

HANDWRITTEN QUESTIONS

Gregory Markee

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protoHouse . prity lights
Madison

Did you find the germ
did you find the engine

did you catch the son of a bitch

name it
tag it
release it

have you wandered aimlessly
recently
eaten blackberries from the bush
recently

what do you cause
were you just wondering

what is it you think
of movie stars

are you anonymous

is the sun out today
have you read the book
have you written the book

do you dance

did you find the germ
did you find the little tumor
on page one hundred
next to the poem about squalor

who gave you the most
who gave you philosophy
who gave you the word solipsism

all of the hospitals in a row
with chimneys and picket fences
dogs

something about respiration and marriage
poems for coupling the uncoupled

did you impeach the president
like I did

did you give up your favorite color
for sociopolitical reasons
like I did

how old are you
I will keep my hat size personal

what do I need to know
to exercise freedom
what is it
needs be forgotten
have you mourned
have you ever stayed longer than your invitation
have you ever given
a bouquet of flowers red yellow
to a black and white soul

is this urgent

the quiet in the library is not the quiet in the church
elaborate
outdoors in the morning june
before sunrise
is not january's time I trust

decay

did you anchor the boat
did you suffer the boat

remember the directions
forget the directions on purpose
elevated a park by calling it nature

decay

is my condition
hold it near to fantasy the voyeur
will you tell me your appearance
or shall I know it liminally

the heart shaped box set aside
conditionally

the exploitation
of music
the exploitation of poems
will you make it
alright all right
hold my hand
when it gets dark quiet
when there are no words

to listen to reason said over and again
open the door
open the door and
having listened to reason will you
listen to a stranger
now

make little lines of progress
fashioned of mutualism

how are you
fine thank you
did you hear the news about the meteor
no
I saw it myself
it was covered in ticks
hairy alien ticks
thinking ticks I am sure
strategizing ticks I am sure
climb in your eyes like sex

how is your habitat
fine thank you
is it still religious
I am taking a break right now
just trees
and squirrels the nondenominational squirrels
always faithful
no
it is not depression it is just
I am taking a break right now

the upended order of the universe
is a traveling earth
it has not always been that way

I was once the middle
then someone called and said no
you
are in astronomical dependence to
the sun

whorl about at ease

believe one's station is not their own
unless one's station is their own
requires a humbled disregard for
some facts some truths
including but not limited to
the circularity of earth
but
the alienation of the neighbor
you borrow the mower from is
possible

self reliance
is a moment without language
judgment is my own
I am not hungry
I am covered

tomorrow is different
I remember vocation
people will ask me questions
and listen

to spite certainty
I will learn something
by answering

self reliance
the adaptations of self reliance
the measures of self reliance
are the confounds the social confounds
autonomy
has never mentioned autonomy

WE ARE ALMOST FIFTY
HAVE WE MOVED ANYTHING
RATHER
I AM ALMOST FIFTY
HAVE I MOVED ANYTHING

HAVE YOU WRITTEN THAT BOOK YET

THAT IS ALL

ABOUT CAMPING FOR A WEEK
REGULAR CAMPING
WITH THE TEMPORARY NEIGHBORS
THE SHOWERS

DO NOT TELL THEM YOU SKINNY DIPPED
THIS MORNING
JUST BEFORE SUNRISE
JUST BEFORE THE COLEMAN STOVE
HEATED THE WATER FOR COFFEE
AND OATMEAL

AND THEN

THAT WHICH STARTS A QUESTION IS
A QUESTION IN ITSELF

OLD NEWS IS
ANTHROPOLOGICAL
I JUST KEEP NODDING

NEW NEWS IS
TEMPORAL
CURIOUS
SMELLS LIKE PRINT

TAKE ONE WITH BREAKFAST
TAKE ONE AT BEDTIME

SUPPORT A LOCAL CHARITY

DECIDE
WHAT [IT] MEANS TO ME

OBJECT LESSONS

THE TREE

THE ETYMOLOGY OF THE WORD TREE

THE AGGREGATE

CEMENT

THE CONGREGATE

CEMENT

A LONG LINE FORMED TO WATCH

THE PROFESSIONAL SURGEON

THE PROFESSIONAL PRIEST

THE PROFESSIONAL GOLFER

THERE EXISTS AN AUDIO RECORDING

ISOLATE

THE SOUND OF THE BIRD

THE PROFESSIONAL TEACHER

THE PROFESSIONAL SKATEBOARDER

THE PROFESSIONAL SIGNATORY

CAME TO A CONCLUSION

WHAT IS IT
I DO NOT KNOW BUT IT GETS BETTER
AND BETTER
TURNED ME FROM A SPECTATOR
TO CONCERNED CITIZEN
TO ACTIVIST

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY
THE REACH OF ONE'S PERSONA
IS THE CULTED ENDS OF EDUCATION

BUT I AM
NEARLY FIFTY AND LONG SINCE UNSCHOOLED
CARRIED A GERM OR TWO
THE PARKING WAS SO DAMN EXPENSIVE
WHAT DO YOU DO

TAKE A BATH
EAT OREOS
HAVE A FACIAL
[THEN]

WHAT IS A HUMMINGBIRD FEEDER
WITH NO HUMMINGBIRDS [intentions]

RED

THE BLACK AND WHITE NEWSPRINT [intentions]

READ

HOMOGRAM

IT WAS A STORY OF DEATH DECAY
AND LIFE COMES OF IT

BUT A MUSHROOM IS NOT ALIVE
NOR THE DOORMAN
NOT REALLY
NAME ALL OF THE DEAD THINGS
YOU CAN THINK OF

YES STILL WORKING STILL WORKING

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN ON A JOURNEY

AND NEVER TOLD ANYONE

SIC

COMBUSTIBLE FORMS PREDATE

CONSCIOUSNESS

THE FIRE BURNED THE FOREST

UP TO TREELINE

THERE ARE LITTLE WHITE FLOWERS

AND BEES

ABOVE TREELINE BUT NOT ALL THE WAY UP

THE ROCKY COAST

I COULD SIT THERE FOR HOURS

WHAT IS SIMPLE
LONG ENOUGH TO CRAVE
THE COMPLEX THE HEAT OF THE COMPLEX
ONE LAST TIME
AND NEVER AGAIN

IS THE RELIABILITIES OF NATURE
IS THE INSTITUTION OF NATURE
BEHELD
AND WONDERING WERE I SO TRUE

I APPRECIATE MYSELF DIFFERENTLY
THAN A SEASON
I AM
NO DIFFERENT
THAN A CONCERTED THOUGHT

WHICH SOCKS ARE YOU WEARING TODAY
TELL ME
WITHOUT LOOKING DOWN
ARE THEY NATURAL OR SYNTHETIC FIBER

WERE
THE BREVITY OF ZEN
A LINGERED MOMENT
I TRUST
YOU WILL BE THE SAME WHEN I WAKE
AFTER A PEANUT BUTTER AND STRAWBERRY JAM SANDWICH
AND A GLASS OF MILK
I WILL PUT
A FIRE IN THE FIREPLACE
WITH LITTLE TO INSIST

WHAT IS CAPTURED
REALIZING IT IS CAPTURED
IS NUCLEAR
IS PUSHING PUNCHING AT A MEMBRANE
CALLED SUBVERSE AND LOWER THAN
VERSE
EXPLAINING SUBMISSION
AS A CLARITY OF TERMS
AS A CLARITY OF CONTAINMENT
AS A CLARITY OF LUST
[RAGE] [BOUNCING RAGE] INTERIOR

[WR]
SWEETWATER SURREAL
I FOUND A UNICORN WITH A MANE
OF LIGHTNING
PUT IT IN A LEATHER POUCH
TURN UP THE VOLUME LISTEN
THE SOUND OF A CIGARETTE
THOSE PLANES ARE EVERYWHERE BITING
THE FERNS
WILLOW FALLS GRAVITY SWEETWATER
WADE
IS COMMON IS OFFICIAL IS POPULATED
IS PAVED
I WAS THE FIRST TO MARK IT
THIS MORNING NOT REALLY
BIRDS FLOAT
PIZZAS FLOAT I FLOAT I AM
AN ENVIRONMENTALIST
GATHERING UNICORN SAMPLES
WAS A RAINBOW WITHOUT RAIN THIS MORNING
WAIT WAIT
ARE THEY NOT COMING

WERE ONE TO STUDY LETTERS
SEQUENTIALLY
THE SHAPE OF LETTERS
ONE AFTER ANOTHER
DIALOGUE
JUST BECAUSE THE ESTABLISHMENT
OF MEANING
DOES NOT MAKE IT TRUE
MAYBE RIGHTEOUS BUT NOT NECESSARILY
TRUE

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxy

were one to study numbers
acknowledge
one truth is not the ends of numerical truth
but what is established
heretofor

were one to study music
I cannot say
poetry and the varieties of poetry

what is a hospital
what is a place of employment

the churchbells

one two

one two

one two

six total

it was two fifty pm

I was the only one there

it might have been one fifty

on the trainability of genius

were genius desirable

environmental education has nothing

to do with the environment

but an externality of authority

maybe falling in love is following in love

grace the

make room for the tempers

the baseless and that with base
the fruited
the colored the lessoned the cultivated
o poet
what is a darned weather
what is a darned night
o listen quietly
do not be seen
[they slowly creep]
to and away again and again
it is the dead are present
making [they]
are building a lake a dammed lake
all of this will be underwater
sunken and with fish
with dead grass beneath

slowly I die but when

the radiant the formative the redundant
time is but a mirror
held [to one's chest]

stationary cause is no cause
but memory is cause
attaches itself to my history
the column
with tobacco leaves
I lean against
making the weather

what were you saying
about the dandelions
rubbed on one's chin
the gentle air just air enough to say air

what were you saying
something rhetorical
me too

me too

I wonder []
never mind

the tractor
took both westbound lanes of the highway
moved over a bit
to straddle the left line to pass
I drove right by the casino
kept driving two hundred eighty miles
turned around came back

a passive existence does not include
art
what

action policy
the creation of tautological systems
recreation
stage this stage that

early in the day before the sun
no
time does not stand still
nor its derivatives are quiet

the shape of honesty
the shape of laughter
the shape of heresy
the shape of kindness
the shape of winter
the shape of collusion

but your voice I can no longer hear your voice

I defer

[silence] [and the zombies of silence]

[with typewriters]

[all in a row]

[the silent typewriters]

[plagiarizing the seasons]

[plagiarizing the stars]

deep beneath the ocean

she wept

authentically

and with no strategy

but wait

placid
sky the color of its reflection
nothing moves passion
this
herald
the news today is a crossword puzzle
the ambiance of lesser wars
lesser struggles
regular injustice
the food section
the material inserts where to shop
the thought of recycling
the recycled thought of recycling
been north and going there to stay
this time for good
would you be wildered
what would you ask of security in what voice
the allowable temptations are
no more reluctant than what is not tempting
I have no law for you
nor am I watching you
I have no law for you

how long do I have to wait
but I am not waiting
I am listening
to Walt Whitman's nature
to Bob Dylan's being
to Walt Whitman's self
to Bob Dylan's self
to Walt Whitman's country
o standard
I despise you for my limits
who is it says poetry is complete
but one with a drum
are you not the same
agent

how long do I have to wait
the electrician said he would be here an hour ago

how long do I have to wait
until sunrise

until I have no more questions

I like you
do you like me
check the box

and then they were all gone
having said all they could think of
[witness]
but it is not standard
what is not said
but believed

and were courage their silence
and were courage their dismiss
and were courage their entropy

the mushroom grew and grew
the size of a house
overnight
with a door
and windows
with a maiden

what does collapse
fall into itself becoming
too small to be reckoned
[but it is still there]
[and holding everything but size]
[especially philosophy]
[without reference]

darn

how does what I do
have anything to do with what you do
especially considering your criticism
of it
is
the world large enough
there is some land for sale
on the mississippi
one side or the other

you go first

the ruler
expanded upon a sympathies to reason
but was still twelve inches

cast out the fishing line
interpreting
fish

the ruler whistled as if
there were no responsibilities to sunday
just checking

one by one
the ants crept up his pant leg
red ants the little fiery kind

the ruler
measured freedom okay
that is far enough

no
religion is not arbitrary
she said as she vacuumed
I could barely hear her
[what]

that changes everything
the way
a dog puts itself to sleep
by fasting

that changes everything
there is no boss
to ask for an entitlements
no performance reviews
the meritocracy
started in junior high
shoveling neighbor's snow
selling flower seeds door to door

[distress]

did the thunder roll in
before or after the thought of thunder

it was before
but after a morning's ruminations

never mind

dark sky
still the birds now quiet

o the smell
and here the rain the troubled rain
now
collapse

it is an old storm I remember
this one
comes and goes returns

thunder

the library book about libraries
the reformed architect
enough is enough
hold me into your chest until
I disappear
the apparatus fitted the aged citizen
for contact with youth
remarkably the zombie bled
purple ooze agreeably purple ooze

on occasion
change is a matter of dissent
listen
change is a matter of dissent
but there is no change and can be no change
just a character of change

did you hear

did you act like you heard
ignorance

is it an old philosopher
forgets foundations

it is my problem memory
no
it is not a medical condition
just
one truth refutes another
one curiosity holds me oppositionally
because
if one [thing] were true another cannot be

but truth
truth does not exist like change does not exist
just a matter of character of
truth and change
without them actually
being

what is a social construct
where are you taking me

to mention all of the principles
like a list
start from the top
and a second list for what is excluded
were value so tidy
were ethics the same as morality
she said

the origin of force[s]
is its appropriation

steady the wind with a wall
how else to light a civil cigarette

the door ajar
the foreign room
who to ask when one is alone
deciding
the reciprocity of intentions
may or may not be
a separation of oneself

philosophy swallowed my dog
it is just a matter of time

because of my expired membership

decay
unto a natural state
a headstone is presumed to last
ten thousand years
but it will start tilting on the soil
at one hundred years
at two hundred years the words
are barely legible
eight generations of family
unto a natural state
but it is not decay it is
the process of naturalization
renaturalization if need be said

I am going to kwik trip now
for a slushee
would you like one

did the great museum contain
the not so great museum

what is effortless what is driftless
what is boundless
what smells good
what is it makes me salivate
what is courage what is despair
what is loss

what do you think about if I say

nothing

I will tell you my hermeneutics
if you tell me yours

something about disaster preparedness
and saving the world
from our parents

that and getting lucky

all of the books were lined in a row
alphabetically
except for nonfiction
the categorical confusions of
 philosophy
 education
 sociology
 anthropology
Dewey not that Dewey
not that one either Dewey Dewey Dewey

the research library
open nine to five
gone fiche-ing in the basement
the stacks on wheels with motors upstairs
the lights that buzz

the bunch of books bound by a belt

o yeah

[research]

the philosopher continued the endless philibuster
[endless]
the gendered philosopher
and me with no password
for question

but you are not my audience
were I to have an audience
but you are not my audience

the hollywood symbols continue
and the avenue of the americas
and the aggregated museums
reinforce

but it is a little room is it not
for an idea
for a person to die with an idea
listening for contradictions
in the interest of adjustments
in the interest of a closer perfection
[a closer perfection]

how
the philosopher
turned to the education of philosophy
became a comedian
became a good natured priest
favoring single malt whiskey to beer
alas
nor longer call the introductions
of aesthetic forms genius
for their attentive characters
be
and then it comes
the rightfulness of knowing
the rightfulness of understanding
time and again
she wrote left to right
one poem and then another and then she died
like I
when the substance of philosophy
turns to politics
what is one to do
o

but for the spectacle of politics
I do wearily say
goodness in a regard
nor am I quiet necessarily
when presented with quiet
yes
I vote with reason attached
and say that I vote with reason attached

what is your reason
no
that was yesterday

today I am traveling to yellowstone
you see
there are protected areas
where nature is original
except for the invasive mustard plants
one day
I put my feet in the water near a waterfall
you see

which congress were you referring to
sex or representative government

there is a long line of candidates
numbered
one to twenty three
saying goodness in government
because
something
may or may not be moral
may or may not be legal
mental note
do not tell me why I should not vote for someone
inspire me
cause me reinforce me

are you not your own reference now
your own subject resembling

is it not my own voice I struggle for
without using the word struggle
maybe not always

convince me I have nothing more to say

how is it said the stars come

again

for never having left

the same words

was a vagabond at my door wearing my clothes (B. Dylan)

what it is the stationary follows

is a question

[put the lantern on the tree branch]

[shut down astronomy]

[while we eat]

[is a question]

the spider on the wall because
I leave the back door open

the habitat of man
with corners and refrigeration
admiring nature and the colors of nature
black and concealed
and to be frozen and without ambition
in your interest

but for gold ink
and the impurities in pure gold
and the trace of gold within
impurity

but for the cold day in summer
was no rain that day
did I not close the door
without saying anything about
spiders
or being willfully thankful for
doors

about average

and whether average should be exhausted
the story of average tells itself
in species survival
were one to consider in such ardent terms
the others received a's
crossed lines
told different poems

the thing about leadership
requires direction
some attention to time

populism is a social bath
everything is claimed
to reference an exterior
I am quite content nor I am quite content
concealing
the privacies of being
when they are better than yours

and were it enough to be adequate
were adequacy to judge oneself
say comfort in the restoration of oneself
by way of the means of contentedness
with answers for loss
and becoming

it is difficult not to judge not to favor
among one's own trust

what is a social construct
where are you taking me

the ascendants are watching
for what is new is old again
do they not return to sleep after
their questions
are formed nor necessarily answered

the plastic flowers
that is all
and a couple of words that is all

wind in the trees
I like that sound

have you ever shared eye contact
with a deaf person

so
are we born average

so
are we born carnal

so
are we born original

a questions are perspective
and I cannot assume another
exactly
but shown in voluntary transfers
how
and circumstance

taking a day off

over the miles

handwritten

spatial reasoning and the archaeology of paradigms

the canoe

seaweed

sand with clumpy grass

pedal a bicycle

go for a drive

honesty and patience

coke out of a glass bottle

can an old poet sleep inside of themself
what of love
did the spacious sky pass with my knowing
and what of night
the aphrodisiac
can you steal me from my pen
what is a dare
was it your imagination or mine
can you spell it
did the gold in your gold ink settle
to the bottom of the jar too
I have never
disapproved of hospital food
sometimes I go to the cafeteria to check in
would you like a wafer they are wafer thin
enamoration
arrows
headbangers
white legs
sunspots
strong moral character
apply within

what is it
I like your variety better
the accord stayed without knowing accord
the dissonant
the timely
the elevated
was it pushed me into the dream
number nine
elephants and trust
the modern stations
resonance and the idea of poetry
the foreteller's songbook
diction and degradation and reconstitution
hindsight and the practice of policy
is it six months winter begins
the dormant
reeds
then
the lily pads frozen upon then
but now is now and differently
explained

stood among the grass the wildflowers
little creatures
habitat
bees and butterflies and bunnies
collateral
is there an agency to the self
was a minded words forward and fro
the position of the juxtaposed
relative to origin[s]
is memory decanted

fieldstone

the charged superhero the bored superhero
what calling
to the archivist in sneakers
it is a big big room
with cement walls and time
situated like the arbitrary is situated
with
a mail box

what is quieter than a seed germinating
I do not know
who has been here longer than another
who is the eldest witch among us
carrying a bouquet
friendly enough to say friendly
is it still the surface of our imagination
watching the cows
called nature
pastoral
one and another climbing into efficiency
with dates and figs
declaring independences and redemptions
about the way
time and again
looking over at the person next to me
unnecessarily
because
NPR is unenlightened today and
I have nothing to say but
distraction

the paused ritual for the phone ringing
hello this is God
I really should take this call

was a better summer to let the grass grow
like a municipal beard
just
the mosquitoes

one after another

the chimneys
caused electricity

the tacit
is quieter than a seed germinating

birds on a telephone wire
supposing me I suppose
the day ends as it begins but
turned the other direction

o holy day
as the others some forgotten
for being common
and were regret a question of free will
no and yes
I am still young and becoming
the last before and before that
making neutrons into [things]

the glazed features of autonomy
in which death is exterior
and near but inward
the heartbeats
tympanum carrying oneself

a cross

held about by a fine silk thread
was not a wall
nor a backstop
nor leather
nor recognizable will of another

what is a demon
and do they keep themselves
from end to end the unedited
book
the draft the wind
entered wednesday
do you mind
the urgent matters of suffocation
for a silo grain burial
insist
nor loss so easily catalogued
as a frame of attention having been
and I cannot tell you to listen
to what I do not know
but for its rhythm
but for its rhythm remains
at least one question
and maybe another
[bracket] is a question generative
[bracket] but first let me answer

[bracket] whether an answer is more generative

the mimicries the reproductions
of want
for one's own
institution
but for verse fixed upon its completion
nor you nor I are abled in change
but proven
 it was velvet something about velvet
 [I have nothing for you]
 [slap]
 I will never look at velvet the same
ten seminarians ten manifests
but that is history's account
but that is only reason
limoncello
and the clarity of stained glass
the thought of a cedar flute
but only the thought
and a dirt road
returning home to where I last remembered
like habit

the coffee grinder
was not wrapped in age
but temper
old brass
custom

the tent
stopped the rain but for the sound
I cannot resist
sleep
among
and in the morning the two deer
with long faces and
without fear

the mechanical pencil
the mechanical paper
the mechanical poem
the mechanical sentiment
the mechanical loss
the mechanical word
the mechanical song

how many is that
twenty two
last suppers
yeah
I lose count
did your watch stop again
uh huh
have you decided
decided what
whether it is a gift or a consolation prize
still thinking
sleepy
I think so
what is the latest iteration
consistent with yesterday

red bird
where is your mate
making single chirps
the brown feminine the crown
cardinal

immoral illegal
sorry beyond my limits
go see a priest
good clean fun
existence
here and there attached to memory
emotions and the impeachment of emotions
were there one irony
implicit to the isolationism
associated with solitaire
o
you changed your hair
no discount thanks
I wish to pay full price
hang it on my wall
the wonder[s] of absolution
the grocery store
the farmer's market
did they [all] get a blank journal
without instructions or
just me

o source of winter source of river
too you push up mountains
give the oceans a place to [stay]
and life
I do not invite you
for your presence already
I do not invite you
but stay
and in the great hereafter when
you are taken back
then
o stars o night of stars
you are only delicate to me
saying
saying
like the she unafraid and near [why I mention fear]
you are to me
 jump once
 jump two
 jump three
 jump four
 five (Harjo)

[service]

contact
and the estrangements of contact
the varietal nodes of geographic existence
trucking
pilots and engineers
took a picture of a quiet place
now it is ruined
like a dead giraffe sported
ecology is no call to an inward homeyness
nor homelessness
the ecologics of return is balance
mention sustainability
theater
nor conquerable but potenced for waste and
nature's reclamation
[such is a social judgment]
[such is a proprietary social judgment]
nature is always
and in an observable form
am I so fortunate
were I so fortunate

and to live among
so commonly [that]
a social conditions turn to one another
eating
one another and
causing art

Mondrian's and Rothko's borders
the tattoo
the parfum
the ham sandwich
the lucky strikes
the sacred
the profane
the lucky
but fortune is not luck except

and the moon settled into the sea
with the fish
and the thoughts of the fish
and the whales
eating plastic

apologies
I am only bewildered
soon to become just perplexed
eventual to coalesce as a question
then patience wait

meantime
the strata of art
in between
huh uh
priorities

the desk
the bewildered desk
exhales
the tempers

art is not a word
not really
it is a lingual placeholder
for something other
and something other than that

the administrationists
the expressionists
the impressionists
the conjuring divinists
the protagonists
the appropriationists
the categoricalists
the mudhens
the peahens
the aesthesiologists
the grandparents
night
the sojournists
the physicists
the matron
the casualists
the classicists
the turtle
the kitchen
the abbreviationist [silence]
[open] [dot to dot]
the comparativist

the imperialist
the naturist
the count counting
the varietalists
the experientialists
the domestic the character
the poet and something other than the poet
ink
the watchtower the clocktower
all along
the instrumentalist
what it is comes to mind is not always true
the axiologist
the ontologist the ontological posture
the defamationists
the troubled minus the troubled subtraction
the androgynists
the players the numbered players
intramural colloquia with round balls
the mesoamerican ball court
the flat earth for sight but
for the astronomers

explain language
explain dreams
explain time explain redundance
explain coincidence
explain distance
explain divinity
explain the sunday comics
explain color
explain the artist
explain trust
explain education explain higher education
explain numbers
explain deception
explain order
explain context
explain money
explain fear
explain pathology
explain exploitation
explain beauty
explain metamorphosis explain the butterfly
explain the impressionist

