

Barry McKinnon / *The the.*

(for Pat Lane & Wallace Stevens)

terror in the mind. of this &
less we speak

inverted trees & the task
of poetry:

Beatrice / Helen disappear & the future, a vast
expanse of snow, cutbanks perhaps to stop
the view, the eye to take the shape of all

contours. interruptions that are themselves
a kind of death,

these questions that break our solitude.

*

what is work, but this — to know, to last
human pressure, to continue

a spin (not a dance, which is
the farthest pole of what I speak)

*

I saw myself on skis — the poem began
months ago — a line of blue where snow
breaks

from one part of the city, you'd swear
civilization has ended, & that here
we stand

amidst invisible wires, primeval —
very old & our life but an outward breath,

a long continuance of The

the.

today:

in this cold, the body moves hot. it knows
what to do. (no doubt, this part of the brain
is almost perfect with its control, as the part
which keeps balance
for the crazed

*

you must be more careful. my block
heater is missing: the car may not start, I
may not get to where I have to to — or else
accept the delays,

to speculate: not much is too important, or
worth getting to —

(*a vision of inverted*

trees

got me here

*

this delay in language — not ever to want
getting out

the *real* is different: strippers in The Canada
are ugly & bruised — better than most poetry — but not
beautiful

if you look close

(the reeling flesh speculations
robbed with each
part removed

outside:

20 min. later a boy who was sober, now
reels out the door into 20 below weather, dressed in
levis vest, T shirt, cannot walk, as I walk
off

home, in this life

it is so easy

to curl in snow, dream of Gauguin's

trees

(if you cant find a car
to steal

or

The the.

what is known, what is not
known

— an intense educational campaign
should be launched —

there is no end to meanness & misunderstanding

the impossible inverted trees

(did the boy make it

a simple flash thru
the mind, to launch a search
so fast to forget what was
sought

to say what? if we had the comfort of a real & breaking
heart,

yet enough to watch children
grow

in our impossible silence not knowing
what to say

*

god bless you

*

if we could admit: the lines are really down, the long
and lasting cedar has a point in
the wind a breaking point, its
roots sucked out
the earth

dec/77