John le Carre, The Looking Glass War
p. 14 -- an iron bar of a smile, like an affliction

p. 92 -- ...he declared, as if were a maxim of his house...

p. 154 -- ...as if Leiser expected nothing from nature but stark collision.

p. 250 -- ...They had relapsed into a state of somnolent fear, like men in a submarine

p. 286 -- Almost with detachment he caught sight of the line of crystals on the blanket, untouched, still and ready, dressed by the left and numbered, flat on their backs like dead sentries.

Edward Abbey, The Brave Cowboy
p. 6 -- skin... the hue of an old gunstock

Life, Oct. 9, 1970 (Gallery page)
Hovering over Lake Erie, he made the fleet look like a double handful of diamond chips strewn across a black onyx table.

E.B. White, Here is New York
p. 23 -- It is to the nation what the white church spire is to the village.

Robert Penn Warren, All the King's Men
p. 3 -- ...a snatching sound as though God-almighty had ripped a tin roof loose with his bare hands.

p. 11 -- ...as though somebody had laid hold of something in there, in the dark which is you, with a cold hand in a cold rubber glove.

p. 17 -- Alex whickered like a stallion....
near sunset: dark ships on palest blue water; imprints, templates; ball of sun on water, weave of clouds between sun & mountains; degrees lighter, the far shore.

the ships march past on the substance of the Sound

the great im rink of water

the long swim to Asia

someone who chatters because he/she is hard of hearing

NYT, Sept. 6 '12: In her own words Emily Dickinson said she was "small, like the wren; and my hair is bold, like the chestnut burr; and my eyes, like the sherry in the glass that the guest leaves."

May 1 '13: 1st cruise ship of the season, the Crystal Symphony, at 5:30 early light is like a loaf of whiteness and lights. (Carol: like an elongated wedding cake)
Isak Dinesen, by Judith Thurman, p. 178, quotes from Out of Africa the description of D. wrote of her bushbuck Iulu: "...she would perform, for the satisfaction of her own heart, on the lawn in front of the house, a war-dance, which looked like a brief zigzagged prayer to Satan."

Misty Fjords, on Paul Allen trip: dark reflections of mountains in Manzoni Lake (when our seaplane landed there)--like black marble

bass choir of thunder

sailboat tacking like a quill pen writing on the water

the blue heap of mountains on the dark island

(the summer day) heavy with bees

the palette of water (Puget Sound)

the smoke of the ferries out of Kingston, especially late in the day: capricious, low or straight up.

vessels in the mist, the steam of time

ferries like bolts of light sliding home

rainbows race along the (pivot) irrigation systems (seen on Columbia Plateau during trip to MT in '03)

browbeaten tomatoes (after rain got to them)

Victoria Clippers after dark: They move like luminous bats out of hell, one-eyed bright

"You smell of time as a Bible smells of thumbs."

--Irish poet Medbh McGuckian, cited by Edward Hirsch in Wash. Post Bk World 11/9/03 (clipping in Writing abt Writing ½ of ½ file; several other good examples of simile in the piece)
Oct. '87, backstage of World Theater during reh'1 for Noah Adams show: back of stage is like a mineshaft, with banks of lights overhead. Amid reh'1, stagehand rode all the way up to the lights on a cart-like "elevator."

'87: sun-lit clouds like rising steam out of the Blue Mountains of Oregon.
--giant shadows of trees down sheer bluff

K satin-black of crows

K the park dizzy with robins

like putting Savanarola in charge of the barbecue.

(punks dressed) like a frozen concentrate of the Addams family.

seen in Montana, June '92: guy wearing black (pigeon-toed) cowboy boots w/ silver toe tips.

possible scene/image, based on myself during trip through the West in spring '93, carrying coffee to the Red Lion Inn in Missoula from the Burger King across the parking lot: wearing Santa Fe Indian-patterned Pendleton jacket, carrying a cup of coffee in a leather-gloved hand with other hand bare.

avenues of masts (at Shilshole)

intransigent snap to the air

beautifully unpunctuated

Athena, our elderly dog buddy up the street: Wobbled as she walked, she was so old, no, ancient.

from Marcella Walter, when we were at their place up the N. Fork of the Flathead, July '96: the Walters call the phenomenon when sunset changes tint of the 80 mi. of Rockies out in front of the cabin "the purpling time."
a tepee of fog beneath each street light
the multiple claws of a 747 landing

our lawn chairs like old maid twin sisters in flowerprint dresses.

at Green Lake, Sat. morn in Feb. '86: a swimming widgeon, braids of water behind
tail lights on freeway at night, a river of embers

21 July '86: bright clear morning, with the Sound socked in by fog; Kingstone ferry dock can be seen, but everything between shores, all directions, is solid vapor, like looking down into mountain valley filled with cloud. Ships using foghorns. Thus:
    Out in the fog ships become Zen vessels, seeking with Omm, Whommm, answers another. MMM, considers a distant third.

22 July '86: fireweed, 6-7' high, at back of our house, like herd of purple giraffes.

driver who goes thru yellow light after yellow light: gobbling up amber lights like they were 00 grapes.

a rumpled room

Xmas, '87, at the hillside park, 9:30 a.m.: the frosted blades of grass (of the baseball field) in their millionhood.

a honey waterfall of hair

mountains in lace caps of snow
the way I learn things: like throwing handful of popcorn at a porcupine

wind so hard at Oregon dunes, Carol said her hair seemed to be in square knots
eagle in a birdbath
(Carl's classic: St. Bernard in a windowbox)

the world is not our windowbox

emotion beat its wings in the air

ferry on the Sound on dark stormy night: line of its lights look like a long slow arrow

from Linda M: his face looked as if it was made up of parts from other faces

a cross-hatch of problems
dawned on him that Nixon was not merely a stick in the mud, but an entire tree in a very slimey bog

This is the January of my discontent

the space between the ears a howling wilderness

Goodyear blimp like a great silver salmon in the sky

1971: the summer there was no summer

the wind came carving, carving
the wind came out of the north with scythes, cold bands of snow cutting just above the ground (drifting)

icy wind, like the reverse of crownfleece

prisoners binned in penitentiaries

stars: the far suns of the night
bellywhop of an idea

Jeffers sharpened himself on the rock edges of the Pacific shore

coyote -- its quickness standing briefly in campgrnd fashion of the 60s-70s -- miles of hair

snow as molecules of winter scene

history is whorl of lines like fingerprint, including everything from weather to chance crowds to epidemics to thought patterns

difference between being careful and being really prudent: squirrels easily avoid Snoopy, dachshund next door, by idly climbing tree and glancing down at his frenzy. Other day I was in backyard when Kelly, Headrick's # Irish setter, spotted squirrel mid-yard and gave chase. Squirrel ran not only the width of H's yard, but all the way through the fence and entirely across our yard, and then up a tree.

storm in the west: the sky looked bruised

he worked at life as if it was his own invention

sound of ballet slippers on floor is like chuff of fine sandpaper on smooth wood

the right wing of the family

kindle a sunrise, or glow of sunset

fragile as the slipstreams which spiders leave above forest paths

effortless as an Englishman riding a bike down a hill

sailboats on Puget Sound: like white teepees on vast blue prairie
These things usually go about like Godzilla meeting Bambi—splotch, and it's all over.

Lift his cranial cap, and the moss on his brain would fluff out like the shako on a guardsman.

the skull is a dicebox

a jay goes past my window like a blue spear

a hawk's eye: lensed fire

listening as if paid by the word.

Jeff K's even-toothed smile, as if about to say something but doesn't: he holds it the way a horse holds the bit between its teeth.

Alaska trip, Jan. '81: blue of Mendenhall glacier, like a tide cascading out of the mountains.

green geyser of poplar visible over top of our house and Cochrane's.

the way I'm dressing these days, in blue denim shirt and Doig Bros Grain Merc tractor cap: dairy barn chic
drinking: a handful of snow and a finger of scotch

holding hands across the table while eating: to do it right, one of the couple has to be left-handed, the other right-

from C, '83 Oregon coast trip: sanderlings are like the clerks of the shoreline.

hair white as swan feathers
Oregon coast snuggles in bear rug at dusk, the dark fir forest

unexpected as griffins

the wind saber ing

N. Cascades Highway, Jan. 22-23, '77: sparkles of light in snowbanks at edge of road look like silver needles flying through air as car flies past flat in the sun as though concussed

P-I, April 10, 1977, Blaine Johnson--

..."Sonic fans seem like they would rally around a dead horse in 100-degree weather as long as it wore the green and white..."

Richard Corliss review of "Looking for Mr. Goodbar," New Times, 10/28/77, p. 74: "As the apotheosis of that first generation of humans who, educated by television, have learned to speak while grinning from ear to ear, Keaton could be expected to jar..."

the half-dark of a winter day

It was winter-spring, one of those points of the year when the weather could jiggle either way.

bushtits on birch branches like monks riding bell-ropes

the doubloon sun

clouds like damp cotton

like a kitten finding cream

the 5 tubas of UW marching band on Boat Day, like funnels of a cruise ship.
Reading Jeffers on the beach (quote lines): like having Shakespeare drop by for a chat

small town is where you can't be up without everyone in town talking about your case of diarrhea

grief drying her voice to a whisper

the BLINK electric fuzz of the tv screen

whisker as descriptive noun: whisker of sand, for ex

I am to games what the St. Louis Browns were to baseball—valuable because everyone else can beat me day in and day out and feel good

crone mountains

congress of ...

backstage at ACT during Summertree, lights hanging from ceiling rods, tilted down like fat black bats

flying over Cascades; roads in mountains below look like cracks in nature's beauty

railroad tracks -- iron thews

eagle in a birdbath
(Carl's favorite: St. Bernard in a windowbox)

while the OO were still running around painted blue settlers as tide on the lami, washing westward

a bolt slid home in Mr. O's mind

windy day on Puget Sound, sailboats at identical angles all across water, like tips of spears flung and stuck in blue field.

his ideas were fireships, searing notions which threatened all around them
We lay it at the door of government, like half-grown kittens presenting our first mouse...

in the bogland of his mind

mountains sawed up through the earth

the nape of the world
(the back of the neck of the world)

oxymoron: using slightly ambiguous words to make new meanings -- "studied casualness", for ex

spume thickly drifted on beach, like fallen clouds

I followed Dad around as something like a younger brother -- 6 going on 35.

children's shoes were a bank account for all to see. Mine were adequate but scuffed, like our condition.

growing my beard again, and looking scruffy: looking like I fell face down on a porcupine

children all around like minnows

hours are microseconds of historical time

waves trailing their spray like white shadows

powerful wind at Cape Falcon, wind which eventually ties trees into knots and sends limbs at grudging angles -- like a boy's arms forced high and back in schoolyard contest of arm pushing

sleek boat which looked so light it looked ready to fly upward out of the water.

to write with the detail of a scrimshander and the scope of a mapmaker

an ice age seems to have set in on the public mind
H.L. Davis, *Honey in the Horn*
p. 10 -- ...it required the patience of a horse-breaker.

p. 32 -- ...a stand of black fir timber that looked solid until you got within two yards of it...

p. 39 -- It seemed almost like stripping something naked to expose the square brown earth where they had come for meals and sleep and rest and shelter...

p. 74 -- ...every shape was outlined against its shadow as if it had been nicked deep into a hard rock.

p. 104 -- ...mere childish bullying, like a miller-moth batting against a lamp chimney...

p. 105 -- ...she was something that made mankind seem bigger and more creditable than he had imagined...

p. 287 -- ...they went into Coos Bay in the rain at a clip that almost took the town a mile down the beach with them.

p. 385 -- ...trail-side bushes ripped at their legs with the sound of a saw going through slabwood...

Richard G. Stern, "A Valentine for Chicago", Harper's article in writing examples file: 
"...I sympathized with Mrs. O'Leary's cow, that incarnation of pastoral revenge."

Michael Davie, *The Observer*, Ap 7, '68 (LBJ article, in writing examples file): "It could happen because Johnson's decision transformed the entire political scene. It was as if someone had switched on the lights in a brothel. The remaining candidates all had to make a move of some kind; and these moves necessarily showed with awful clarity what they'd been doing before the lights went up!"
Saul Bellow, Herzog
p. 110 -- My ancient times. Remoter than Egypt.

A.J. Liebling, The Earl of Louisiana
p. 75 -- The drilling barge lay, or stood, about 100 yards out in the stream, a creature at once reminiscent of a giant sucking insect, a birthday cake with 9 candles, and the skyline of a factory city.

p. 78 -- Roussel has the kind of head Norman peasants carve on wooden stoppers for Calvados bottles.

p. 91 -- The night was like a heavy blanket pressed down on the lawn.

p. 92-3 -- Long's ideas in a speech "chased one another on and off stage like characters in a Shakespearean battle scene, full of alarums and sorties."

p. 152 -- In state politics, The Times-Picayune has been to the Longs what the Austrian armies were to Napoleon. It made their reputation by being easy to lick.

p. 191 -- In our country the thought of pedestrian locomotion is so abhorrent that even a policeman who would gladly beat you up would be ashamed to make you walk. It is the twentieth-century equivalent of dropping a man at sea in an oarless rowboat.

Alan Moorehead, A Late Education
p. 100 -- ...where Paris lies became a black bowl strewn with glittering beads of light as though a part of a tropical sky had fallen on the earth.

p. 150 -- tense as a cat
Louis Auchincloss, The Rector of Justin
p. 5 -- he explained in the deliberate, patient
tone of one who never repeats.

p. 15 -- Surely the thread that holds her strong
spirit to this world is of gossamer.

p. 23 -- the silence of songbirds in the sudden
shadow of a hawk...

Edmond Taylor, Awakening from History
p. 174 -- As for world government, my own conscious
attitude toward it at that time was somewhat
like St. Augustine's youthful feelings
about chastity: I wanted it, but not yet.

p. 372 -- Like every American writer or artist or
creative worker of any kind -- except
scientists and engineers, I suppose -- I kept
running head on into the rigid dichotomies and
obsessive compartmentations that clutter the
opennesses of our cultural horizon without
properly framing them, like sheep corrals
on the empty prairie...

Jane Howard, Please Touch
p. 2 -- An epidemic of such programs, reminiscent
at once of systems analysis and social science
and snake oil...

p. 35 -- Kahn and hundreds of men and women like him
are today's circuit riders. In the spiritual
life of this century they occupy a niche
similar to that of itinerant preachers in the
last.

p. 103 -- having scarcely more attention span than
a hummingbird...

p. 188 -- Suppose a lady named Mrs. Minler.
Christy Brown, Down All the Days
p. 17 -- sage and serious as any generals

p. 56 -- The houses stood like squat, disgruntled cocker spaniels...

p. 90 -- clouds...like dark battalions of weirdly shaped horses

Jan De Hartog, The Distant Shore
p. 22 -- My head felt as if my brains had got loose...

p. 46 -- Then a cunning thought slid out of the jungle of my confusion, like a snake.

p. 150 -- ...the women took up the note. They sallied heroically at the dark mass of waiting basses, but were smothered at once. The basses roared like seals. It was a massacre.

p. 279 -- ...they looked like Captain Bakker done by different cartoonists.

Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre, Or I'll Dress You in Morning
p. 330 -- But the vulgar breath that El Cordobes has brought to the sand of the bullring is just a zephyr of a wind blowing over all Spain.

William Golding, The Scorpion God
p. 9 -- Out of this sky, heat and light fell like an avalanche so that everything between the two long cliffs lay motionless as the cliffs themselves.

Edmund Wilson, Memoirs of Hecate County
p. 28 -- But her magnificent agate-green eyes must at any age have been arresting: they seemed to concentrate the light of the intellect as a powerful lens does the sun.
During the 1920s the Communists had originated a new cult, the Adoration of the Worker. The stereotype mesmerized many intellectuals. It was visually based on drawings in the New Masses, which showed a larger-than-life-size wage earner, his eyes fixed on the far horizon. His martial jaw proclaimed a proletarian toughness armoring a heart that bled for all humanity. His muscular neck and bulging biceps suggested a spectacular virility. He was portrayed in effect as a combination of St. Augustine, Paul Bunyan, and a stud bull.

Saturday Review, April 1, '72

CITIZEN NADER
by Charles McCarry
Saturday Review Press, 335 pp., $7.95

Reviewed by Robert Eisner

Nader employs the written word with considerable effect. To McCarry, "this has something to do with his eccentric use of language. A Nader sentence is like the footprints of a rhinoceros on a glacier: unmistakable in its meaning but very queer in its choice of ground." He fires letters to those he would influence, or pressure,
Kurt Vonnegut's review of Bomber, by Len Deighton, Life, Oct. 2, '70, p. 10

The prose all clanks and clunks like that—and I was about to throw the book away. Then I caught on to what Deighton was telling me obliquely: what happens to human beings in mechanized warfare has no poetical or theatrical possibilities. War books which move us to tears and laughter are fakes. What actually happens can best be described by a mechanical engineer. Deighton discovered this, I suspect, as he went along. He tries gamely to make us care about the human beings who are about to collide, but we’re bored silly. Machines steal the show—three types of machines in particular: German radar sets on the ground and British bombers and German night fighters in the sky.

Listen to this: "The huge Freya radar aerial swung gently, smelling the cold wind that blew from England. It stopped, began to swing back and stopped again. Willi Reinecke called to August Bach down the length of the dimly lit T hut. ‘First contact, sir.’"

"And so the battle began: three groups of men using every device that science could invent began to grope around the blackness like gunmen in a sewer."

Beautiful.

by Kurt Vonnegut Jr.

Mr. Vonnegut’s most recent novel is Slaughterhouse-Five.
Ved Mehta, John Is Easy to Please
p. 7 (about UN interpreter George Sherry) --
   It was as though his voice were still working for
   some other man.

p. 16 -- the aristocratic, cocker-spaniel head of the
   Assembly's president, Mongi Slim ...

Frank O'Connor, Leinster, Munster and Connaught
p. 66 -- His mind was too abstract; like that of the
   Russian liberals, it was too filled with principles
   evolved from the poetry and the philosophising of a
   stable and well-ordered society.

p. 66 -- ...a noble infirmity of judgment which fails
   to realise that Ireland is not a nation, but a bad case
   of arrested development.

p. 68 -- Charles Steward Parnell himself is, like Swift,
   one of our very few rockets...

p. 84 -- ...a man who wrote as some people sing...

p. 86 -- I met Murder on the way;
   He had a mask like Castlereagh.

p. 99 -- ...a battlemented courthouse, which suggests
   that hard-fought cases sometimes include a siege.

p. 69 -- Parnell's position at this time is something
   which the most imaginative dramatist would draw back from.
Raymond Chandler, *Farewell My Lovely*

p. 4 - "... he looked about as inconspicuous as a tarantula on a slice of angel food."

p. 5 - "... big man purred softly, like four tigers often dninner."

p. 6 - "... a battered face that looked as if it had been hit by everything but the bucket of a dragline."

p. 20 - "A line of stiff yellowish half-washed clothes juttered on a rusty wire in side yard."

p. 21 - "... voice dragged itself out of her throat like a sick man getting out of bed."

p. 26 - "Thick's cunning played on her face, had no fun there, it went somewhere else."

p. 38 - "... carpet almost tickled my ankles."

p. 39 - "It was a room where anything could happen except work."

p. 53 - "My voice sounded like somebody tearing slats off a chicken coop."
Chandler (cont.)

p.73 - "It was a blonde. A blonde to make a bishop duck a hole in a stained glass window."

p.133 - "They don't make that kind of time in watches anyway."

p.144 - "I was almost sober & my stomach was burning toward third base instead of trying for the centerfield flagpole."

p.149 - "... kind of bossy smoke that makes you want to open the door two inches, emit succulent raspberry & slam it again."

p.171 - "It was a long, dark hallway that had been mopped the day McKinley was inaugurated."

p.183 - "His mouth shut hard and I could see his teeth were biting at each other inside it."

p.186 - "... thought in my mind moved with a kind of sluggish stealthiness, as if it was being watched by bitter & sardonic eyes."
Chandler (cont.)

p. 185 — "Outside cars honked along alley they called 'Speedway. Feet shivered on the sidewalks below my window. There was a mystery of coming and going in air. The air that seeped in through mustard screen smelled of stale frying fat."

p. 187 — "After a while there was a faint smell of ocean. Not very much, but as if they had kept this much just to remind people this had once been a clean open beach where waves came in and creamed & wind blew & you could smell something besides hot fat & cold sweat."

p. 189 — "... a waiter who looked as if he would slug me for a quarter, cut my throat for my bits, & bury me at sea in a barrel of concrete for a dollar & a half, plus sales tax."

p. 197 — "Them rich dames are easier to make than paper dolls."
Raymond Chandler, *The Lady in the Lake*

p. 235 - "The minutes went by on tiptoe, with their fingers to their lips."

p. 260 - "He had a hand like a wood rasp."

p. 271 - "His voice seemed to come to me from a long way off, over a hill, through a thick silent growth of trees."

p. 281 - "I gulped what they called the regular dinner, drank a brandy to sit on its chest and hold it down..."

p. 302 - "... leaving him there moving his mind around with ponderous energy of a homesteader clogging up a stump."

p. 323 - "... he said, in a voice the size of a marmot."

p. 360 - "It had an elderly perfume in it, like three widows drinking tea."

p. 396 - "I smelled like dead toads."
Chandler (cont.)
p. 416 - "We had some coffee and sat around looking like people seeing friends off at the railroad station."
...Heath's concentration of power obviously gives the idea ... that presidential power is slowly creeping up on No. 10 with what a Financial Times reporter called "Grandmother's Footsteps". "Whenever anybody turns round to challenge him, the Prime Minister is always standing virtually still."

—The brains behind the throne,
  by James Fox, Sunday Times Magazine,
  March 25, '73, p. 49

Kenneth Clark, in TV series Civilisation: English cathedrals, great orderly mountains of stone rising out of wooden huts. "The romanesque carvers were like a school of dolphins."

Construction of Chartres (my note: moon shot of the day?)

Unsigned review of The Lord Killearn Diaries 1934-46, in Times Literary Supplement, Feb. 9, 1973:
  "Reading his easy, conversational prose is like swimming in cream."

  (Lord Killearn was Miles Lampson, British ambdsr to Egypt.)

Pain is a packet of chiseling tools.
  —Edward Hoagland in VV, Oct 17, '68

Night moused across the northern hills of Georgia...
  The huge glistening machinery of our society seemed to come apart like a Tinker Toy with every step he took.
  —Mark Kram, Sports Ill'd, July 27, '70

...a kind of torque that starts in the brain...
  —Will Bradbury, Life, Oct. 30, '70
Clive James' TV review of world figure skating championships, Observer, 4 March, '73, p. 35:

...the British hopeful's all-too-recognizable addiction, at the beginning of her programme, to that burst of angular semaphore which over the years we have learned to translate as 'At some time in the next five minutes I am going to make a catastrophic mistake.'...

of winner Karen Magnussen: "...a display of dramatic power that ran like cold fury on silver rails...

on Janet Lynn: "Lynn's joy-spring takes place on the edge of cuteness, because cuteness is the name of the territory which lies beyond the point where Fleming quit. Fleming's rigorously critical creativity exhausted the possibilities of classic lyricism, leaving decadence as the only feasible technical advance: there can never be a more beautiful arabesque than Fleming's, only a prettier one."

Wm McIlvanney, Remedy Is None:  
p. 13 -- "His awareness had frozen on the fact of his father dying..."

p. 17 ---...words that the wind pared to a shapeless sound.

p. 19 -- Her cheeks looked as if there had been acid on them.

p. 26 -- ...a poison six years in taking effect.... Slow death.

p. 40--Remembering the scene, Charlie was able to recall it complete, existing as it did bright and separate in his memory, like a room where the same people sat for ever saying and doing the same things.

p. 43 -- Everything was done with formal propriety, as if it was all according to the eggbreakers' handbook.

p. 44 --...his forehead, ploughed with effort...
Shadows of America

ON BBC-1 they re-ran Part II of A Man and His Music, and as the wonderful Sinatra once again made his Death Row crack about the audience (‘nice, smiling, receptive, unarmed people’) and put that slicing, capped clench on the powering rhymes of ‘Luck Be A Lady Tonight’ it was time to bend all one’s thoughts to the thousand reasons for loving America. Like a latterday spice, the flavour of liberty in the modern age comes from the United States: the tone of voice, the finger-snap, the way of standing — everything we recognise as free. And yet here again, for a dirty Christmas present, the B-52s were going back to North Vietnam. Unbelievable.

Somewhere on the news, somebody said that the bombing of Hanoi had been resumed. It wasn’t stated how the use of this word ‘resumed’ modified the original assurances that Hanoi was never being bombed at all, but no matter. We were already inured, in the depths of the psyche, to the idea that the Kissinger initiative would fail and the war go on. Except for being more obviously glory-mad, Kissinger is only the latest in a long line of American power-figures nobody ever elected. Roosevelt had Harry Hopkins, and there has always been some enigmatic wiseacre like Bernard Baruch ensuring that high-level decision-making wouldn’t be confined to the people’s representatives.

Ironically, a flappably written series on America (BBC-2) is a sense of the present. It is all past, and when the present gets a mention it, too, is made to sound like the past. On the Parkinson Show (BBC-1), Cooke was compliantly asked to rebut critical accusations of his liking America, as if that were the only form criticism of his series could take. But it’s possible to like America very much and still contend that with this enterprise Cooke has risen to every occasion except the one with which the world is actually faced. In an early episode Cooke revealingly declared that what took place at the Boston Massacre was decided upon after the event, according to people’s passions at the time — just like the massacre at Kent State. It was disturbing to hear disparate historical occurrences being homogenised in this way. With the help of an independent inquiry, the President found out pretty nearly exactly what happened at Kent State. Having found out, he set the findings aside, and asked the world to believe that all was confusion.

That Cooke should play along is instructive but not startling. It fits the pattern. Cooke’s aquiline elegance of mind could never be bland, but when threatened by contemporary upheaval it can take refuge in a certain dapper knowingness. Perhaps we should all be so democratic.
Although professors may reach for a literary image to describe a barnyard phenomenon, it must be even more common for them to discover that what they had assumed was a metaphor is simply a fact of farm life. An informed citizen who comes to the country rather late in life is often astonished to find that a neighbor who mentions the need to prime the pump is not talking about tinkering with free-market economics but about priming the pump. People do make hay in the country, and if at all possible they make it while the sun shines, so it will be dry when they store it in the barn. "Rudolph, you might say, rules the roost," Jeffrey told me the first time he showed me his flock settling in for the night.
rancher seen at 3 Crabs: tall bronzed Californian, drove up with wife and daughter in Mercedes. Looked like gunfighter of old. Sat and watched waitresses bustling with open and unabashed curiosity of ranch man accustomed to eating in restaurants. Wrinkles at corners of eyes. Dressed in Levis, levi jacket, denim workshirt with 3 pearl snaps at wrists. Tall, looked like Lincoln must have without beard.

WSS basketball game, Dec. '69:
Cheerleaders stiff in their movements during cheers.
Bandleader in turtleneck and mustache.
All around, half-remembered faces: younger brothers and sisters and other relatives of my own classmates.
6 baton twirlers and a flag bearer; at dramatic point in music, twirlers pose and point batons sword-like at flag for singing of anthem.
black and orange school colors

Montana, Jan. '71: helping Dad in his bedroom, I could see both of us reflected in the mirror of his dresser. It was like looking into my own old age.

San Juan ferry scene: man combing his wife's long brunette hair

sand fingers

where sky and sea lip together

Pac. S. meeting a bit thick with wilderness chic: much discussion of proper sleeping bags, wild edibles, etc.

Dad would deadpan

up the Elwha: grouse, hard to see, and slow, slow. Squirrel nearly challenging Carol for her pack at one stop.
crossing eastern Washington, 6/27/88:
The big elevated pipe sprinkler systems in fields catch rainbows as we drive; pipes are at right angles to the freeway, and as we approach, the light from morning sun (7-8 a.m.) behind us moves the rainbow spectrum from major spray to major spray along the pipeline-on stilts.

round hay bales like billiard balls on green table
(green? tan? buff?)

swans' necks of surf @ Richmond Beach point

water trembling under the stars

rigs antlered with bikes (Moab)

sand fuming against mountains (Death Valley)

date palms, ossified

3 generations of power lines to Pahrump (" " trip)

which barely qualified as a wide place in the road
Cape Falcon: the vast talon become stone

(about Oly Pen. cut over land; letter to John Muir?) They butchered this country like cannibals determined to chew down to the last knucklebone. ...They had some excuse, thinking the forests would last forever. We have none.

from a plane above the Midwest: frozen lake and river behind a dam, like a great gray-white sea serpent with its head cut off

ferry on the Sound on dark stormy night: line of its lights look like a long slow arrow

ocean: the commotion that made life endless war of water and land life still coming ashore earth formed that way; ocean still on the move

sheep country: tufts of wool on barb wire

ocean endlessly stroking away the headlands, which endlessly resist

Robinson Jeffers "kindled a morning": kindle a sunrise, or the glow of a sunset

small house with overbig family: diapers hanging 3 and 4 together on clothes line because of lack of line space

beach walking: the tide takes over

whisker as descriptive noun: whisker of sand, for ex

pewter weather of gray days and stormy water

night was sloping across the sky to where the sunset had been

the days drew down
flying over Iowa in winter: snow and bare fields, inexorable squares; countryside like linoleum blocks put down by some gigantic Des Moines housewife

Eastern Washington: small clouds of dust caused by two men walking in field from highway to Cat.

Moses Lake: several children on pedestrian overpass, watching freeway traffic zoom beneath them

Nooksack: quickness of the river trying to leave itself

slaughtered forests north of Quinault: like graveyards ploughed up, stumps like giant knuckle bones. Also: landscape is mashed flat, as if some giant thrashed about committing rape there.

Skagit Valley: a nether corner of the country

Olympic Peninsula is the stern of the nation, bulking up like rear of galleon. Nation faces Europe, flow of interest in that direction.

Feel of high grass against the back of your hands while walking bluffs at Ebey's Landing; your motion and the grass's against each other

At Cannom Beach, looking at ocean: the great and quiet water stretching to Asia, Jeffers said. On the far shore, do Asians look at the Pacific as the mysterious water stretching to America?

lights across Sequim Bay, their reflections pendant in the water before them

Cape Lookout, Oregon: man on beach with monkey in red jacket, frolicking.
Invitational track meet being held on the beach.
Several dozen boys, their uniforms bright against the tan beach and green sea bluffs. Colors from another planet, orange, maroon, white.
Wind has combed the dune hills into waves flowing away from ocean. Dune grass mats hills. Ridge behind, across bay, has been logged, and stumps show like tombstones on the slopes.
a jawline beard, as if that was all of his face he would yield

on the highway, a magpie eating a skunk, seeming to take on its colors

Montana river valleys flaming with cottonwood in Oct. '78; clouds high above like smoke. The space between...

The girl seen at Black Angus when I had dinner there in early Dec., '78: came in with another girl, either slightly older than herself or at least more assured. The younger was at the exact tentative time between girlhood and beginning to be a woman--she no longer looked around the room like a child, but she did sneak looks. Her attention span, and awareness of herself, were changing. She had black hair, with brief upturn--winglike row--of hairdo, from temples back along hairline to her ears. And a single tag of hair stuck out behind, over the rear center of her collar.
S. Fork of Kings River in Calif., June '78:
---record Sierra runoff, the river white mile after mile, a torrent of milk; spray hanging in air over it like steam, jets of spray as the flow blasts off rocks. Water so rough and rock-tossed it seemed higher than the road beside it.

California, June '78: a tawny fractious state, like a palomino bronc, which visiting journalists never quite know how to approach

June 20, '78, Monterey: Preservation Hall Jazz Band. 5 black men, evidently in their 70's: Percy Humphrey, trumpet; Willie Humphrey clarinet (brothers: big slope-shouldered men with stomach girth of small bass drum); Josia "Cie" Frazier, drums (oldest, likely in 80's); James Edward "Sing" Miller, piano; Narvin Kimball, banjo. Two white men, mid-30s or so: Frank Demond, trombone, and Allan Jaffee, tuba, who chose the music as they went along. Impression was of the casual, long-learned skills. The Humphrey Bros., when not playing, each would sit near-motionless, gazing out over audience. Kimball on the other hand seemed to look out to audience for companionable approval; he was the darkest of them, with high-held head and face like Zulu chief. Frazier at the drums would peer at them like elderly bookkeeper who knew by habit exactly what he would find; tapped rhythms with no motion whatsoever above his elbows. The five, taken together, were elderly, overweight men, in crewcuts and pomades, who could play music like hell.

July '78, Carol about the Montana trip for reunion: Montana is a sensual--tactile--feast--the air, the smells, the views. Also a kind of beautiful Appalachia.
James Morris, *Heaven's Command*, 451, on vanishing of the Tasmanians: "They seem an insubstantial people."

452: "...when a man was gone, he was gone. His name was never mentioned again."

N. Cascades Highway, Jan. 22-3, '77: sparkles of light in snowbanks at edge of road look like silver needles flying through air as car flies past.

a wood duck's eyelid closes from the bottom up
Cannon Beach, March 24, '76: during two days of storm, people have been seen in queer mixes of raingear, as if all the gear in town had been thrown into a pile and everyone was blindfolded and then pulled out a top and a bottom.

from the same trip: the howling fluency of wind at Cape Falcon -- a rightness of sound

tag ends of storms in the Coast Range

donut and eggs trick seen in Shoreline PUB: guy at lunch carried tray with two donuts, two eggs -- the eggs sitting up in the donut holes as if in egg cups

the iron schedule

Olympics in sunset profile: my eyes fill with color and silhouette

Country Kitchen restaurant in Twisp: menu lists prices for thermoses fills of coffee

mumpy country

James Morris, Pax Britannica, 217: quotes Kipling on Empire Britons met in Singapore, pale from the climate "and the veins on the backs of their hands are printed in indigo."

Morris, ditto, 259: "the air becoming sweeter"

Morris, ditto, 260*: brilliant description of Simla

Morris, Heaven's Command, 123, on Hudson's Bay Company's Canada: "This was a wild tremendous country, like a vaster Scotland perhaps, where the emptiness had a desert allure."
Kalaloch sunset, '74:
Clouds like great feathers, glowing from firebird
Red from sunset hits water, makes column of color
on water and wet sand.
Chlor spreading through sky along the clouds
Standing in tide, feeling it dig under your feet,
washing beneath your heels and slowly sinking you
from Oregon coast: capes do the work of bargain mtns,
islanding you in the air
mountains the fever lines of earth's making
ocean beach, June '75, evening at Cedar Creek: in dusk,
outlined islands holding their dimension
similarly: snow holding the outline of ridges and trees
a clapboard shanty of an argument
quicksand (bogs) at edge of mind
can hear the iron gates barging shut in the mind.

winter riding the wind, down from the high range and
across the flatlands. Here a 00 died, there a 00
movie house in Ketchum, Idaho, Sept. '75: looked like
meeting of Shagnasties Unlimited.

✓ At Ketchum, walking up from Hemingway's grave: a plane's
shadow rollercoasting on the sage hills.
✓ A hawk seen nearly a mile away, incredibly distinct
against the high blue Idaho sky.

airplaning your hand out the car window
road lollipping around curves
forest nosing at the back of our house, pushing, probing
Deer Park in the Olympics: the sun sets up the first parts of the day -- slanting shadows down from ridgelines, deeper shadows of valleys, the broad distinct line of silhouette on the high horizon, highlights on the meadow flowers.

Cloud moving above Grand Lake puts deep imprint of shadow on trees already shadowed by each other.

Thud of rifle bullet hitting deer: comes as instant echo to shot, BAMthud, can be heard couple hundred yds away; hunters like Dad could tell instantly whether animal was hit.

Trail zigzagging up mountain like carpenter's rule unfolding.

Windy day on Puget Sound, sailboats all at identical angles all across water, like tips of spears flung and stuck in blue field.

Dad's boundaries narrowed to the atoms of air he could summon into a breath.

Setting sun on ocean horizon -- molten weld, clinching dark onto earth.

Dallas airport: rancher with round outline of snooze can showing in side pants pocket.

Drinking with the glass far back into your mouth to kill the taste.

Ocean Grove shore: thin sails of spray flattening (wisping) from crests of waves.

Rain slanted down today at 60 degree angle.

Walking the OG boardwalk in today's wind: wind at my back began to lift my arms out from my body, a basic push to flight.
pranks of the earth, reinforcing my uneasiness that man has little power here

hazed with mist

Ebeys Landing: green crown of trees, tan bluff

Vancouver, BC, July '72: in Stanley Park, lawn bowlers rolling their cockeyed balls over impeccably manicured grass. Tiny old Oriental man, like crumple of parchment, in dapper striped pants and straw hat, playing putting course in park

--at Schnitzel House, people eating with left hands, a clue that they, with European backgrounds, thought it a good restaurant too. Another good sign was that German-speaking family of 4 was waiting patiently outside for place to sit.

--trout jumping at Lightning Lake in Manning Park

crone mountains

morning at Dungeness Spit campsite, looking south to Olympics: early sun is sorting the green textures --blue green of forested mountain, slate green of barn roof, brown-green of hayfield

from Cornish ballet class:
--exercising legs on bar, dancers slide bodies like supple willows before wind
--fine sheen of sweat on dancers
--their neck cords stand out in exercises

from backstage at ACT during Summertree:
--grayness of theater, like inside of battleship; floor gray, walls gray, ceiling dark and covered with lights and apparatus
--lights hanging from ceiling rods, tilted down like fat black bats

flying over Cascades: roads in mountains below look like cracks in nature's beauty

dark wet-red log working its way ashove
Oswald West campground like fur trappers’ rendezvous — kids with long hair, worn clothes. But very courteous, quiet camp.

Garibaldi smokey with plants

Tillamook undistinguished small town, like all across country

Cannon Beach bar has wallpaper chart of Pacific Coast shipwrecks — hundreds.

Wind at Cape Mears lighthouse; 3 arches offshore

Cape Falcon: bluffs shouldering into ocean; seals swimming below. Wind

plane ride from Spokane, coming home from Dad’s funeral: two paces moving toward each other — the vaulting, arrowing speed of the plane and the centuries-old thrust of mountains toward sky. The slow timelessness of the mountains wins by enduring.

the valley going west into ridges, more and more hills toward Sixteen

✓ the white of frozen irrigation on green fields

Townsend: dark old patterns of clouds moving across hills, like shades of night

white rock letters high school students put on hills

As harvested grass fields were burned off weekend of Sept. 7-8, ’74, light blue-gray smoke over Willamette Valley — like small dirty storms on horizon, except they don’t move, just thin out and smear. Visibility near Salem down to ; or 3/4 mile.

Oregon capes like spiny-backed monsters, snout down in the surf

wind traveling across Smith R. Valley
it is one of the ends of the world, where a continent chunks off...

cows that were husks of animals

in a six-colored shirt

the brain in its bone helmet

the sibilance of an S curve (tires on road?)

the wind sipping dust

gulls balleting along the roofs of wind

a man who looked able to juggle sledgehammers

palomino hills, a herd of

mountain with topknot of snow

as if cut out with a rip saw

the sun an ember

Aug. '78: on my right thumbnail is a bloodmark, a halfmoon, straight edge down toward knuckle, 1/8" wide and about half that high. It appeared weeks ago at very base of thumbnail, where nail meets the skin—some bump or bruise I didn't even notice. Ever since, it has been riding the pale, larger halfmoon at base of nail: just now, growth of the nail has carried it about 1/3 out the length of thumbnail, so that it sits exactly on outermost curved rim of the paler halfcircle, like moon in eclipse at edge of sun. Color of the blood mark is rust, or light tone of dried blood; it is striated (lengthwise along thumbnail) by surface texture of the nail, so that the mark has a spectrum-like look of being made up of adjacent straight lines. Like a locket, or moss agate, some miniature of universe in horn-material of nail and blood-daub...
Description

Carol and I with coffee cups in our hands would go through the house early in the morning—as if we had the cups out for a walk

A robin gathering straws near the garden—they stick out of his beak like cat's whiskers

The upper lefthand corner of the country, like the return address of an envelope

A man juggling cleavers

Juncoes fly fast and hard toward the ground as if thrown, then seem to slide in the air to a landing

Like a cowtown sheriff oiling his six shooter so he can go out and do the needful

The day had grayed over

Forced up like the edges of shore ice

detail from Montana trip, May '80: sledgehammer head resting on pickup box behind driver: short handle stuck in box hole entirely out of sight.
Shadows cut gaps on the sage land
a crooked sleeve of water reaching through the valley

The seat of his pants dragged in like an empty sack

Winter riding the wind, down from the ridge line, across the sage flats

Like the ascending lines where the arches of a cathedral meet

A junco comes along a fir branch like a monk strolling a path

Breasts coming out of her sweater like holster shells

It was the kind of day to make you wish you were back home under your mother’s bed playing with the cat

He was the kind of fellow who would have named all of his sons junior if he could have

A crow lands on the fir branch outside the window, plays up and down, like a pirate on a pitching ship deck (cruel dark beak, baleful look)
Idaho interior is all up and down, except where a river flattens into a broad pool before helling off into new white rapids.

the birds made morning with...

paunches of ore on the hillsides...

windless

the perched hawk unsheathes its wings

the white web of stars above the Salmon River handcuffed to

parabola across the continent

the wind moving on a field

winter would blow itself out

the ice thinning down to lace patterns, and then water from watching the Phila. String Quartet, esp. Iglitzin: the musicians' trick of crimping lower corner of music page for quick turning.

Sara Hart's habit of talking about husband Charlie as if he were dead, even as he sits next to her

patches of fog snagged in the tree tops
Coots are the hicks of the waterfowl world—in their simpleton style, nodding in self-encouragement: Yup, yup, I got it right at last, the feet go under the water, the head goes on top. Contemplate the coot and wonder what other jokes nature may be up to.

sour winter on its way out

the creak of dry madrona leaves, hinge of season, summer into declining summer.

a man of medium height and middling looks

westerner in a shadowplaid shirt

coho spawning: their brilliant bruised color

white knuckles of the ocean; nicks, bleeding white

bushtits like leaves trying the new branches

morning pulling itself from the night

a spider rappelling
WSS, June '77: barmaid in the Buckaroo, which has many regular drinkers, many of them loggers, doesn't bother to ask what they want: just holds beer mug up and gives an inquisitive look.

Shirley Ann Grau, The Condor Passes, 17:
"The sun was beginning to penetrate the high band of heat haze to the east, and it swam in the sky, round and yolk-colored."

p. 20--"...why he'd come home half naked, stripped like a willow that's been peeled."

p. 387--"Stanley drove as fast as he dared on dark roads streaked with autumn fogs."

John Cheever, Bullet Park, 11--
"...a winding highway that seemed to have been drawn on the map by a child with a grease pencil."

134: "The wind is out of the northeast and coming up the steps he can distinguish the sounds made by the different trees as the wind fills them: maple, birch, tulip and oak."

236: "The birds in the trees seemed, to Hammer, to be singing either an invitation list or the names of a law firm. Tichnor, Cabot, Ewing, Trilling and Swope, they sang."

John Updike, Museums and Women, 145:
"Harvest and seedtime, seedtime and harvest, the elbows of the year."

Dan Levin, SI, Nov. 18, '74, "End of Bluefin Tuna":
"Ellis Hodgkins stands in his doorway, huddled against the wind, squinting out to sea with his one good eye. Another fall is ending in Rockport, Mass, his cameo of a town..."

...He has at least a foot of faint scars on his pleasant, handsome face."
James Morris, Heaven's Command, 158: "...it was O'Connell who called Sir Robert Peel's smile 'the silver plate on the lid of a coffin.'"

Morris, ditto, 185: "phrasing his public proclamations in thumping antiphony, half Old Testament, half steamhammer."

Morris, ditto, 208: "Through that untamed landscape it ran like a coiling thread of rational judgment...."

Morris, ditto, 209, "suggestive of wild black woods"

Morris, ditto, 232, "a treeless place without a flicker of green"

Morris, ditto, 240: "He believed absolutely in every word of the Bible, especially the bloodthirsty parts."

Morris, ditto, 283, of Richard Burton: "...he lived in a more or less constant condition of fury."

Morris, ditto, 291, of Livingston: "this marvelous and maddening Scot"

Morris, ditto, 359: "Camada sometimes seemed to be nothing but frontier, as the Duke of Wellington had expostulated long before...."

Morris, ditto, 379: "...his words remained in the memory like music."

Morris, 397: "...the King of Ashanti went into battle hung all over, head to foot, with infallible ju-jus, forming a kind of spiritual chain mail..."
Details from Idaho trip:

Carol, in The Royal Restaurant in Boise: looking around, she pointed out that white shoes mean hot weather — so we don't see many in Seattle.

Up N. Fork of Hyndman Creek, as we hiked under brilliant sun through sage-and-buff country, she pointed out that Hemingway must have liked hot climates — Spain, Idaho, Cuba, Africa — or at least places with extremes of climate. And how much does metabolism affect what one writes?

In movie theatre at Ketchum, watched as scruffy young folks wandered in, sounds of beer cans snapping open — I said it looked like meeting of Shagnasties Unltd.

As we walked back to car from Hemingway Memorial at Sun Valley, plane went overhead, its shadow rollercoastering, dipping and diving, along the sage hillsides.

Brilliant clear air — from campsite n. of Ketchum, I watched a hawk which must have been nearly a mile away.

Stay at Spring Bar campgrnd up the Salmon, Sept. 3, '75: no rafts from river trips came thru, which surprised us.

So many historic sites marked in central Idaho, from Lewiston to about Riggins, you can hardly drive.

An Idaho constant: narrow, restricted bridges.

Also up the Salmon: incredibly posh house, with swimming pool and cabana, across slender and suspension bridge. We thought it was posh lodge, drove across to ask directions to campgrnd; were told by caretakers it's a private residence.
Muriel Spark, in The Girls of Slender Means, p. 37 -- "...Jane Wright who was miserable about her fatness and spent much of her time in eager dread of the next meal..."

Kittitas Valley at sunset as I returned from Spokane Expo story, late Sept. '73: deep purple shadows, dark pockets of black lying next to windrows, more shadows over the field patterns, cows belly-deep in grass of glowing green fields. To the north, Wenatchee Range clawing above horizon like child's fantasy.

Evergreen Speedway at Monroe with Ann Campbell, Memorial Day '72:
Everyone looked much as expected -- sunburned, very few in hats; women in bouffants. Dark glasses and beer everywhere; many people carrying coolers, blankets, Women in shorts.
Frenzied yammer of announcer. Blasting noise from cars in time trials.
Pete's car unexpectedly was 1" too high, because of new tires. 3d time, it passed under bar ok, to cheers of crowd.

The Jensen Ranch: everything awkward there, buildings too far apart, hillside, out of sight of mountains; road went up hill, making immediate problem whether you could pull it in any mud; alkali bogholes.

Skid Road: landing dock for ex-cons, an Ellis Island the invisible people the gray ghetto your farthest neighbors the tollgate city
Unused in article: within a block of Frye Hotel, two all-night businesses operate. One is the Seattle police hq, the other a series of bail bondsmen.

a la Foster St., WSS, Mont
the remembered landscape begins to map itself again.

all spaced uncannily along this single line of flight
like knots in a thong.

BRRRNG: the seatbelt sign has chimed off.

Mullan Pass, the intercom voice of the pilot drawls, and
ahead, what he describes as Great Falls-Lewiston-Miles City.

Two generations ago, what the writer Bernard DeVoto
called the tidal pull of the sun brought people with my
name west toward places like those. Out of Scotland,
across an ocean, then two-thirds of a continent.

Trains run in the sky now.

phosphorescent rivers of headlights

America seen from the air is like America seen by first
arrivals from the ocean—strange, shadowed...

in an airplane, we are in suspension in more ways than one.

can see time in a plane: sunset coming quicker, or
lingering...

Below, time zones, rectilinear survey, interstate roads
and railroads—the web of lines we tie the continent down with.

Could crisscross US in one day (airline schedule to make
colossal X over country: San Diego to Boston (?), Boston-
Tampa, Tampa-Seattle).

Wilbur, Orville: is this what you had in mind?

the plastic of planes, and turn plastic too.
Backwards across America (cont)

We fly not only over earth, but over time, too.

Down there, 35,000 feet of defied gravity beneath me...
Backwards Across America (cont)

Man across the aisle is studying performance graphs of stocks; jagged profiles like the Rockies below

Man behind now whistling: WHEEP uh WHEEP wheep wheep uh wheep wheep

The sun falling faster behind us as we near E Coast

A venture in memory

Milwaukee to the left; below, small Wis. squares of farms; close by Oregon, Illinois?

seat belt signal: BNNG

Over Front Royal, Va.: trapezoid patterns of metes and bounds fields, random, odd

roads in DC area at dark -- rivers of commuter lights

the day of flying is skewed, no middle to it -- 3 breakfasts and dinner

Woman behind me over Newark, looking at rivers of cars and ocean of house lights: "Goodness gracious." Yes.

Carol: planes' customary great circle route of landing: north into Newark, south into Dulles

reading TW language which boomed like the rhythm of the rails (quote)

It is hard to believe that scene now -- but impossible to think it could have happened elsewhere.
Backwards Across America

flying at 37,000 feet; minutes from Seattle to Moses L.

Below go C d'alene, Mullan Pass, G Falls, Lewistn, Miles City, Aberdeen

Tacoma industrial smoke -- induslm's signal smokes

Rainier a Xmas bauble of blue and white

in Cascades, logging roads stand out with fresh snow; like great Mayan hieroglyphics

Across Montana, striped panels, tan & chocolate, of farmland

snow in gullies, white like silk threads or leaf veins

kinks of river in Mont.

change of patterns: the linear of riding rr to 180 degrees of plane

memory of plowing edges of field with Cat

There is this to be said for Newark: the continent begins to flow westward from here.

patterns (personal, geographic, historic) run together and twist, like the braid of the Missouri thru its sandbars and islands

the Yellowstone comes kinking from the SW, with lore of L&C

plane a hermetic sealed tube, like dept. store tubes which whizzed overhead

Man behind me is drinking, begins to sing; he has been nagging his wife all the way; is rooster-pecked the opposite of hen-pecked? hissm singing: rmr dmm uh doo

(CONT.)
It was at Westbury, on a day when we travelled more haltingly than usual, that I once left the train. It was Sunday, a day of clear summer, the air dry and cloudless, little motes of sun haze dancing in the yellow light. I walked out of the station and found, at the end of a green lane, a lake, like a mirage, fringed by reeds. There, on that lake, I saw for the first time the great crested grebe, a diving bird I had only read about. It swam low in the water, its dark body almost lost, its long neck holding aloft its ruffed and regal head; and it was joined by another grebe, and then one more, and yet another, until there were six of these remarkable birds swimming, or vanishing into the water. If it was water. It was an element so rare and fine, so unruffled by any passage of air or bird, that the very reflections of those grebes floated beneath their bodies complete in feather, in color, in action. Waterdrops fell down from each flawless bird and up from each immaculate image, dissolving in each other as they met, in an equal har-
OLD MAPS AND NEW

There are spaces
where infringements are possible.
There are notices that say:
Trespassers will be welcome.

Pity leaks through the roof
of the Labour Exchange.
In the Leader’s pocket,
wrapped in the plans for the great offensive,
are sweets for the children
and a crumpled letter.

There are spaces still to be filled
before the map is completed —
though these days it’s only
in the explored territories
that men write, sadly,
Here live monsters.
MOON-LANDING

The rind of Newton's apple
was hard as a mason's hand;
yet the apple exploded, its pulp
spattered minds in closets
then minds outside closets.
That was the beginning.

Now two minds, hard
as silicon, glittering as quartz,
fall logically on moondust;
and blind stars and dwarf stars
are trees of apples and the forests
of galaxies make audible
their shaking leaves.
In a mind's midnight
they rustle and shine
as threatening as logic,
as beautiful as revelation.
GULLS ON A HILL LOCH

They resent our arrival, they rise like big snowflakes blown up in a swirl. They tilt and dive, make sudden accelerations and effortless towerings, or float, dead still, offering us two stony eyes hung between angelic elbows. They draw diagrams in the air and score them out, they unravel the sense of pattern.

And all the time the crying, the cackling, the objurgations in that impossible language! — some like the cries a shell would make, or a corkscrew singing in the morning, or the leading contralto in a choir of tombstones, or a shell-less egg, or a terrified slate, or the hinges of a door in the Hospital for the Insane, or a moonbeam mewing in its forest, or an icicle arguing with an icicle.

But mostly they are mad, and defiant, those Gothic scratches and yells and opulent ululations, compulsively tearing the air at the seams or yodelling from a precipice of space.

When we leave, they land on the water, shrugging and sipping, affronted, glad to see the back of us, who go downhill into a summer evening, observing such sanities as hens — fat dowagers bowing and scraping — eight swallows clothespegged on a telephone wire and the village bull, as usual, pretending to be Jove.
In any midnight blood bubbles into ferocious flowers that eat the darkness and crawl on the sleeper’s skin. That safe chair releases its ghost; it climbs the wall like a louse and like a daddy long legs hangs from the ceiling by one toe. Hear how the pillow ferments. See how the picture on the wall turns into some other hanged thing, not dead yet. And the window, that pale psychiatrist, stands watching it all and coming to dreadful decisions.

And in any midnight blood runs through its narrow streets shouting the marvellous news: the sleeper’s mouth smiles and his hand half closes to hold the shape that means perfect. Green wavers of light spill from the cornices like Spring, like happiness, like the tenderest of new beginnings. The bed stands sturdy, its solid block of space fraternal with everything, holding the sleeper still in his safest of selves.

And every morning is a landing at a new airport, is a congregation and scattering of people, in whose luggage are undeclared middnights which they will exchange secretly and without knowing it. A look is an orchid, a word is a knife, a gesture a lamentable crying in sunlight. And the middnights wait, each one a fable of the past, each one a rehearsal of the future.
Before the Curtain

This is the story—the long and true story—of one ocean, two ships, and about a hundred and fifty men. It is a long story because it deals with a long and brutal battle, the worst of any war. It has two ships because one was sunk and had to be replaced. It has a hundred and fifty men because that is a manageable number of people to tell a story about. Above all, it is a true story because that is the only kind worth telling.

First, the ocean, the steep Atlantic stream. The map will tell you what that looks like: three-cornered, three thousand miles across and a thousand fathoms deep, bounded by the European coastline and half of Africa, and the vast American continent on the other side: open at the top like a champagne glass, and at the bottom like a municipal rubbish-dumper. What the map will not tell you is the strength and fury of that ocean, its moods, its violence, its gentle balm, its treachery: what men can do with it, and what it can do with men. But this story will tell you all that.

Then the ship, the first of the two, the doomed one. At the moment she seems far from doomed: she is new, untried, lying in a river that lacks the tang of salt water, waiting for the men to man her. She is a corvette, a new type of escort ship, an experiment designed to meet a desperate situation still over the horizon. She is brand-new; the time is November 1939: her name is H.M.S. Compass Rose.

Lastly, the men, the hundred and fifty men. They come on to the stage in twos and threes: some are early, some are late, some, like this pretty ship, are doomed. When they are all assembled, they are a company of sailors. They have women, at least a hundred and fifty women, loving them, or tied to them, or glad to see the last of them as they go to war. But the men are the stars of this story. The only heroines are the ships: and the only villain the cruel sea itself.
The Cruel Sea

Ericson frowned. "That hadn't struck me," he said, somewhat coldly. "But it'll be a rotten time for anyone who tries to kill us."

The expected signal came at dawn, on a dull calm morning that saw Sallash still circling the rock, still occasionally weaving a cunning variation of her course, still plodding along as ordered, and serving three meals a day, and remaining keyed up for any danger, any last attack.

"Hostilities terminated," it said. "All U-boats have been ordered to surrender by German High Command. The surrender signal is a large black flag. You should take appropriate precautions against individual enterprise. The two U-boats that are presumed to be still in your immediate area should be escorted to Loch Ewe."

"Immediate area?" said Ericson. "It's a libel. . . . We'll wait for them to show up."

The beaten foe emerged.

All over the broad Atlantic, wherever they had been working or lying hid, the U-boats surfaced, confessing the war's end. A few of them, prompted by determination or struck by guilt, scuttled or destroyed themselves, or ran for shelter, not knowing that there was none; but mostly they did what they had been told to do, mostly they hoisted their black surrender flags, and said where they were, and waited for orders.

They rose, dripping and silent, in the Irish Sea, and at the mouth of the Clyde, and off the Lizard in the English Channel, and at the top of the Minches where the tides raced: they rose near Iceland, where Compass Rose was sunk, and off the northwest tip of Ireland, and close to the Faeroes, and on the Gibraltar run where the sunk ships lay so thick, and near St. John's and Halifax, and in the deep of the Atlantic, with three thousand fathoms of water beneath their keels.

They surfaced in secret places, betraying themselves and their frustrated plans: they rose within sight of land, they rose far away in mortal waters where, on the map of the battle, the crosses that were sunken ships were etched so many and so close that the ink ran together. They surfaced above their handiwork, in hatred or in fear: sometimes snarling their continued rage, sometimes accepting thankfully a truce they had never offered to other ships, other sailors.

They rose, and lay wherever they were on the battlefield, waiting for the victors to claim their victory.

Two rose to Saltash, off Rockall.