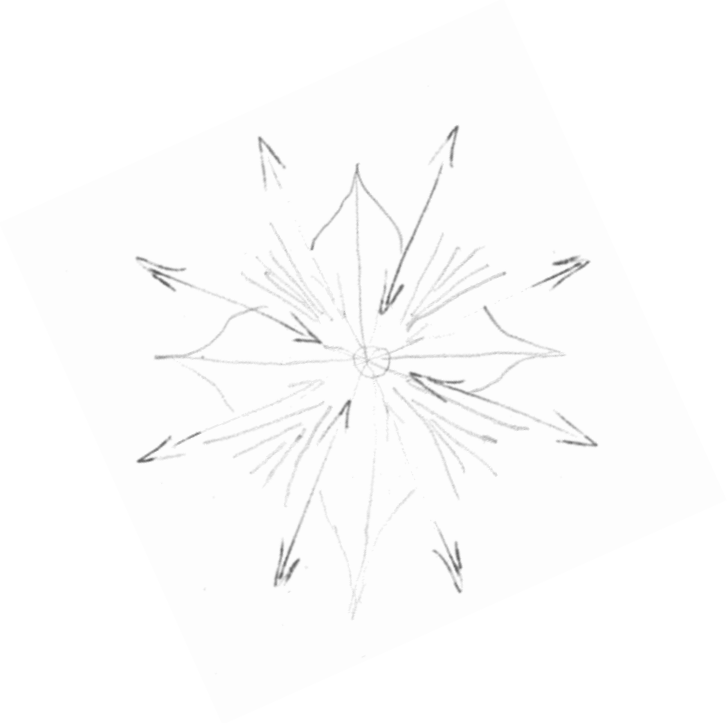
Centered On Summer

Dimensionalities, Transport/Exchange,
& It's Already Started!

Notes from inside the field, 2026



Robert Celedon-Scott

Centered On Summer. Notes from inside the field, 2026

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I. Dimensionalities

1. Differential (v3)

with a reflection from B; July 12, 2026

"Look up ahead!" I tell the kids. "See how everything's in the rain up ahead of us?" I point out, driving.

Then B tells us about a time when it was pouring out front of her home—but clear, with the sun shining in the backyard. The girl racing back and forth between windows had no one else there to share it with.

2. Lose Your Shirt (v2)

my thrift store entrance; July 13, 2026

After retracing my steps from the parking lot where I spent my lunch break skateboarding, I zip up my jacket in the doorway of the Thrifty Quaker.

Apparently not noticing anything unusual, the shopkeeper greets me. *"Hello!* Everything here's on sale today except shirts."

"Are you kidding?" I laugh.

But she didn't overhear. I just told another customer I lost mine.

3. How Deep It Goes (v2)
shoveling our tree fort post hole dirt; June 28, 2026

We cannot know
how much we have in common

(raking, shoveling alone, this Sunday midday)

until we know *what we are inside ourselves.*

4. *Shhh…*
don't mention the girls coming over; July 12, 2026

We're pulling up to the house
when from the passenger seat your glance interrupts me
(I getcha.)
: '*Don't make our daughter excited for what might not come.'*

One unintentionally played note
from outside the mode
reveals the arrangement's limits.

5. We're Sharing the Recliner

last October. You're accepting my life is something special, out of precarity, I'm putting in the work, you can let go of your concerns about your son's wellbeing; July 13, 2026

I remember telling you, mama, *I am just getting started*
gathering confidence that things will come together
better
than we could yet imagine.

Then the upward shift's gone rapid—
into presence; in just nine months
almost unreal

After a point, it seems nonsensical to keep asking
"How could I possibly believe in this?"

Instead, acknowledge
if it works.

6. I Catch Myself

at the end of lunch break, looking at the clothing rack on the Bon Air strip-mall sidewalk; July 7, 2026

I catch myself in instant fantasy.
How that small dress would look on you!

It's a choice to dwell
more within or without our correspondence,
shared sense.

Isn't so much of attraction

the tending of attention

7. Banging on the Keys (v2)

a Thrifty Quaker conversation; July 13, 2026

I'm talking with a stranger while trying on T-shirts.
She tells me she means to give her attention
to chewing and tasting each bite before swallowing.

Well, at home,
when my kids and their friends bang on our piano, I say:

"You *can* do that if you'd like—
as long as you're listening to how it sounds."

8. Range of Motion (What Capacity)

thinking aloud on Stephanie's dog walk; July 10, 2026

I think hurt is largely anticipatory…
before we're sure

whether the water's too hot
or the thorn will drive into our foot

the mind exclaims, anticipates
harm would exceed some capacity.

isn't a panic attack
(recursing) fear

that feeling will swell
to exceed *what* capacity?

9. Drawing In

my early morning envisioning at the Brightpoint Community College training session; July 13, 2026

Any job,
any relationship,
any circumstance

even teaching in a windowless, cinderblock room in the juvenile prison—
if I can remember to ‘pop up’ some levels,
to draw into my conscious experience
the world beyond the classroom walls,

outside the building—
my swaying trees at the edge of the parking lot…
the *future* extending beyond my own lifespan—

while nothing in the classroom visibly changes,
I now hold the difficulties within a larger landscape.

Everything assumes new proportion,
and the swirling, hazy feeling in the mind, in my vision
rapidly dissipates into clarity.

I am discovering, demonstrating—it’s
the consciousness-container that ensures

no circumstance overfills the landscape.

10. What's Missing

walking through Coalfield Station Antiques; July 13, 2026

I wasn't sure what I was missing…
till I spotted the same round tin Chinese Checkers
in a wooden antique mall bin.

Holding the pocked marbles in my hand
—the pale greens, mustard yellows

I used to play
with you and your mama

…that I could call you now.

11. Preceding, Proceeding
observing my Jungian artmaking in Ms. Lloyd's classroom; July 1, 2026

To the merest suggestion,
instinctively, I commit.

Concoct ad hoc methods
to amplify, ornament.

With care, with a sense
of stewardship.

Wanting not to see essences
damaged, or lost,

my creative action, *less free*
for fear of degrading.

12. Coordinations

at the Material Room for a performance by Gen Ken Montgomery and The Enchantress of Bioluminosity; May 15, 2025

wanted to believe the sound was not its source.

to see two aspects corresponding, entangled.

Let two elements diverge
and coalesce
just enough
to see their correspondence as but one option—artistry.

What else
should I have expected? (The invitation's no accident)
Flock together.
But there's no one here to save me
nor to be my complete witness, just passing through—*hello!*

So, let's let some two things—say, pitches, two vibrations—come into coordination.

…but not so instant we don't hear, we don't *feel* it.

Aren't the best the things
which cannot adequately re-transmit, translate,
which escape the bounds of a rational medium

And much the validity, power of experience depends
on whether arriving believer
or skeptic.

How unexpected others hang well enough with such an off-scripter
who resists, is repelled by, his own first impulse
—not out of distrust—
but by my desire to integrate more.

of others, of experience, that surround
when not hearing my own thoughts too loud.

Now, a passerby smiles in a tennis skirt;
in one-notch-above-homeless shirt, I am pleased to be received *and* free.

I can wind conflicted
into discrete detailings,
crackling
brittles.

OOR… move more into fatty fibrous tissue.

I opt now to be led back into the immersion inside

rather than stand out,
still
busily observing —

13. Making a Stop Near Home

after a day at summer camp; July 15, 2026

I don't understand why everything has to be unfriendly tonight, I tell my argumentative eight-year-old.
Today I had a good training session at work, started writing some colorful stories, skateboarded on my lunch break. Got a call back about an opportunity, met some nice folks at the store…

"For *balance,*" he interrupts, "like you always say."

14. Years After, at Robinson Market

where Auggie has just tracked down a purple Propel to share with Violet; and I'm looking around, not knowing what to get for the two of us that isn't booze. Or only: something for you?; July 14, 2026

Remember when you and I met
how you could be dismayed
times I'd pick out treats for everyone but myself, not knowing what I would even choose…

When I put myself last, it's not a virtue.

It's unrelatable,
acting selfless.

15. In Nelson, Imagining
across a great field; June 8, 2026

In Nelson County, I'm imagining
what it would be

to be sharing the night here
with you, Aug.

A young boy's face
catches my attention as he circles back
again and again, on the low-intensity roller-coaster…

What if
this was your enjoyment.

Meanwhile,

you're nearly back to Richmond from the beach.

16. Wallen's Got Better
at the flying swings; June 8, 2026

Wallen's *Got Better*
dream-drive-hurtin' *I'm On Fire* vibes

swirl out from the carnival ride
operator's little color-pulsing speaker,
on the base, at the center of the flying swings.

Twenty at a time, Nelson teens
don't wait for a stop—
once the spin is low, unlatch the bar and jump off.

Released from the line, our three girlfriends fly,
dressed all in white tonight,
and for two full songs spin above our heads.

To leave the rest of us behind, the first races.
One
reaches both forward, and back,
for a familiar hand
to hang onto her littlestness.

The last one feels us below, enough to let go—no other support needed.

Am I
alone here missing my son?
I wrap my arm around your side. And you rest your head on my shoulder.

Belonging,
no optional thing.

He should be with
who'd be thrilled to choose him.
Now, young Maddox Batson sings

17. You Can't Keep It All

construction paper snake; January 8, 2026

Can't keep it all, Aug—you can't! The dresser in your room's got to be tidied.
And among other things,
I've just thrown away
the basic construction paper snake you made.

But seeing it in the kitchen trash, in your absence,
I can also see the earnest face,
concentration in the classroom—second grade.

You wouldn't notice or miss these things,
but I ask over dinner at the Inn
and Vy clarifies—
Each treasure she hoards functions as a portal
: pinecone, stone, exoskeleton, plastic debris

access,
an entry
to memory
…a place, a day, what came before
and after
the thing's creation or discovery.

And the yellow sliver of construction paper with a tongue was
'August's favorite thing that day.'
Cupping her mouth onto the shoulder
of B's grey eight-year-old nursing-cropped sweatshirt—close enough to be
out of her mom's view—she lets one tear go with no explanation;
saying only
her feeling *'might hurt'* us, and cannot tell it.

Back at the house, I retrieve and smooth it out
to dangle from the edge of your higher shelf.

18. Why I Want
integrity; July 16, 2026

Why I want integrity is not because it is moral.

Without it, things are certain to fall apart.

19. Walking Back into Knox Hall

after sharing a patio table with Dr. Hudson; July 17, 2026

The end of lunch break, at convocation

I'm looking across the room at this coworker I barely know, and wondering why I want to hug them.

Then, a couple coworkers I enjoy sharing vulnerably with

then, one
I've never seen before this morning

I look up.

Our big countdown timer still says: *10 minutes 7 seconds*

Oh! —it's paused.

And that feeling is my love

20. TMI

jotted atop the geometric boulder; July 18, 2026

What makes the *T* in TMI
is not exposure.

It is the presumption

that another should bear
an undue burden.

21. Overhearing

in the Monday morning Bon Air line; August 3, 2026

“Do you know anything about anything?”

“I know everything.”

“Well, when you do see it,”
(It is the new Spider-Man movie?)

“let me know. There’s something I want to talk to you about.”

22. Switching States

the body; August 3, 2026

I lie awake, switching states—

body aware; phantom-body tingling.

How incredible it is! that all these parts (which I consider to be *my body)*
are working together
so I may have this.

How much gratitude for this span

—this inhabitation of experience

23. Even When

I am separate; August 3, 2026

At the top of my catalog of recollected voices,
perhaps yours has tended so imploring, so cutting,

to ensure I can't forget,

even when I'm separate

from you,
from my day,
from my body.

24. Walking Toward the Trees
beyond my preferred parking area; August 3, 2026

The texture
The massing
The motion subtleties
The gradations
The variegation
Recurrence
in the shapes of leaves

The feathering
The fanning
Richnesses in the range of greens

25. How Remarkable It Is
my parents' power; August 4, 2026

that my parents used the power that they had,
their *'in',*
to tie me into consciousness.

The embryo grows
differentiated
and complex

undergoes a narrowing of experience,
a winnowing of the senses
to fit a form.

—Another novel perspective
born to feed the master collection.

26. Spaciousness Is a Balm

after emailing my apology; August 6, 2026

I am grateful.

And you have given me a new focusing
for sensing

how *activity,*
brimmingness—

these are not what connects,
what's needed.

27. This Isn’t Your Table

on the Stella’s Grocery patio; August 6, 2026

Parents are perhaps too tired… to demand you pick up the ice cream sandwich from the table when you bite it. But *would you* enjoy your experience more for that effort

28. I Edit

we do; August 11, 2026

I edit when sharp,
bright, quick-minded

I edit when dull, tired, and groggy.
And when spacey

When clear,
when empty

until, eventually,
all my *‘mes’* agree:

This one is a keeper

Centered On Summer. *Notes from inside the field, 2026*

I. Dimensionalities, *July 12-August 11, 2026* *4-24*

II. Transport/Exchange, *August 15-September 14, 2026* *26-44*

1. Vy's Confused Quip. *on the way to Fort Monroe* *26*
2. No One Is Going to Dislike Me. *voicing* *26b*
3. How To See the True Shape of the Shoreline. *meditation* *27/28*
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III. It's Already Started!, *September 17-October 16, 2026* *46-70*

II. Transport/Exchange.

1. Vy's Confused Quip

on the way to the beach at Fort Monroe; August 15, 2026

"It's humid, right!?
Or, maybe it's just me…"
[…being naturally oily]

With no hesitation she replies,

"Sorry—you're not special. Everyone else is just like you.
…Except for me."

2. No One Is Going to Dislike Me

voicing; August 15, 2026

No one's going to dislike me for occasionally stating clearly:
I don't wanna go there. Or: *I don't want to do that today.*

But dragging my feet
to try and get my way… or hoping
to covertly deflate
their preferred way a little…

that they will grow to resent.

3. How To See the True Shape of the Shoreline

resolutions [meditation transcription]; February 24, 2026

[72 minutes in]

I am observant.
Not in the typical ways, or visual ways, but dynamical ways.

I don't judge (as much as) I seek to understand.

When there is something to judge, you can look more closely.
Once you get one level deeper, you have passed through the surface you were judging, and are now looking at different phenomena.

You can isolate a conflict there, zoom in; and again the same thing happens.
Move into what is judgable, what seems in whatever way shitty—
There is new phenomena you may seek to understand.

This is *all* things, *all* people.
The most evil people. (All things, all people.)

Many of us don't yet practice this.
And I want to be more of a success in the world because *we need more people.*
To be called to the good. To seek *common good.*

Others might, if they come across models. The scale is modest, small, but I can be one.
God, show me if this approach is wrong. The apparatus I have—my physical body—reads: bare minimum tension (as I am speaking/thinking this).

If you want me to see that this is not the right path, *you* must be the one to show me. My instrument says: *I'm okay*

Oh, go ahead—I like that.
A little tension in my jaw I can't identify the source of…

Show me something I do not myself cause, that I
do not cause myself. —*Now it's gone, dissipating.*

I have feared confined spaces… but what the hell? I don't mind, right now.
Let's try a six-inch-deep, six-inch-high crawlspace, my head in here.
I can feel it; embodying that impression. —*Give me something else.*

You know,
I bend rules
to honor your humanity.

I don't bend the rules because I am weak, lazy—not usually.
Look
at how I am seeking accuracy!

Now, I'll shut up.

I feel
'as a feather', as they say

or thin
as a
sheet of paper

unburdened

as a wisp

[then the recording hisses for 56 minutes of sleep]

4. I Am Floating

and I wish I'd told you; August 16, 2026

I wish I had told you near the end
how I always love the ocean

Floating on my back
with the glow of light-
squint filtering
the sweet spectrum of *carrot—pale, to orange, to purple.*

I am joyful, being here
—how you brought me
into this.
where if you want
you can simply fill your lungs with air

then fill your lungs again.
kicking, even slowly.
Some days, we just need to do our own thing

When I was young I didn't know
how to enter with others into trusting relation.

Now I venture in, and venture out—and right now's
no sunken solitude. It is sometimes right

to take a little enjoyment in myself
though,
I wish I could share it, too.
Kicking, even slowly

5. Thousandth Day

walking away from Bon Air; August 21, 2026

It is rare to see the leaves, the trees like this—

no less compelling, no less complete, in their stillness

Encompassed
by a late-summer complex.

of slo-mo pulse waves,

of a soundfield of cicadas

6. All Books, This Book
the value of; August 2026

You would not judge a book
by the dullest sentence it contains *(would you?)*

but
by what it, at its best, could inspire

7. Nearly Midnight
I'll stay put?; August 21, 2026

Out back, nearly midnight,
pissing when the rain begins
to come down, heavy

Does one catch any more raindrops
moving,

or
standing in place

8. Anew

takeoff; August 23, 2026

Ordered you a new
big pack of underwear today.
The second this summer,
these *large.*

But clearing space
in the drawer is tricky.
And although no call
could be more practically easy

to make
than
get rid of what is smallest,
what's the oldest,

all the phases, former
interests,
Jurassic Park, Spider-Man, your Grandee's
Scooby Doo,

however fleeting,
I do not want to be rid of you;
I want my child.
Not just a future adult

to share some days with.
Maybe that's wrong,

indulgent. To grieve
what is not negotiable.

9. Seeking

absolute agreement; August 31, 2026

Finding a prospective partner in genuine, absolute agreement

there cannot be curiosity,
nor discovery.

...without distance,
no perspective.

...without difference,
nothing to intentionally align.

10. Private Thrill
black bikini; August 29, 2026

Why, when you've undressed with me a thousand times

am I walking along the river here, *rooting* secretly

for your left breast
to work itself
out
from over the top of your black bikini,

expose, incidentally, that nipple with its darker areola

11. Reawakening My Namesake
Grandee's eddies; August 29, 2026

I'm remembering for the first time in years
the grandfather-grandson date

when you picked me up from school,
Grandee,
to go to Fudruckers.
To share burgers and fries,
and speculate about life.

Might it be that when one living conjures up, holds the memory
of one passed, like this,

that it reinstantiates, holds open their form,
the dotted outline of their selfness

for a gathering, *pooling,*
as of water *ever-passing*
through the individual-shaped net

a sieve, variably permeable

12. It’s So Hot

an arrival; September 2, 2026

It’s so hot, it’s still summer, I’m leaving work. I am struck, in disbelief. To have yellowing leaves flying toward me, toward the merge lane, between spurts of drizzling rain, gusts of breeze

Like the evening we encounter the year’s first firefly.
When I’ve almost stopped expecting they’d return.

13. You’re at Home

I’m home too; September 2, 2026

You seem to’ve really missed me—
I barely have a chance to hang up my keys, and set the contents of my hands down on our old wood kitchen table

when you walk up again, and both times then begin singing something you’ve learned in school, softly to yourself:

Every single cell

Every single cell
inside my body

Every single cell is happy and well

14. ‘Toward’ and ‘Together’ or ?
is it play; September 3, 2026

Tossing the basketball…

then
away, down the hill, with ‘against’ energy.

You both playing *coach* now,

stomping
my back, white shirt

hitting
my glasses with your unintentionally too-close hands

grabbing
at my garments.

Is it play

15. Contraception

for con-fusion; September 4, 2026

You and I are watching this documentary wherein the aging man loses himself in another, in a love—loses his life. But we don't need to worry; I can see my old self in him well enough.

16. Intrepid

slipping silently from the tent to pee; September 5, 2026

Intrepid in the 3am
insects, endless
haze, mist, or fog,

and four red lights blink, pulse
from amusement park rides
beyond my wild field here.

I asked the girls for ‘the flowers’, subtle facepaint,

but then all five elementary-schoolers joined in,
irreverently, covering my back, chest, and face.

Now, there’s no one but me awake
to see the crazed purples, blues, glitters, pen ink in the dark

17. Too Late Labor Day Weekend

after time spent, with two new camp spots, two rivers, five kids, five adult friends, eight pounds of pulled pork BBQ, a seafood platter, a new playground/park, half-a-dozen new writings, and several dozen chigger bites; September 8, 2026

The long weekend's too long

for me to rush
to get my work-work done

Now it's drawing to its end and I am *practically* empty-handed

18. The Unpacking Remainder

after camping; September 6, 2026

There's a loose
dark purple grape in the car's back gate

but it slips from my fingers into the jumbled jumper cables again

This time though—I manage to catch it and toss it into the street. And like something from an old cartoon or a movie: a car appears, speeding,
better than I could have scripted; one, two tires run right over it.

19. First Words

this morning; September 7, 2026

In this one, Brandon and I sit up high in a cathedral-like atrium balcony, stained glass windows all around, for Lou Harrison's solo performance. I hand Brandon my new booklet-in-progress, folded open to a spread with two recent stories and two half-page hand-drawn graphic scores, just as Lou begins to share more freely with the audience, having concluded the planned portion of the afternoon program. He tells us about his early creative experiments and performs little excerpts from them; it is informal, heartfelt; and the venue transforms into an outdoor expanse, like the grounds of a campground or RV park, just as he announces that this will be his career's final performance. The audience shouts, asking what on earth he means, shouts he's wrong and it will not be.

He speaks to us a moment about intonation and tuning, then drones an open fifth on an amplified small Irish harp to accompany himself singing a gradually unfolding melody; the sound of it together deeply moving.

Afterwards, I am walking through the old city, some imagined century-ago New England, when I notice him crossing a street nearly weeping. I remind him what an inspiration he is, how much his work has meant, as though he'd mentored me directly; and we share an embrace for just a moment. Two friends—one much younger, one much older—and I are climbing some great old building's wooden stairwell, like I've seen only in Tbilisi, and at the landings are near-room-sized mobiles and cuckoo-clock-like automata Lou has made. Intricately painted, carved characters spin and twirl, making covert irreverent jokes. We smile and laugh, walking through it.

20. Lying on My Back

OBE; September 9, 2026

If I want to get somewhere
don't whisper that wish, that intention, all soft and pious-like

In the imagination, use the shout I'd use with friends at a noisy concert so the words push upward, provide a buoyancy that can help move things upward

21. It Is Up to Us

after the morning's jumbly phone call; September 10, 2026

It is up to you and me how generously we choose to read each other's words, each other's actions, each other's motives.

22. Encouraging Evening

after the parking lot; September 11, 2026

From the parking lot punk show we happened upon, with the cigarette smoking, *'lower-case i's,* self-conscious safety pins, and choreographed fight-dancing…
we walk into a packed-out gathering, where Philadelphia ska welcomes, pumping hard, incorporative.

I settle in for a moment before it occurs; but *I stop my running rumination!*— that self-talk, in reanalysis, reinspection.

I give a nod to the night's complications,
its complexities, our complexes at play;
then say,

"I am not preoccupied."

It does take a couple of tries,
("I am not preoccupied.")

but then there is wholesale change.

—

And I…
I'm seeing only this now.

—

I am feeling
only this now.

—

I am within only this now.

23. Most of the Time

no one's wishing; September 13, 2026

Most of the time,
no one is wishing I would *do more,* or even
say more

but only,
that I be less preoccupied.

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II. Transport/Exchange, *August 15-September 14, 2026* *26-44*

III. It's Already Started!, *September 17-October 16, 2026* *46-70*

1. Holy Shit, it's Loud in Here! *Sidewalk Café* *46*
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III. It's Already Started.

1. Holy Shit, it's Loud in Here!

Sidewalk Café; September 17, 2026

but I can make out just enough of the song they've got on to be pretty sure I like it.

2. Aug is Asking (v2)

how les is more; September 18, 2026

> "Why's this restaurant advertise less soups, less salads
> …less desserts?
> less options!"

I have no idea what he's rambling on about.

> "…only *'less poisons'* seems like anything to brag about."

I turn around to see what the hell he's referring to. He's looking up, reading the front window of the French restaurant.

3. It’s Already Started (v2)

a generative diagnostic; September 17, 2026

Headed out of the house for work, I notice a few books on the nightstand.
The one a friend sent from China, the one I found in a little free library, the secondhand bookstore selection whose essence I feel deeply, but not its flow.

Any first time you open a book or listen to an album, and it doesn’t live up to what you had hoped it would be, it’s a potential incitement.

You can tune into the subtle disappointment or discrepancy. That gap—between what you had hoped to find and what’s actually there—is *yours.*

You imagined it. You invented it.
It’s something only you yourself could think to make.

So, what had I hoped to find in the book my friend recommended?

Poems that could fit naturally alongside my ‘Thousandth Day’, which had prompted the recommendation. Maybe something like four to five traditionally shaped lines of classical eastern poetry; but (reaching further into some dream ideal of mine) also spread across the page, in a way that is more contemporary than ancient, but presents as effortless and timeless.

> Thousandth Day
> *walking away from Bon Air;* August 21, 2026
>
> It is rare to see the leaves, the trees like this—
> no less compelling, no less complete, in their stillness
> / Encompassed / by a late-summer complex. / of slo-mo
> pulse waves, / of a soundfield of cicadas

With this in mind, I’ll attempt one or two impromptu treatments (in the imagined style) of simple scenes from my morning, aiming to write several lines that can then be *‘re-flowed’* for pacing and a more spatially engaging presentation.

1. Beyond the gentle mound of a hill / beside a prison parking lot / the tan bamboo stalks slant / parallel lines somehow dignified

2. there's nothing else like washing off / with a view outside through an open window / treefort, trees, green / kudzu in the unused alley

I don't want to stop and re-read what I've written yet; so, I'll try making one more, based on what's currently available in my field of vision, sitting at a student desk in my classroom while my student does his own writing.

3. the beige, tan tiles alternate vague strokes run N—S E—W N—S E—W / down every row, column / some scuffed, and with tufts of grey or black fuzz / a stray straw from an old broom, a tiny corner of torn paper / It is a landscape / a child could notice

The nightstand book in question is *Three Chinese Poets,* and my longtime friendship with its recommender, its title, my vague notion of its premises (about which I am ignorant), and its cover artwork sparked in my imagination:

Sparse environmental description, the presence of a narrator/character, or maybe sometimes two characters, and enough specifics to make the pieces sensuous.

I'm surprised how conspicuously 'on theme' some of the elements winding up in my impromptus seem. Around one of the parking lots at work are striking patches of bamboo, a little pond, a grass hill, and an Asian-looking gazebo where coworkers occasionally smoke. And behind my house, the backyard ends with a fence and an alley that are wildly overgrown with kudzu.

The book didn't need to supply these sorts of details. They already were my reality.

I can't judge the three Chinese poets—I have yet to read much beyond the book's introduction. But I realize now my felt discrepancy was this:
I had hoped this book of 700-year-old poems would somehow produce my own ideal work for me.
That disappointment belongs to me.

The first two impromptus come through rapidly. Then, once the floor catches my eye, I unthinkingly begin using a perceptual mode that was more readily available to my childhood self. The third piece emerges.

What if I channel that mode more intentionally now? How do I know this familiar mode (of sight/attention)? When did I inhabit it memorably enough in childhood that I could access some actual specific memory now?

> 4. Hardwood floor or carpet / spreading out with just a book or two, / a cup of Constant Comment // You sit at a kitchen table, waiting, / hoping for a walk-in

This scene—being at work with my mom at a model home *open house*—echoes the larger investigation: spontaneously furnishing a suggested/ suggestive environment.

In the spirit of 'poetic misreading', I want to give total 'poetic anticipation' a try. Before reading something new, first sketch, journal, and explore what is suggested by the title, reputation, artwork, etc. What idealization has the imagination already made of it?

(Now, though, I am looking forward to reading *Three Chinese Poets.)*

Here are the revised treatments of the four morning images:

3b. It’s Already Started

four morning images; September 17, 2026

1.

Having Never yet Touched Them

Beyond the gentle mound of hill

beside a prison parking lot,

tan bamboo stalks slant

—

Parallel lines,
somehow dignified

2.

Kudzu Alley

There is nothing else
like washing my body

by the opened window

by the tree fort, trees,
rain, green

unused kudzu alley

3.

The Tiles Alternate

The tiles alternate,

vaguely perceptible strokes
run S—N, E—W, S—N, E—W
up and down every row, every column

Some with scuffs,

some with tufts
of grey, or black fuzz,

a stray straw from the old broom, tiny
corner of torn paper

—
A landscape
a child could notice.

4.

A Weekend Midday

My own new empty room:
shiny hardwood floor, or carpet

Spreading out with just a book, or two,

maybe colored pencils,
a cup of Constant Comment

My mom sits at a kitchen table, a room or two away

waiting,
hoping for a walk-in.

4. Perk!, at 11am
September 21, 2026

Just as I walk in, the grey-bearded man tells his girlfriend,
"Also: if you don't win the lottery tomorrow, you can try again the next day."

5. *Wookah-Wookah-Wookah-Wookah*
I'm starting a new band; September 19, 2026

a wah pedal, turntable, electric toothbrush trio.

6. In What Arena

through what medium; September 18, 2026

If what we describe as the flow state is like getting out of your own way—feeling less discrete relative to your environment; less distinctly your own individual self; less excruciatingly, effortfully striving—

then it follows that the better I get at things, the less the rewards will tend to feel valuable, to matter to me, even the intrinsic ones.

The objective, our happiness …is it: to be more diffuse, to feel our individual presence less, as less isolated, less its own sequestered island?

What would the implications of this be for death then?

An end of striving
—at least, the end of physical, effortful, necessary action?

In what arena do I make my effort after death?

7. Hard Mode
September 20, 2026

Why am I (as she's asked)
living on hard mode?

It is (experience and me) making up for lost time.

To address what many don't realize they struggle with
—
insufficient contact with life.

8. I Aim to Be
welcoming; September 20, 2026

welcoming
to any passerby
could-be ally;

and not inviting, but open
to the could-be assailant.

—
No other way to know
who could be whom.

9. Right to the Point! (v2)

re: your text; September 19, 2026

"I *feel* this one," my coworker tells me, reading a piece that takes place in a convenience store. He stands in my cinderblock classroom, pointing at the hairs on his arm sticking up.

Gesturing at his uniformed abdomen, he concludes, "these are *emotional proverbs*."

I've had a lot of practice *articulating* up to this point in my life—conversing, professionally proofreading and editing—and I have received a fair amount of recognition and encouragement for it.

What's new, and what I believe you're responding to, Josh, is that I've learned how to make that apparatus lightweight. The pressure of decades of *not relinquishing* my cumbersome 'observation-articulation' apparatus forced me to streamline, bootstrapping the faster 'felt feeling' apparatus.

With somatic charge as my guide, the faculty has become portable enough to bring along into new modes available to me. Now there can sometimes be an *immediate* active relationship between meditation and living contact.

The recent progression of writing charts the emergence of this state of presence, with less and less need for withdrawing or splintering off into 'observation mode'.

The writing itself often participates in living encounters—allowing me to dig into personal and relational conundrums, to 'see the knots' in need of detangling—and produces a transcript as a byproduct, which may be of use to myself or others.

Somatic feeling guides the transcription. And at their best, the results re-animate hologram-like configurations of experience.

These configurations can be recovered through induction. There is a sense of life-like discovery which can arise through retracing the concurrence of *observation/participation*.

I write about the highs and lows of culture and the highs and lows of the body because ‘the real sacred good’ and ‘ordinary life’ cannot be meaningfully segregated. It is not enough to see that they are connected; to see properly, each is actively infusing the other.

I am not called to write at some designated ‘writing time’. It’s at ‘convenience store trip’ time, at ‘prison yard walk’ time, or at ‘playground goofing’ time. I am learning to use this somatic mode because others can’t wait for me. I use my daily pressures.

“You *are* meditation” another coworker insisted a year and a half ago. At the time, I felt smacked—worried she could be calling me placid, or passive. I didn’t yet know what she meant.

10. More on the Childhood Mode

from 'The Tiles Alternate' and 'A Weekend Midday'; September 21, 2026

It's not just that children are shorter,
closer
to the ground than us

they are also less far—just months, years—
away from their babyhood experience.

And so, still naturally play,

relax
on the floor

in ways we don't remember
are options

11. So Familiar

we acquisitives; September 19, 2026

The mind that can't stop working, can't intentionally rest.

Which reinforces a narrowed daily focus
(at the expense
of broader-spectrum reception).

The need to acquire, to possess
until even the hiking trail becomes like a shopping experience,

consumer, collector. Isn't this plant good to remember
later—I'll take a picture?

whether or not I circle back to buy one for our garden at home.

Or bringing a stone
and almost imagining
my companions will be impressed
by my faculty of sight, or the curating, or what is curated itself.

(Sometimes, as with the old megalodon tooth,
the story's retold for years.)

There is a desire to get things *fixed,*
whether Legos, poems, or sketches.
A compulsion to be more myself, too.
Like he's looking across the street now
imagining if the Byrd Theater were suddenly his possession,

how those two American flags would have to be pulled, replaced
by some more tasteful, expressively colored variation,
not primary-colored, blunt, inelegant. Nothing decided by preordained default.

Then, compelled to share this all!

While someone else's satisfaction
could be a glow of their-own self's appreciation; content to know *"yeah, I saw that,"*

we need, usually, 'to do something with' the fact of what we've seen.
Our own appreciation tends to be just around half of it.

If I must: *Appreciate.*
or even, Make a thing mine.
or Turn it into something new.

but
without the *needing* to

12. A Break

Tuesday morning; September 22, 2026

We're walking back down bottom / from a meeting / in the upper gym

I got stuck in place / between, here / and don't wish to look away

from the small surprise within our gates

the K-9 officer with her dog / twirling in wet grass;
taking their break / from searches

13. How Relaxedly I Can Shut My Eyes

raw meditation version; September 22, 2026

The trick I use to align my

spine,

to relieve all strain

when lying down to nap,
or meditate;

that sense of *no*

tension

is the same

as what can guide articulation.

No strain. No tension.

From the bottom to the top,
clear of obstruction.

How relaxedly can I close my eyes?
can I shut my eyes?

Usually, the word order matters.

The contraction

shifts the emphasis;

shifts the pace, but also
shifts emphasis.

What is sometimes tougher

What is sometimes more tough
than failure

Is wagering everything

in pursuit of a success.

14. Be the Live Wire
September 23, 2026

Be the live wire,

even if it means looking like the fool.

15. Goshen
a recovery; September 22, 2026

Road Trip / Bingo’s translucent / red doors with tiny doorknobs.

We're on the road to Goshen. / Where the other direction
is up the hillside / from where we are now.

My dad drives / Mom is passenging.
My siblings sit / in the backseat beside me

To drop me off at camp / for a week. / 1993.

16. Not the Journey I Expected
September 23, 2026

I remember how one of your most played albums was the *Greatest Hits*, with the beetle on its red cover. And walking toward the car from work, I decide I'll put that one on. I start it up, and from the very first of *Only The Young,* the misty prison parking lot and trees are infused under a grey sky, and the whole visual scene intermixes with what I've heard hundreds of times, flooding into it, into me. It's not surprising that I found this *opening,* moving then. The audible interplay of intuitions, and intricacy, restraint, intensity, detailed periphery, and spotlighting. Nothing too soon. Nothing too much, or too little. Turns of melody, incisive. All intertwine, unify, into their own genre, into a magnificence, that's somehow both exactly as I remember it, and, too, I almost disbelieve how I'm retracing each detail fresh. What a privilege this exists, my whole life. Right now. I couldn't need a track two. I miss the life, my mom, my dad, siblings, grandparents, neighbors, pets, our living room together back then. The scarab emblazoned in my memory. Life cycling. How much emblazoned onto me. Memory-cycling. Needing not anything, nor expecting it. I might *surprise you,* sending only, "I love you dad!"

Only the young can say / they're free to fly away
sharing the same desires / burning like wildfire / only the young

"That is nice to know. I love you too."

17. Frustrating Origami
June 20, 2026

Coordinating on the phone, I tell them, “Sure, I’m free now. I just gotta set aside the world’s most frustrating origami.”

From the next room, Auggie shouts: *“Hey! Don’t call me that!”*

18. Your Precious Present (Re: Anew)
you’ll almost certainly want this *later;* September 23, 2026

(just as I can now see my mom and dad wished, exasperated, for me to appreciate:)

There is only one who can keep all of you.
Please.

It cannot be me,

it only can be you.

19. To Love
September 24, 2026

To really *love*

might be properly understood
as *organization.*

20. Bathroom Reflection
while emergency shoe shopping at a North Carolina Walmart; September 27, 2026

I don’t have to be self-defining,

clear precisely each and every instant.
One should not be.

The more I can throw
unresolving, teasing messes,
irreverent, incomplete noises around

the more trustworthy;
more wholly the mean, edge-case,
and throughline
are free
to reveal the shape of me

21. Origami Manifestation (v2)

September 30, 2026

Seeing my guitar hanging on the living room wall
after days away from home,
I wonder

what rhythms I might settle into

what chapter, what harvest comes next.

This life and these pursuits have been less
a long pathway, visibly spanning up ahead

and more
a series of corner-turnings
unfolding.

22. Where a Choice is Alive; What You Most Want

re: Be the Live Wire, re: Dutiful Avoidance; September 30, 2026

Back home from our rugged trip, and you're catching up around the house.
and so am I, doing work, but not the timely, essential central things, where a choice exists. Even if it's of use, tinkering around the periphery may be avoidance of the commons.

Then in our picnic altogether, I realize
the deepest choice is rarely ever: I deserve to take it easy after all my efforts.

I get up. I'm pushing three swings at once. Entertaining our kids. Running up the slide without hands, sliding backward down with my worn-down shoe soles. I'm entertaining myself. Instigating all-in play.

We have infinitely many games
to have or not have 'skin in'
and always an available justification.

23. The Negotiation/Collaboration
October 1, 2026

Present
what is most alive.

It's so rarely narration
of interiority's intricacies.

But rather:

the surface
where inner experience
and surrounding experience
respond to one another,
interface

24. Release

a runaway process; October 2, 2026

After holding the jaw clenched, the mental heat
I remember now, by empathy, a way
to release

to clear a pathological overflowing chalkboard
(to leave it altogether).

—

I am not preoccupied.

I am not preoccupied.

—

Spaciousness
is a balm.

Spaciousness
is a balm.

Spaciousness
is a balm.

—

(Thank you.

for showing me I need a rescue, NC.)