Brian Fawcett / THE SECOND LIFE
5th Serial Run, Hornby Island

A branch of flowering cherry, lady
small tree roughbarked
& the rough skin on your arms
pointed breasts beneath the folds of your dress
the tensions
of these boring, debilitating suburbs

Poplar, some birch, fir
& thickets of alder between the new
& already rundown houses

I brought these flowers & left them
because you were not home

& by your gate golden forsythia, & the sun
breaking open the weeping willow, lady

Lady, inside the agony
of these pale pink blossoms the year
is rushing, the breeze is warm
& coils around the slender boughs

& ankles of

Gravel
& Maillardville. The church
in the rain. The Virgin
in concrete & the colorless mandala
because these thousand lovers
are poor.
                I have lost my heart
watching the rain fail
to wash the ashes from your body.
Our cheeks are wet from the world

but the city rushes on & past
heartlessly

On the 17th floor the City
is a rumble in the ears. Tonight
I have nothing but this lonely heart
wanting love & to sleep
with you before I jump

back into more of the same. Nothing
is going to get resolved nothing
but the nightglow on your body
because desire brings me back
knocking at your door. I don't even know
if the City is there, is lonely
or where the people have gone.

The Lonely Heart on the 17th floor
rumbles in my ears.

Dusky yellow moth
trembling on the windowsill
what if I touch you.

Touching your wings
is death the cold
is death the rain
beats on the yellow leaves

is death what if
I do not touch you

After Dante

keep talking. There
is the Terror of love
that it grows
in the words it feeds
to the leopards of desire.

My lips against your breasts
begin love's death
choking the words
the leopards alone desire

II

After Dante

the second life proceeds
unlike the first
tense & vigilant
against stupid bullshit
& descriptive nature. Love

your nature is
particular, mixt with
the new events
& barely invisible

III

After Dante

does Language
stop up my mouth

& warriors of the Will
battle the leopards in the streets
because each comes apart
in the middle of sentences
like lepers. Can I

ever again speak of Love's pure body
in the absense of the vast yellow blossom
of an impossibly organized world?

After Dante the streets
are the same
but I am silent & spotted
& I rage at each intersection

to gather new syntax into the voice
of that larger desire

IV

After Dante

I am not the same.
Watching you sleep 2 AM
March snowy night If only
there were nothing else to say

e.g. Kenneth Patchen's misery
not the result of privilege & abuse
of human labour & he

not also given up to
blind increase

V

After Dante

the sun again eventually gleams
on the blue sea, those pretty white patches
on the distant mountains
really are snow

& the lonely heart is none of these.

A white boat (you can see
the multiple lines dragging the water for fish

edges past the shimmering point
& into the calm waters

The poetics of Cities
must change, can
no longer be based on material resource alone
or absolute planetary wealth the earth
is finite & mortal
hence the need for new poetics
of diminution.
                I want to say
I love you to someone
or simply walk the streets with friends
but the poetics of this are caught in profit
& the complexity of technology
most of all in the minds
of those who rule the cities:
builders, moneymen, planners, hence

the streets are hostile, the abundance
lives in fear of its sheer mass.

The overpopulated species is the source of new wealth
the social the form
of the poetics

We do require meaning to subsist & we do demand
in however small a context to know
whats going on, whats our place
& who are these men w/ curious uniforms do
they protect us, & what further, beyond
questions of property & personal gain what
will make strangers want us. This

is permission for this use of
the plural, is the real resistance, this

and a wondering heart (angel wings
I saw on the beach turned out
iridescent seaweed
                is the Angelic

& the gorgeous wings brush us
when we stand in the darkening waters
of all that it is not

& we are part of

Waking up to your tears
2 AM my cock
halfhard against your back
& the hamster in the next room
turning the wheel, what

am I
to do, caught up
in these entanglements, your tears
running across my arm, divorced
from the ancient dream of romance & light
without regrets or satisfaction; it has gone
like the ordered world I knew as a child
& the justice I expected was its source.

Tonight I want to know what
did I do, do I deserve
the quiet in the city, the night
tracing routes back into
the tears I awoke to my cock
halfhard against your back &
the squeaking wheel the hamster runs
into the traffic
of personal misery.

Is the night's dark flower
the real world, my hand is half open
half fist in a dark
no longer unborn light. What

is the hamster where
is the child Why
in this losing is it you
that I fight

The Mystery of Love begins to fade
and She takes off the belt, buckler
the corset of gold. Real women
often wear coloured underwear
bought at the Bay.
Let them.
Paradise is not artificial or even elegant
& nakedness
no longer reveals us as angels
nor does it betray
the pain in each of our hearts. I demand

a love without wings.
with real roads, bridges, the records of our human deeds
piling up on the city register.
                And in the seat of Power
a compassion capable of boredom, anger
curiosity at the tangle
of flesh, trees, metal,
the landscape

we are together in

By Reason of the Beautiful
I search these streets to find her not
from the illusions caused by
the illusion of the perfectly parallel.
The streets fascinate, their solitude
is a torture. The invisible city
& this wholly visible heart
because I have come to question the Reason
of the Beautiful. Yet

you, Beloved, I do not question, do
love & do
not love finally.
I can never find her.