

JANUARY

and so i opened
the new year with a scarlat
ti sonata: the
spirit's champagne and
heavy metal for
every metaphysician
all believers in the ho
ly common life of
everyday and in
the great flintstones of
reality that god has
strewn for all to find

and so i opened
the new year with the queen's pawn
and intelligence
replied to that by
moving its black knight
and i knew that the counter
attack would come precisely
where the emeralds
flashed so wildly and
that i would only
have freedom (my faith) with which
to defend myself

heartland 3/1
the light is dark in the depths
of january
the wood looks like jew
ellery by arje
griest clumps of molehills in the
lawn the daythree hangover
tastes acrid up there
at gravergården
farm the new year is
being ploughed in let us hope
that is a good sign

4 january

5 january

heartland 6/1
the hawthorn outside in its
tattered livery
and my soul inside
in its ageing human bo
dy and its sweatshirt
from last year encased
in seventy per cent po
lyester the christ
mas tree shrivelled on
its way to rue land
fill epiphany

death without doubt was
paying a visit
in the neighbourhood i thought
i recognized it
inside a white o
pel ascona coming from
stillebæk now it was time
to keep a low pro
file without ducking
down too much like you did at
school when you wanted
to get off homework

hints tips and good ad
vice to a young po
et 'my new year's wish to you
is that you may have
to find yourself forced
to work hard to write your po
ems - for how many poets
have not simply been
smothered by their tal
ent their all too precocious
talent' i said with
a small knowing smile

the sunflowers down there
behind store væ
deled have now become so
charcoal cremated and so
terrifying that
i scarcely dare bike
past them even on
this day of epiph
any - they are tonsured monks
of the franciscan order
it is also your
fault tove meyer

and we passed over
into the amethyst wood
where language and re
ality did not
fit like pieces in
that jigsaw puzzle referred
to as 'the world' where they were
not commensurab
le and their rela
tion thus could only
be expressed in poetic
irrational terms

i must confess that
i throw out apples
to the fieldmice in the ar
senals of janu
ary thinking this
to be something rather fool
ish until a friend upon
hearing that remarked
'that really is quite
ingenious - in that way
you're able to keep
them out of the house'

hints tips and good ad
vice to a young po
et 'in my childhood there was
this brand of substi
tute chocolate - cre
mona - which we boys all a
dored more than we did the real
thing so much so that
when the war was o
ver we looked out for choco
late that had the taste
of real cremona'

heartland 8/1
a raw cold without the snow's
duvet of glass wool
the frost now lies in
visible over
the hills like tetrachloride
holes in the writing bigger
than those found in the
number field things i
can't express words i
cannot put on paper with
out help from the dead

we have now entered
a month that is with
out alcohol and rhine wine
lent you might say before its
time a time of car
rots and grated ap
ple for breakfast a
certain abstinence
mortification of the
flesh and heart from the wood's edge:
pheasant cock screech like
a dry martini

9 january

im using this d the worlds edge d im using this
corner as the o corner as the
poems anchora bramble bramble poems anchora
ge to reality n bramble bramble n ge to reality
o o
do not try t t t f yrt ton od
his path here not ev e
t rook t e t e t grakle t
h r thorn n r b h colony h
e eht ylno y thorn y l i grakle e
e s thorn d e s colony
w m r t n e t grakle w
o a e h tt g a h h p colony o
r z l sre h i hh i ier ytin t i o a r
l e i p s oo e g r h s o t stone l
d s g a h rr r ns e f h d
s h p t p nn t r p p ngier s
o t n a a s thorn e e a r h s
e f g d p t s thorn i t i e t e e
d rein h e s g h n r h f d
g l a s daten y n t e ro i g
e etters i here only poetr s h s n l e
h s e n
do not try t sdrow eht ylno er ot even
g
l r
im using this o bramble bramble a im using this
corner as the o bramble bramble i corner as the
poems anchora m n poems anchora
ge to reality the worlds edge ge to reality

the geese down at søn
derlund have by now survived
both christmas and new
year and særslev chair
factory and veflinge
sawmill while the small
fir copse is gone per
haps for the same reason it
once gleamed so brightly
of carbuncles in
the january woods and
of carbon 14

when understanding
is no longer the
organizing principle
for your existence
but rather exist
ence itself which grants you a
degree of understanding
when you have reversed
descartes only then
can you begin to join in
talking of the truth
of the setting sun

perhaps the very
screen i've chosen is on the
one hand too coarsely
meshed to register
the quiverings of
the soul and on the other
hand too finely meshed to al
low the clouds from stil
lebæk to squeak through
it's just possible
the magic square is simply
not up to the job

a new pulping or
der from the publish
ers this time it is to be
'winterreise' that
will end up as milk
cartons i'm beginning to
wonder whether giant e
ditions are not worse
than pulping perhaps
it is better to have the
few hundred books that
manage to survive

heartland 12/1
it is as if the great dreamer
had strewn castor
sugar over the
garden as if kate bush her
self had danced on out
of her video
tape continuing right a
cross the lawn clad in
her gwenevere cos
tume and had scattered
stardust in her wake

dedicatio cor
dis - the wood stood dark against
the evening sky (as
when black is printed
on madder lake to
make the colour gleam from the
inside as if it was a
question of some great
innate force) the wood
stood with black letter
ing right across the heart of
my brandnew sweatshirt

and i saw a fire
storm from australi
a and an oil disaster
not far from puerto rico
and i saw a dead
doberman pincher
in sarajevo
and an old film se
quence with cripples from vietnam
there really was plenty of
entertainment on
that winter's evening

tombeau de morten
sen - 'you can't draw at all' rich
ard once remarked to
my mother who was
one of his schoolmates on a
mager all that time
ago neverthe
less she naturally got
better marks than he
was given as he
was always putting black fin
gers on the paper

the days went by one
after the other
and even though i was keep
ing very strict tabs
on them i felt a
bout time as i do about
dates or the question of sum
mer time i sudden
ly became unsure
whether i should be adding
a day or perhaps
be subtracting one

had time expanded
to some larger u
nit than that which hours and
minutes were able
to register or
was it more a question of
a flight from the seconds that
dissect human ex
istence into ti
ny pieces? - the strength of my
life had to try to
decide that question

formerly i was
the one who caused things
to happen and to take place
you might say whereas now i
sometimes get the feel
ing it is rather
the opposite it
is as if things are
that which dictates my exist
ence here in the midst of the
innermost sanctu
ary of winter

perhaps it's the year
of the tree-sparrow at a
ny rate they're hopping
like fleas on a sheet
out there in the years first slush
or else it's only
me who is sudden
ly able to understand
their language because
i have drunk far too
much sherry have consumed far
too much dragon's blood

and i saw the so
viet parachute
troops descend on the flag of
lithuania
like doves with beaks that
were full of fire and cogwheels
and they fired into the crowds
at random with their
kalashikov ri
fles - that was what i saw one
day late in the twen
tieth century

got up eight o' clock
ate my müsli break
fast as usual time to take
the dog out fetch news
papers and post your
eyes and lips beloved are
indispensable daily
humdrum am sitting
at my writing desk
not thinking of anything
'mind of mindlessness'
am writing this poem

zeno's arguments
are of course not in any
way evidence a
gainst reality
rather against in
telligence itself or per
haps against the understand
ing of all things' co
hesion an understand
ing of the world the
eleatians were pio
neer knights of the faith

the fields lay green with
thallium under
the spectroscopic ana
lysis of winter like the
fields of a magic
square (or perhaps like
certain pages in
'kierkegaards papir
er') all i had to do was
to pace them out one early
morning to solve the
mystery of life

dear peter - in the
depths of the winter twilight
of your eyes greylefted
with carbide i can
see your daughter run
ning around during all those
years when i did not yet know
her just as i am
able to see you
wearing your black ber
et in the far reaches of
her innermost look

and we gyrated
in ever decreasing cir
cles around midwin
ter's acetylene
flame around midwin
ter's potash around midwin
ter's soda around midwin
ter's magnesium
because we knew that
it was precisely
in that light that the poem
would meet destruction

and it was a con
stant source of solace to me
not to have to un
derstand everything
hoar frost's decimal places
or the cube root of
the night it was such
a relief not to have to
remember any
longer all the pass
words of explanations be
cause now i was free

and by freedom i
meant as i always do ab
solute freedom that
which passes under
standing call it freedom in
relation to god
(even though it is
god who has equipped me with
it) thus enabling
me now to be a
ble to choose to believe in
god or choose not to

16 january

and i saw the eag
le break the first seal
and i heard a voice cry in
the great loudspeaker:
'allah u akbar'
and the cruise missiles put an
end to his words and i saw
immense clouds of smoke
ascend from the top
pled chandeliers of baghdad
- all this i saw on
cablenews network

and when the eagle
broke the second seal
i heard the tv speakers
all talking at the
same time as the scud
missiles began to rain on
haifa and tel aviv and
i could not believe
that which my eyes saw
on that day in the final
decade of the sec
ond millennium

and when the eagle
broke the third seal i
heard the idiots and those
possessed say the word
'peace' while they were froth
ing at the mouth led astray
by their own anxiety
incapable of
realizing it
was precisely their compli
ance that was the most
frequent cause of war

and when the eagle
broke the fourth seal i
saw what looked like a sea of
coruscating glass
and i saw the first
green pictures of the bombard
ment of irak light up the
screen like a swarm of
angry fireflies all
this i saw one janua
ry late in the twen
tieth century

and when the eagle
broke the fifth seal i
saw 'harriers' and 'eagles'
'ravens' and 'hornets'
fighter planes cover
ing what was a third of the
sky trailing behind them their
dragon tails of ker
osene and fire and
i saw one of them hurtling
earthwards now seeming
ly a burning star

and when the eagle
broke the sixth seal i
saw jerusalem's golden
thurible from which
smoke ascended with
prayers before god's countenance
like mourning apparel and
i saw this on my
tv one after
noon in nineteen hundred and
ninety one on a
zincgreys afternoon

but when the eagle
broke the seventh seal
there was silence for an hour
because a news black
out had been imposed
and then the president said
'a litre of blood for a
dollar and three li
tres of plasma for
a pound - the oil must remain
unscathed' - i heard this
on st. agnes' day

i've been confined to
my bed for three days now be
tween sweaty sheets and
hoar frost outside from
the grass that is cast
ing its faint reflection in
across the ceiling and the
poems from last year
where i read that the
desert war was rag
ing then more fiercely than a
ny influenza

heartland 22/1
storm hurricane force - time to
read perse's 'vents' or
malinowski's 'fu
ga' or even better to
go out into the
wind's iron fist and let
yourself whirl round in ever
decreasing circles
round your own axis
like leaves that swirl around a
pyramid of tin

i go out into
the wind that is like
an eagle that smells of chalk
and rusty iron - the sky is
big tonight and i
don't know any rea
son for holding back
no - i'll let my po
em bay away at the moon
just like my dog would have barked
in competition
with it last winter

crucis in corde
plantatio - enor
mous diagonals made criss
cross patterns over
my heart spans of years
and time of birthdays and dates
of death were all gathered in
to one point as un
der a glass i was
in my wholeness my wholeness
was in me time and
the instant were one

hints tips and good ad
vice to a young poet - 'things
have to have happened
or been created
before you can talk about
them but doing so
is (like an echo)
what gains the applause just like
rings on the water
only reach the shore
a long time after the spir
it's stone has been thrown'

the chaffinches print
their strings of tiny hiero
glyphs onto the hoar
frost whilst they peck at
seeds the signs do not
form a sonnet and there's no
inscription 'soli deo
gloria' only
a stupid poet
would be able to
find such meaning in those scrawls
me for example

heartland 23/1
according to the grima
ni breviary
it is the time for
banquets now in the heart of
winter poultry and
pork on the table
for the dog too and the ger
falcon while in my
personal alma
nac there's just a new moon black
as tarnished silver

in this poem it
is not forbidden
to strip patti la belle
to the skin or as
you would with a cut
out doll to the paper - you
can buy whatever woman
you should chance to fan
cy simply for words
except my wife apart from
that you've a free hand
- or a free poem

heartland 24/1
the warmest january
in living memo
ry i've no deepfelt
grief (though grief's great stuff
for poetry) and am not
unhappy (even better
material) all
that i lack is the
snow which ought to be
falling at this time of year
as silent as snow

the entrance to this
poem is to be
found in the memory three
steps up inside the
backroom here you are
with dice being cast for each
word and nobody stops you
committing sui
cide when you've lost your
last poem for who knows may
be salvation wins
over perdition?

25 january

what had become of
'the good old days' when the grand
father clock had a
more resonant chime
throughout my childhood and snow
storms could be relied
on with clockwork pre
cision not like nowadays
only in fairy
tales of 'the good old
days' when all the fairytales
actually took place

it was not all that
simple with all that
freedom or rather with that
sliver of freedom
humans despite e
verything possess and i am
often tempted to lose my
self in calculat
ing totals and to
talities to lose my way
in ramanujan's
splendid formulas

tombeau de robert
jacobsen has now taken
'the old days' with him
behind the rust and
red lead there where the secret
hexagram has been
welded into the
inside of the iron leaving
us still alive on
ly the chance of read
ing his last signature mir
rored on the steel pane

memory is quite
spiritless since all that is
spirit relates to
itself (otherwise
only to god) while he who
remembers has pre
cisely to relate
to a timespan outside the
moment (point in time)
which is thereby at
a point outside him because
all time is present

the first word ought to
have stood in the last poem
that much i could re
member though not quite
where - whether it was
to take place on the far side
of the fairytale or in
the depths of winter's
box of varnish and
chinese ink i could
no longer recall and the
rest i'd forgotten

the texaco lorry
was here again to refill
the tank with fueloil
if only it was
possible to be
topped up too with some sort of
fuel that was more efficient
than snaps and coffee
another form of
pure alcohol like
the time before devalu
ation got going

dear jørgen b you
were my very first
real friend and no doubt you
will also be the
last because that's how
things are with everything that
really means something it tends
to bite its own tail
as is the case with
birth and death which close about
the great laurel wreath
of reality

it's snowing finer
than coriander
and purer than even 'die
winterreise' where all my
final youthful dreams
lie buried under
the ammonium
carbonate of ro
manticism such a ve
ry long time after i have
woken up to the
great reality

i did not bury
the blue titmouse in
a lined cigar case but chose
instead a sonata for
toy piano by
john cage and i thought
about my own death
partly because a
bird had just flown into a
window pane that was full of
sunshine what way-out
eschatology

hints tips and good advice
to a young poet 'sometimes i tend to cheat
when i am playing chess against the
tasc-thirty machine not so
much out of a desire to
win but to make the game of chess as beau-
tiful as possible just
like when i'm writing
poetry' i said

hints tips and good advice
to a young poet 'but the most delightful
games came about even so when i re-
sisted the temptation to
cheat when it was all on the
line and my opponent was reali-
ty in person and when truth
and beauty were one
in my poetry

and the birds flew towards me from all the four corners of the globe they
flew at me directly from god forming a spontaneous flock just
outside my very kitchen window and i felt
great affection for those paltry mites as
if they'd been the children i'd never had myself

and once more i was standing at the farthest poem where nothing more
could be said because language had been worn
out and exhausted of turquoises and didn't
do any longer and one fine day even the
innermost word would be entrusted to me and
bring me to silence

the winter's barbed wire
the winter's chemi
cals the winter's smithy the
winter's crusade the
winter's naphthalene
the winter's king's gambit the
winter's broken on the wheel
the winter's 'tupi
lak' the winter's i
liad the winter's rape and
winter's diamond
anniversary

on the gable of
the house with small mintgreen let
ters (that resemble
tsao-shu) i have
written heartland pro
bably to proclaim the po
etic nature of all as
pects of my life ra
ther than put it a
side to certain hours
and to the winter fairy
tales of certain days

the day's name: vale
rius - cold and clam
my as an oyster mushroom
the culmination of win
ter the dead tug at
the heart as do the
weights in a clock that
call for their taxes
the wood is a delicate
distant violet as if
coloured with vine
gar and blackberries

hwest slant downwards to the real sea northe
 t h h h a
 r o o firewo o nr nroh s
 o r r odpile r o t ct roht
 n n ra n firewo ntra h ra tn
 t ct t odpile r ct no r
 holz r r r a h g l a ivah
 e w a a a c o a c n e
 d e c c cth n th r t t g d
 g ge t n t or orn n h e g
 e hr i m f e
 n o along this path youll s dewollo
 f roh hr e f
 o t n m b p nr ht o
 r c de the mid e a o ca r
 s a d of f i win il t rh r
 i k ra e a s meop ter t h n t t i
 d o t c w s sb n e ca n d
 e o n t o t el i dleh yllar y r r e
 n r bou l a o n cart o n
 tho nd l lf ni deransne eb llur t n ht
 i ary thorn t o t r i
 tho c f t irreg h ac ct h c oht
 y rnt a r ular o r ra t a y
 tr r g a anima r t racr
 s n t n c l dro n li n t
 o r h i t pings nn r firewo r nroht
 u o o v et o odpile a s
 t h r a h c a
 hwest n here runs lifes arterial way t southe

or i could spend both
days and nights ponder
ing the particular var
iants of the queen's
indian gambit
(where the rubies flash and e
verything follows the rules) in
order to escape
this almost accursed
freedom which made so many
demands and gives so
little in return

heartland 31/1
nightfall has come early like
silver paper at
the wood's edge - what's the
use of freedom now
when we cannot have children
when it has finally been
confirmed after sev
enteen artifi
cial insemina
tions at the clinic so what
does freedom mean now?

thalamus cordis
in a forest black as black
in its deepest cowl
ing from behind a
huntman's shack winds of pain were
howling deep within
my very soul at
its very flower i killed
something beautiful
at the very flow
er of my heart's true bower
thalamus cordis