This is the place I work

This is the workspot, the office

a pinhole light blur, tiny orifice

          a sacred office, scared and/or scarred

and/or tiny faces in the tepid arms of film.

        However, documentary only stretches so far

Turn on the work-processor. Insert the bi-mother

down “the tunnel illegals use to enter the blocked country”

an inner mist selve carried cavernous that arrays

          a complex filiated story—

tension locked with tension

          of unsorted sorts and shadowy toll.¹

Cannot complete a particular train of interrogation

        Where does the profit-taking highway go²

Everything touched is premonitory.

        The work is waiting for the work.

Given

a blank space

an imaginary page

          for “19 ways of looking...”

at “it”       why not simplify this

          what will these intricate layers achieve?

        given that the project finding itself out

is itself        a work more ruthless (restless, rootless)

        than every before.

political, economic, quotidian, shallow,

rent, obnoxious.

Of the finger pointing look

Of debris variously gathered³

        Mercury contaminated concrete that “someone”
        dumped

          they grabbed, it looked like

        fertilizer, luck for their fields.

        Painful to write and to think

          such allegory,

        whose real name is reality.

² “Can’t move ‘em with a cold thing, like economics.” Ezra Pound, Canto XIX.
³ “the great ritual/ of plenitude and enchainment.” Robin Blaser, “Image-Nation 19 (the wand.)”
Was there a guide? as to normalcy
we already know, what is this normalcy? 4

“‘reverse prepay’ (earnings capture) deal”
shell corporations
off-balance-sheet partnerships

“Uncertain rain, uncertain harvest
the near-starving left still precarious”

With profit, with profit,
even the babies
cannot crawl or suck
unscathed. The suture occurs
on the level of cell, in interiority, so that:

Everyone has now been made an orphan.

And still no damage yet
to the symbolic order?

Incentives and subsidies had successfully
been offered many industries. And...

Poetry tries impeded clarities to offer “new
social symbolism” (per Mina Loy)
as against the hegemonic joy
of war and complacent inequality.

Dream of crushed leaves
in the gutter water, sodden organic deltas and blockages.

Soldiers buried people alive

“Cannot find words
to express our outrage”

Civilians packed in a building,
set aflame
“for this crime
we should beg the souls of the dead
and their families
for forgiveness”

Pentagon cash for torture tutorials5
Air-sick world ablaze with massacres.

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4 “‘What church/ do you belong to,/ may I ask?’/… I sd, none,/ sir.” Charles Olson, “Maximus, to Gloucester, Letter 19.”
5 “If it is true we must do these things/ We must cut our throats.” George Oppen, “Of Being Numerous,” section 19.
Plus whatever’s meant by me,
joined other shivering walkers
down, the descent
into tangled corridors of strangeness.
For we travel as doubles,
some to the side, some splay:
“constellations saturated with tensions”
dialectical shadows in the darkened light
threading bemusement, disbelief
strands evanescent and heavy,
luminosity and ruin,
twisted from historical air.

Entanglement! Entanglement!
yards of line, a wild rope knotting triple crosshatch—
half shank, scrim shank, overhand loft,
snarls caught against the dry-stone walls,
broken selvedge, labyrinth.

One was taking a fourth journey
after the great three
Two took another journey
far past returning home

Walkers dazed to breathe the caved-in air
holding raggy ropes of carnage
to find the way back
or forth
it was unknown

Three got off on a cold track
not a “station stop” but elsewhere
Four hid in roots, hid in stones, hid in the unerring
pain of being in hiding
implacably what happened.

One can never look for these.
One came back to look for these.

---

6 “swim, from clarity, generative [crystal] turn/ me to this disorder, blunder myself into this field that I/
idiot am already.” Armand Schwerner, “Tablet XIX.”
7 “that/ they were there, that events had/brought them to this….” Nathaniel Mackey, “Song of the
Andoumboulou: 19.”
8 “A thread, a strand, 72 angels’ names…/ how to go on?” H.D. Sagesse, section 19.
9 “Released through bars of sorrow/ as if not a gate had opened but I/ grown intangible had passed through,
shadowy…,” Denise Levertov, Relearning the Alphabet, section “R.”
Somewhere between daisies, poppies and lead
sometimes between book and grid, bronze solidity and light
between pink grey lavender yellow white and
mackerel streaky patch flattened cumulus thunderhead and fuzz
ratios pile into a flaxen eye. 10
60 over 19 works out as circa pi.
The page squares the circle.

One lives some paradise in weedy, stumbling places.
Textures of incipience,
vibration and call.
The light strikes; we read the shine
struck like a clear bell.
Again and Again.
Struck.

Such wavering overtones as never quite resolve
but sound.
Even the rests.
The whole music shines its no and yes.

And more: even our grief shines
whether ripped cloth or hollow ring of bone.

There was no solution but continuing to want
and to go to, foraging
some claim or hope of claim
to glimpse, not see but half-see
half-turned, hope turned
not to fix this desire, but to aim.

For the book is never whole
no matter how it fills or why it makes those claims.
Restless and open, desire touches even pages
ripped and crossed out, tarred and tattered,
X-ed over and cut from,
desire stokes the pages odd,
multiplied in implication.

If the full page folds,
if another page comes loose as loss,
if corners of things rip,

10 “I could go on with this.” Gertrude Stein, Stanzas in Meditation, Part IV, section XIX (in toto).
11 “I am a shard, signifying isolation—here I am thinking aloud of my affinity for the separate fragment
taken under scrutiny. Yet that was only a coincidence.” Lyn Hejinian, My Life [section 19].
12 “‘What book?/ what book? Entire enough/ perfect enough/ to take/ the place/ of all/ the books/ and of/
the world itself….’” Louis Zukofsky, “A-19.”
if tuckered margins
flicker while lines cast off, cast forth
bleed and tear into estranged notation,
If all this—
   there is still unfinished syntax,
the clause to come:
   Then What?¹³

   Blunt baffled continuous wonder
   that speaks in (and for) the convergence of quirks
to produce “of moving masses whose shape
   is unnamable”
statement, counter-statement, and huge sections
that don’t settle anywhere,
errant, nomadic, intricate.
A Gesamtnichtswerk.

Imperfectly fluent, crushed, and then implacably thrown.

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¹³ “Then even to have/ been a witness becomes a summary of the/ event.” Barrett Watten, Conduit, XIX.