might not some smallest vestige of mercy have been spared . . . ?

I am not able to say how exactly it would have altered my holdings, but I am not far off believing a dog might better have been commissioned to the endeavors I have before me.

I think of the girl I loved when I was twelve. I think of the thousands of eyes and voices that have gone through her since then. Perhaps she is dead. . .

I think of the creek I used to walk along coming from school. Of the teacher who shot himself in front of the solid geometry class. Of the time I said a lively Anglo-Saxon word by mistake in assembly. . .

I think of my father being carried home with half his foot cut off in the mill. I think of my brother driving around town in a low-slung, tan racing car he picked up in a junkyard for sixteen bucks. Of my uncle stumbling into High Mass drunk as a lord and undressing at the altar. . .

What are you thinking of at this moment, God?

I cannot really expect the old man to take his feet out of the river and make a saddle for a horse nobody would want to ride anyway.

He looks up and winks at me as I go tearing by with some plan or other to stop everybody from running straight on to hell.

Perhaps he understands in the way he has always understood the things which at all concern him.

But it never seriously appeals to him to take his feet out of the gently flowing water.

May 27, 1942: I have seen the new being.

Aside to your daughter Keela:

I am not permitted to speak to you when the white leopard is in the room. On the evening of Peretho (Jan. 6 in heaven) you will walk under the lemon trees which your father planted. You will wear the pink dress with the margarines on the collar. Do not grow bitter if I do not always accompany you to market. The eyes of the geese in their paper crates look with too much pity upon us. Perhaps the wan leopard will not come today . . . say, how is this? The blood will have dried on his paws by the time our true representation to the Other One can be made-

May 28, 1942: The light is blinding.

In runaway order

out of the green life

O ALL IN FIRE

mother

Some useless fellow. My cold rule, on ninth hill. . .

every murder is the murder of Thee

as I everliving lean in love up to that bright tree

Silence then!

"This day is death's."

Red full sweet beast.

"What time is it in the tiger's garden?"

You damned cheats eating your kill-

Bloody handed pigs

Defying Thy announced will  
It is hard to have friends now. People are going to pieces too fast. They hate anyone who does not bleed fog and sickness.

I watch the young men go. Nothing can heal them.

Death won't. These are machine-made . . . not meant to feel or to think-

What have you told them, God, that they go thus to slay and to be slain-

WHAT HAS ANYONE TOLD THEM?

May 29, 1942: All I am ever kind to-

"Wear the shawl His mother made."

"I've given it away."

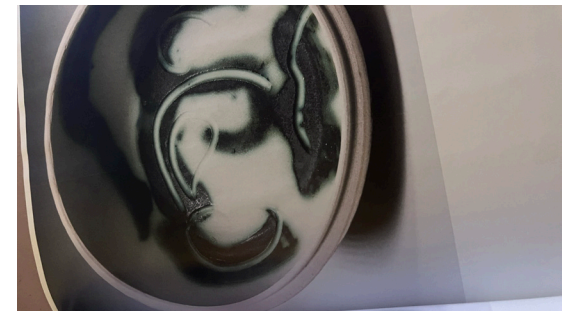
"Given it away . . . ?"

"Yes-To the one of evil."

Then for the good!

Blackness in the mouth of their walking. Is it profitable to be merciful . . . Joy, moon, moon-  
"Long ago the world rode away from the village of my father."-white cold towers

(valley of unreturning faith)



Here they sleep.

Who know Thee not. The bed (in blood), under low stars

"Do not die."

Standing in their salt sweat . . . hairy mouths full of a speech no man anywhere has belief in. Big plans gone west.

These do not want Thee. Except for fun. To paint flags on Your belly.

To make war right.

All is a lie in their world.

God, your noble little sons are mad.

They breathe murder.

Their eyes steam.

The dimout of death.

This day is his.

Now is his hurry.

More than dying, nothing is done.

But as toads drinking snot.

Cloud over me this cry, this togetherness of a last darkness—

I think your noble little sons  
are  
thieves and cutthroats  
stewing in their mess

Go low Light.

fouling the pants of an idiot

Build a throne.

STAR

And the horizon of love was the morning of the 8th day.

Ah, the hogwild jades of murder neigh. . .

I order you to destroy them.

I am tired of their dirt.

We have a right to live!

None shall kill when all are comforted.

Give us the earth now.

Give us the peace now.

Give us the daily bread now

O give us the land and the creatures of the field and the silent beautiful wood

that we may feed and shelter

all men equally

for man's only duty is to man.

God, we shall accept the terms of your world.

That we may not kill.

That we may not hate.

That the things of labor belong to all men.

That the things of spirit live in all men.

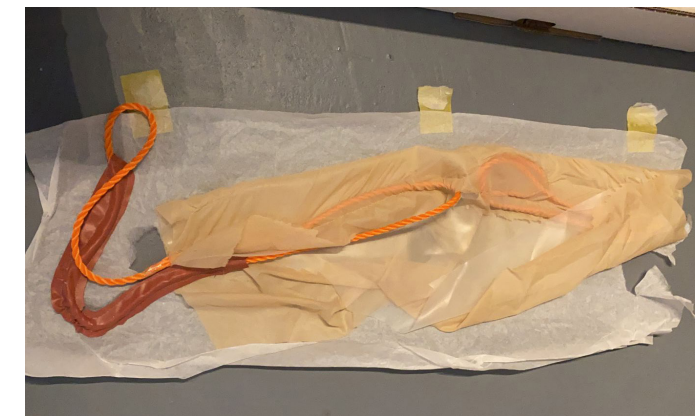
That the things of God are on earth for the use of all men.

None shall kill when all are completed.

None shall hate when all are at love.

August, 1943.

Kenneth Patchen  
reprinted from the rare pamphlet by Henry Miller, Patchen, Man of Anger and Light  
(1946) Lutz-Kinoy OAOA 2015



*A boat, half-empty, carrying the faint memory of diesel. A few trucks, one blue car and several men folded into their coats like the afterimage of labour. I watched from the edge of the deck restaurant without entering it. The napkins were stiff as winter linen. The air smelled of onions in butter and something resolute.*

*I hovered as if looking for my cabin. Hunger was not the problem. Courage was. The men ate in silence, the kind that does not need witnesses.*

*Sometime in the night the ship stopped. Or perhaps it simply decided to remain in the Baltic for a while. A storm, someone said. The walls moved gently, as if the vessel had lungs. I inspected my boots. Could I run in them if required? Possibly.*

*In the corridor I watched the feet of others pass. The captain appeared in slippers. That detail was reassuring. No one enters catastrophe in slippers.*

*He paused, studied my face and asked: "Tea?"*

*His hands were vast. Not expressive, simply large in the way certain coastlines are large. When he noticed my attention he lifted a napkin and folded it quickly into a star. The movement was almost administrative. He laughed and handed it to me.*

*I placed the star in my coat and returned to the cabin. The porthole held the sea like a small circular secret. By morning we were already approaching harbour. From that point onward the story belonged less to my voice.*