

how you had too much wine  
and when i think  
of how we all laughed together  
    i can feel your gentle tug  
then i remember you  
so relaxed and smiling  
i remember too how much i took you for granted  
i remember my ears burning from listening  
while you recounted your days  
and how many times i wasn't really listening      at the other end  
because i'd thought i'd heard it all before  
and was young enough to believe i'd always remember it  
now this is all i can say      of my thoughts

1992, 1993

### poem without end #3

nanabush is an english professor  
sitting in an ivory tower  
looking down upon the masses who go herd-like to their classes  
writing books that no one looks at  
reading poetry on money  
to church drinking tea and eating crumpets with the dead men who turn women into bone

nanabush is a landlord who turns off the heat in winter  
and a tenant who throws parties while the babies are fast sleeping  
ng the one who keeps you laughing even when your heart is breaking  
and the one who tells you stories when it's wisdom you've been seeking

nanabush is a singer  
she's a heavy metal drummer  
she cheats and swears and talks of death  
then lets you meet her children  
she throws pearls onto parliament hill  
dresses men in clothes of sheepskin  
then she sits alone and drinks cheap wine and cries into the table  
while she prays for gods' forgiveness because she can't forget the sabbath  
she's a lonely wooden goddess on a path into damnation

nanabush knows jesus  
he plays tricks on paul and peter  
he unlocks the gates and steals a peek

and cannot keep the secret  
he will shit in darkened hallways <sup>Z 9</sup>  
pull your pants down to your ankles  
he will take your love ~~and steal~~ your life  
and give you dreams and laughter <sup>Z 7</sup>

nanabush is a trapper who wears sealskin pajamas  
he eats fish that have been poisoned  
speaks a language now forgotten  
and when he jumps into the river  
half crazy with survival <sup>S 2</sup>

he tries to touch the bottom to create a new religion  
but he floats up to the surface  
and his hands are cold and empty  
so the animals give him shelter because they know the winter's coming <sup>Ze</sup>  
and ~~when~~ he wakes they wait together for the storm that is approaching <sup>S 7</sup>

*chatty*  
silent nearly frozen they turn into a monument of stone

1990, 1993

## my secret tongue and ears

i  
as dusk falls from this autumn day  
(like a blood red leaf)  
the darkness whirls madly to the earth  
carried by windfury

still  
i sit alone  
against the lamp's dim light  
staring at the hieroglyphics in my skin  
thinking  
if i could simply read these symbols  
tell my own story to myself  
and know i had spoken a truth  
but these lines mean nothing to me  
except a number of years gone by  
and a certain lack of understanding  
so  
sadly as the day flies  
the truth remains  
a secret i keep from myself

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