

**WHERE ARE WE NOW?**

**PETER WATERHOUSE**

**TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN BY  
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**DP**

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**WHERE ARE WE NOW?**

## WHERE ARE WE NOW?

O yes: O no. Why no? Why not? (Something is sliding with us, along us; us yes, us no. Often we stay uncounted among trees. Movement among trees: Us. And with a direction. Far and wide no tree: Where are we now? The trees remember: Once we were men. Now we fan upwards in silence or act black in winter. Winter is white We're not. We are winter. Everything is everything.

A beetle opens its jaws and eats: Everything. A minimal crunch an itsi-bitsi squeak: the world. What's the world doing in such a mouth? Everything. We never knew. The merry beetle thinks: I am enjoying a part, the part contains the whole. Beetles can't think. O yes, O no. Why no? Where are we now?

No beetle opens no mouth: Nothing. Great crunch huge world. There is still space between, there is still no space between, there is no space between, still us still no us, no us. Loving conversations are possible. The dialogue goes:  
Where are you?  
Where are you?  
Where are you now?  
Tree.                                Tree.  
Still. Still not. Not.) There is a ruckus around language.

## THE WIDENING OF HISTORY

Today language is called: No-one. Hesitation spreads widely.  
Wide, the world. In our silence, narrow fruit is called:  
Happy fruit garden. Some forms of stillness  
taste sour in summer. The name of sourness: Plucked  
too soon. The year turns sweet with our hesitation  
(could turn sweet, could-turn-sweet  
is called the course of history). O how beautiful  
to push, speechlessly, summer toward  
fall. How to go on pushing?  
Who pushes us?

Someone says: Night pushes us towards day. Alas,  
days also push. The movement will soon be called fall.  
Sweet signs descend vertically: We  
take a bite. At this moment  
sweet history takes a speechless step. The step is called:  
No step. We agree on context and  
hesitantly name it: Garden. Outside, we are silent.  
The inside is called: Quiet worm  
in apple night.

We wait. We wait for the worm. Thereafter the garden is called  
field, woods, valley, world. The worms stay  
in the center. The waiting man thinks:  
This could turn into a widening of history.

On the day of narrow thoughts we change unobtrusively. Soon we turn into  
the mobility of woods, the oppressiveness in the beetle's landscape,  
the other fish near the fish. How quickly we turn  
into fish: Unexpected.  
The system of change is: Not only fish are fish. Or:  
Not only the world is the world. We are the second haying,  
second breathing birds, second patient cats.

We welcome friends with the words: Hello third haying  
hello third red cat of the world. Question:  
World before or world after the change? Answer:  
We are still changing.  
Hay, hay. Cat, cat. World, world.

In the nick of time (light, night, great answer of landscape—  
we are almost without light, almost without night, almost without  
the great tongue (tongue hay, tongue cat, tongue  
bird of the world): No good) nothing doing: We remained restrained  
and microscopic: In the nick of time. We push grass into grass  
OK. We push blackbird into blackbird  
OK. World into world. OK.  
In the end, we are left. Everything happened unobtrusively  
fish swim unobtrusively as fish. Who  
has changed?

Beetles. Birds. Night. Grass. World.  
Beetles. Birds. Night. Grass. World.  
Unobtrusive.

## LEAVING THE IDENTICAL

The city streets mirror our African skin: in other eyes we are white weather (a cloud can't see itself blue is blue again and again, invisibly you kiss yourself. O self. The second Wegener drift, without context, causes the largest fault in us little continents with cloudbanks, the unique sky many times above our heads.)

Realistic city street greeting to the reader: good morning.

O again and again blue is blue. The black road lies on the black road. We will be white blacks tomorrow (Monday, Tuesday, Sudan, Nubia, Friday, Saturday Eden): the half zebra of the future (half horse half horse). It all sounds hard but is not at all hard. We are quadrupeds on two legs. To make it simpler yet we even sit down. Simply. Even.

And the hoof-beat of cities softly turned into people's shoes: if you don't believe it, like everyone else, you leave the big time for smaller synchronicities and rattle in a different key. But we are black horses bright on the road in the South in the heat, the ice, we are snowing. But it is all very simple.

Winter signal to the reader: difficult thankyou.

There are no reasons yet. We tame water turtles watch door knobs, sniff pencils. For now greatness is always called village or city to save on names. We do not like to say: Vienna is Vienna. Or we say: Vienna is Znaim. There is no reason for Znaim. Lack of reason is ground for comparison.

Third: Nothing is entirely futile. Between the great colors  
(color in the South, color in Vienna, colored ground) we  
take a friendly step forward. A rare event  
it counts. Second:

The remainder is subject to more severe measures. We do not  
sever, we lie down.

First: The beginning, persevering to the end.



## THE HINDER PARTS OF POETRY

Weekday, weather and soul, we call weekday, weather and soul  
gladly, gently, preliminary free of thoughts of death  
etc. The hinder parts of the soul are named:  
ungladly, ungently, unfortunately not free and  
so on. Over and so on drifts weather, drift days  
and we say: Week, sun, soul. Soon week, sun, soul  
will be called a month in winter. There's often been a month in winter  
I've called this. As a variant, I've called November: Rain  
and summer: Indistinguishable heat on Mondays  
so called by us in the hinder parts of day  
in changeable weather turning and turning and  
losing its balance. What loses balance  
goes on a special journey. It is called: unbalanced journey to the hindmost,  
but the traveler is on a second road to a new possible  
synthesis (newest world, with the newest bird  
newest train, newest sky  
synthesized into sky, trigonometrically located with help of  
weekday, weather and soul up front:  
Gentle, unbalanced, edible like apples: What  
are we talking about? We are talking about the newest page  
(rotation of figures, rotation, rotation  
of poetry, we too are squeezed between  
drums and rollers, railway passengers pulled  
proofed variants under what sky, in what world  
with what bird on this day, this moon  
in this soul that doesn't exist?) Preliminary, our beginning  
soon the first friendliness is gone, soon  
free play turns into dread. Most dreadful: the harmony is stable  
unimaginable rotation through  
weekday, weather and soul, on all  
hinder parts. The man playing the harmonium means by this:  
There are only hinder parts. Hindness = all.

## METAMORPHOSES OF THE LEIBNIZ APPLE

Down falls the apple, into place, its own future in a city  
like St.Petersburg. The past outlasts example after example  
(passes over the fallen fruit). Everything (beg pardon?)  
happens also in 1680. What are repetitions called  
since? Repetitions are called:  
Nameless place in St.Petersburg. Once more we are  
more at a loss. Loss has fallen  
we name this process: Steady stream:  
St.Petersburg streams. St.Petersburg streams down  
to Vienna. Does Vienna stream? Yes. Another is what  
one thing leads to, hence every thing has  
1000 names and 1680 names, the led-to-things  
grow into their 18<sup>th</sup> century, Lenz lies dead having reached Moscow  
his death reaches us, we die through our other self  
a rare glow is called: Best of all worlds, best of all apples  
unnoticed. Hello, Unnoticed. The unnoticed is the best of all worlds  
(fall is an unnoticed loosening in trees planted  
long ago, the pear now on my shoulder has traveled there from  
other times, has streamed through other times  
is St.Petersburg fallen on what is called:  
Just my shoulder, without explanation, without reason  
of small significance: A portion of fruit, a right  
shoulder: Countable, divine, O, exclaims the man on a walk, and  
this O collapses centuries. Can the millennium  
be collapsed into the shape of the Leibniz apple? Constant counter-  
question: What is a Leibniz apple?)

(A Leibniz apple is a millennium: We now say.)

## LITERAL CALENDAR

Sometimes we start like this: chair.

Chair.

Soon our start takes a big leap, the leap says literally:

Please have a seat. The distance leaped is called:

Thanks for the seat. This is how everybody measures movement  
literally. What does it mean? It means:

We prefer to sit. It means:

chairs embrace us lovingly. It means:

The carpenter has slipped a loving God under our ass.

It means: movement can be measured literally, we

count syllables, big time in our mouth

sometimes the irrepressible ticks: chair.

Chair. We are clocks. Chair.

Chair. Sooner leaps, later leaps, quadruped time

on our tongue, we explode it into thin air: chair. Soon

air will be called: Please have a seat. Thanks.

Rather hard. Yes, rather hard. Rather love. Yes

rather love (sooner and later and tongue and time: row one

sooner and later and tongue and time: row two

we trade rows, chair remains chair: we can start

anywhere.)

Suggestions to start with: First, a saw (very sharp. Yes

very sharp.) First, water (flowing. Yes, flowing

and cold.) First, sky as a tongue (sky

O sky). Leaping from one row to another is called:

sky touched our lips (first and second); we count

in flowing water (we swim first and second); only now

the suggestions can be cut (it is late. Yes

it is late. Later came out of a big leap onto

the next chair—rather difficult calculation. Yes

very difficult.)

When somebody says: Big leap onto the chair, it means:  
Thank you for the seat, thank you for difficult calculations  
of rows, thank you for the literal future of chairs  
thank you for the flowing tenderness of the armrest. Thank you means:  
Trading rows, we may start anywhere.

Sky, chair, water. We breathe.  
Sky, chair, water. We breathe. We reduce the third  
to the second. We show the second is in the first. We breathe  
first. One, two, three  
difficult calculation, one two, three (we shouldn't say this  
anymore. Yes, not say this anymore.)

We don't end up in construction. Row one.  
We don't end up in the postscript. Row two.  
We don't end up in suggestion. Row three.  
We don't end up in three. Row four.  
We don't end up in two. Row five.  
We don't end up in one. We are hard to pin down, we pull together  
large literal movement, we push time  
against sense, rows careen through rows, and  
those who count say at respective moments: Chair.  
Chair. Chair. Every respective moment  
is a start, and we say:  
Row number six, seat number one, obstructed view. Yes  
rather obstructed, the view. Row one makes you crane your head.  
In our head, we pull together figures and finally calculate the one and only  
figure.  
Which is the only figure? everyone asks on seat one, row six.  
Everyone sits with the only figure on respective seats.  
Thank you. Sky. Water.  
Thank you. Sky. Water. One. (Push this thought farther. Push this  
thought farther. It is late. It is late means: The only figure is too high. Make  
a literal movement with the literal figure. Is literal movement  
not loved rather ecstatically? It is.)

Nothing has stopped (stop, stop, stop, help me, help me, help me  
figure in the eye, figure in the eye, the chairs are singing are singing, the chairs are  
singing, we flow, we don't flow, we flow,  
we don't flow. This means: We are at any old place  
for the right start.) (O how beautiful. Yes, how beautiful.)

## CONSTRUCTIVE PROCEDURE AND SWEET DESTINY

The beginning stands on its own feet (first takes the first step:  
What's long been changed is now called: Walk, we too walk  
our feet take us in hand: It is all intentional. Exclamation of exclamations:  
Not always is it all intentional.)

Walking is described impersonally as follows:  
Apple, apple, sky, Cologne, apple turns to cherry, sky,  
glass, Bremen, Graz, Mainz, glass, glass turns to  
Cologne, sky, shoes, everything, Bremen in shoes, cherry  
sky passes through uncertain sky, Graz begins under the shoe,  
Cologne, Cologne, apple, apple, walking is  
a walking pear of shoes. What follows after the beginning  
is called, in summary: intentional everything.

The intentional summer is called: We turn to apple in our mouth and love  
the sweet destiny. We  
stand on our feet of summer, we feel  
the beginning that intends it all: in our mouth we're from Cologne  
in our mouth there is also sky, in our mouth, a pear moves up  
and down and is taken apart into intentions. The  
constructive procedure of cherries  
makes for sweet walks in Cologne: Not always. The procedure  
goes through a procedure: Not always. We turn destiny into  
sweet beginning. The summary of our intentions is called:  
shoes. Now the beginning stands up in shoes. When the beginning stands  
ready for the journey, we intend great walking on our own.

Summer, exclamation, change. Summer, exclamation, change.  
Summer changes into exclamation; exclamation, into change  
sweet construction will soon be our intention.

## ABOUT WHAT IS A HAND AND WHAT IS IN THE HAND

You take a piece of wood in your hand and say:  
Me and the holidays. A great thing turns into  
a particular held confidently at the far end of the arm  
but rarely. Why?

Rarely.

Hands are not rare, but rarely open to the other  
side of steady. Fingertips feel holidays  
in their fingertips: wooden, a weight, positing  
an unnameable particular world. Our cautious hands celebrate  
this particular holiday.

Particular holiday.

Slow. What is slow? In trees the wood acts  
slow. Out of one particular and another particular it grows  
particularly tall. Long hesitation among  
rows of trees. In this long hesitation we love to take  
walks and the air.

It has grown rare around us. How sad. We  
are sad. We have big questions that we won't pose. We  
don't pose, we walk. We're posited as confident woods  
by a gear many steps below. May we say: a particular step?  
Everything is still called wood. We take a particular holiday in hand.

Wood.

## THE MAN IN QUESTION

1

First, the man in question enters a café. Change of angle to the perception:  
tables, tea, red lips of women. Sugar  
taken for granted is called sugar. All feet  
are on the ground  
all heads, in the sky brought down to earth. The entire café  
applies to the man in question. We pee in the john  
we cough behind newspapers. We unbutton our collar  
Finger in the ear of the man in question, searching.  
Change of angle ninety degrees to the left, the thing in question  
turns on its own axis. First thing in question is the axis of the café  
(café-axis).

2

The man in question screams with fear. Circumstantial details:  
street, high sky, complete vibrations. Now we must say:  
First the complete person screams. What is in question?  
There has been pissing, there has been coughing, but  
the man in question can't just keep coughing.

3

Bus: Everybody looks shaken. Here, a scream  
is called: the driver accelerates the man in question.  
First curving, turning, braking, then:  
city destinations are collapsed, out of  
much noise glances indescribably  
the man in question, Saturday, April 27, after getting off  
all walking means: attention end of the world  
attention end of the world. First the man  
in question perishes.



4

The man in question turns on his axis and rises. Once  
the man in question lies down on red lips. Once  
a door opens, and underneath a hat there is once again  
the man in question. Once he sees something and  
by mistake calls it axis of the soul and  
is glad. For a long time everything is  
indisputable. First the man who is glad  
walks through the neighborhood that does not promise any of this and the  
man in question turns, and  
turning is sometimes called dancing.

5

Eating soup, great market panorama, a tomato in detail  
the man in question is heard to say to himself: market I call:  
here the world is edible. Great despair  
turns into new relation. I eat, combining  
cherries and mourning. Thus  
the longing in question is turned over and over.

6

Unnoticed at first, the promised return. Imagine  
it this way: A scream was turned around the soul. When  
the door opens there is, underneath a new hat once again just acquired,  
the man in question. First we join the turning.

## THE SO-CALLED EGG OF DIRECTION

As the tree turns: ree, ree (the t drops off).

As the day turns: ay, ay (rule: the d drops off).

After the expected short silence we turn:

llence.

llence comes about this way: we've dropped the s. When everything has turned and dropped off, what's the idea? The idea is the expected short silence (return of the s, reverence for the great world, ree, ree, Descartes thinks again Lichtenberg sets his clock, the twentieth chicken of the century lays the so-called egg of direction. Use of the egg: Not edible, but turning. The edible item turned (deduced variant) means according to the accepted rule: dible, dible, dible. Thus according to the rule of drop, silence (deduced, dropped off, turned). We gather every century back into the dropped century, we expect the most distant silence in short words: ree, ay. Details are changed according to history (a table deduced is no table, a flower expected, no flower, all pears will drop sometime through their own history, we are regularly silent, silent, silent. Lichtenberg goes on a day's waltz with Descartes, 19 turns to 18, 18 goes on turning, 17 drops into the sixteenth sense the fifteenth silence: René is born of his own hand, one turn leads to another.

1.

"Beg pardon?" "I said: why don't you turn the trees back."

2.

"Beg pardon?" "The chickens are ready. Why don't you collect the eggs."

3.

"Beg pardon?" "Power sits in the centers. Revolution, please."

## THE INNERMOST HEART

We deviate to a thinkable degree and  
come through ourselves. First degree: Nobody  
expects anything. Nobody expects anything gathers momentum  
and comes through. Fine. Second degree:  
The heart as an apple. With this much momentum, hearts  
are chucked. Third degree: Apples come through  
hearts. Fine. Fourth degree: Apples  
come through us. We, with our own momentum, enter  
the fifth degree. Beautiful fifth degree: says everybody.

We deviate in the thinkable apple tree and  
come through ourselves with firm steps. First appletree:  
Nobody expects us. The lack of expectation gathers momentum and  
comes through. Fine. Second appletree:  
The heart as degree. With this much momentum, hearts  
are chucked. third appletree: Degrees come through  
hearts. Fine. Fourth appletree: Apples come through us. We, with  
our own momentum, climb  
the fifth appletree. Beautiful fifth.

We deviate in the thinkable heart and again  
with much momentum come through ourselves. first heart: Nobody  
expects the first heart. The first heart that nobody expects  
comes through us. Fine. Second heart:  
degree as apple. With this much momentum, degrees obtained  
are chucked. Third heart: Degrees come through  
apples. Fine. Fourth heart: thinkable degrees again come  
through us. We, with our own momentum, eat  
the fifth heart. Most beautiful heart.

No apple.  
No expectation.  
No degree.

No step.  
No tree.  
No heart.  
No first.  
No second.  
No third.  
No fourth.

No fifth.  
One.

One heart breaks: Hello apple gods, tree gods,  
most beautiful gods. We're still coming through  
we are both step and appletree in one breath and  
salute with tender words: now everything is open (no  
expectation, no step, no heart, the first speeds  
through the second, we shift the apples into expectation, shift  
the trees into the heart: we are without us) and:  
the most beautiful heart is at the first degree of openness.

Is it time for the curve. Which curve? It is time.  
When? Curves lead far out, but  
in curves. In which curves? A beautiful vain  
gesture holds the world together (a bird flies motionlessly and  
is called: tree with many wings. With a silent kiss, a mouth  
puts your name on your tongue. The sun is called night  
out among the curves. The world is presently  
a wide scream in the innermost heart: Soft). When?

Tongue from the other side crosses the border. At first we say:  
Hello tongue. Then: What do you want? Tongue says: I want to  
kiss you most cordially. Here we hesitate. Question: how many degrees  
the opening of the mouth? Answer: It is time  
for a fiftydegreeangle. Soon we hear: You are very interesting  
inside, to wit: silent scream, black sun  
a bird flying inside itself. Can one say this? At first we say:  
You're welcome. Yourewelcome means: mouth open at various angles of

respective degrees. Yourewelcome means: Tongue does a quick ballet step.  
Yourwelcome means: Yourewelcome at first. We don't mean it, but  
everything's kept open (in step, in degrees, in expectation,  
in the apple).

Great happiness, rather. How great? That depends  
on the form of the momentum in the curve (pending small  
in a small curve, big in a big curve).

Political interjection: What do you call wrong? Answer: Small, small,  
small answer. And right? The answer  
takes the form of: Hello thinkable degrees. In you  
we deviate. Helloing or way through. We are  
expectant apples. First we were expectant apples. We are  
the right answer. First we were the right answer. First we are  
once more

## CHANGE OF LIGHT

But I love you. How often I said the word apple tree.

It's not the world. O houses.

O fish in rivers. Sun, you can't burn me

nothing can be hotter than my inside. Most beautiful ear: have I told you  
before?

Sometimes more light. How long may I look at your fingers?

I live in number thirty-five with a hard pencil.

Where is the quiet toothbrush? Time goes for a walk.

I never asked your name. What I like best:

thinking in the middle of a din. O

my eyes.

## LANGUAGE 1

My question. How close I am to a question.  
Clouds are my next hat  
in the moving sky. Talk on earth.  
How fast and beautifully I am dying. I was afraid  
in order to please you today. No sooner do I button my shirt.  
What did I say?

## LANGUAGE 2

Do you believe me when I say the word flower?

## LANGUAGE 3

A

The pencil as my easiest. I'm not saying anything.  
A cherry tree in bloom. Pedestrian thought  
sweeps me off. Yet I was in bloom  
a world slid color into my body. It's easy  
when houses take wing. Where are my fingers?  
Fingers. What cock-and-bull I must permit myself.  
Which star is on top? Let me ring again  
as long as we're here.

B

I don't believe myself. I have a white nose.  
Under my white nose, very crossly, lives my mouth. And  
I've forgotten everything. When will this storm be over?  
Where is there something with the word something? Never mind  
I feel I live in human skin.  
The brain changes the knee and anything goes. I can balance under myself  
anybody can.

c

I am waiting with a long face for the first light. If I'm not careful  
I'll jump from a tower. Down river. Down river.  
Can you tell my hands from my hands? What must be my name?  
Who must I be under my sweater which is now blue?  
I must pay attention. We are quiet in our eyes  
and I don't say your merry name. Too late to ask for help.

#### **LANGUAGE 4**

The flowers are yellow flowers. The horses, out of reach,  
have four legs, someone sits on top. A horse is a long face.  
A gallop in the still flower. I live backwards  
I fall into death which I can't see. I call out  
face to the world.

#### **LANGUAGE 5**

Tree: a run, a step, singly. I want to breathe.  
This doesn't work. Somebody is talking here, in this hall.  
Good head, be a little smaller. Who has lost me?  
Streaming along, the one this happened to. I live singly  
all of a sudden. No, I don't.

#### **LANGUAGE 6**

Ears are round people. I still have to learn that.  
My armchair has no knees. The talk of the chair.  
I called out, and it was a storm in my throat.  
The storm entered my mouth as the word help.  
The sky is the capital of air. May I remember a blue world?

Here I am. This happened, and I'm to learn myself.



My words are unfamiliar to me. Between hat  
and head, an endless fracture.

A hat is the pants of the head. With transparent shoes  
speechless, I walk along the sky to be considered blue.  
What is this immense light? School of light.

My words are unfamiliar to me. Between hat  
and head, an endless fracture.

A hat is the pants of the head. With transparent shoes  
speechless, I walk along the sky to be considered blue.  
What is this immense light? School of light.

## **LANGUAGE 7**

Come here you fool. Rustling.

The sky has been blue as long as I've lived. Nothing should be this blue.

Tied to my shoes I walk downtown. In agreement with towns.

O my dear crisis, O my read shirt, shall I say

ant, door ajar, waste basket, tip of the nose, alas. Think me together,

you tell-me-a, silent-house, city-particle, execution-detail, door

not-said-stree-not-a-word, here-flows-my-good-sense

come you fool.

## **LANGUAGE 8/CLOISTER**

Circling the fool. Come here you fool.

Rustling continued.