A Traverse Sequence

48 pieces written for a commissioned play

(11 were published as *Hesitations*: monologues for dancing)

Tom Leonard
so whut day yi day wi yirsell then ih

whut day yi day these days

**

really
been a while intit

thats good
that’s ok then ih

ahm thi same
a it wuz jist  
a dunno wiz jist thi way she sort uv

a dunno

been a long while anyway
fourteen year

a tell yi 
people don’t know

they don’t know the fuckin half of it
they think they day but

they dont
they fuckin dont
ach

ah think it'll be awright

ah no
its daft

but it izny
it izny fuckin daft

thats thi point

its gonny be all right
its gonny be all fuckin right

tellnyi

why bothir though?
who knows whut goes on n their heads?
do you think they care aboot us?

ahm no so sure

a think yiv got tay live in a place
thats whut a think
yiv goat ti live there

huv thi

experience
how no
a mean how no
but why not

why dont yi

why dont yi

is it coz a him

ach
fuck crypticism
fuck thi elliptic

aye

FUCK THI ELLIPTIC

aw they wee gnomic bastards
still waters run deep

AND SOME WATERS ARE ONLY STAGNANT [placard]
day we talk aboot that then
ur do we no talk aboot that

is that wan a they things no ti be said
wid that be breakin thi fuckin code

BREAKIN THE FUCKIN CODE AYE

naw
oh naw

we dont wahnt thaht

ur
ur jist a wee bit

jist a wee bit
a doanno
people say its eccentric
yi hear thim

yid think
yid think it wuz really way out ur sumhm

yi no
sumhm really outrageous

bit

a dunno
a mean

is it me thits daft ur sumhm
a dont think so
a dont think so at all

a mean

a think

a think
a think this is jist thi wey it iz

really

n thats aw there iz

yi no

thahts aw there iz

really
its yer actual
its yer fuckin actual

but ahl tellyi

yi cin get too hung up n that
yi cin get too hung up n

that perception
a thi metaphysical

yi cin

whut a wahnt ti know iz
izzit wurth a dogs shite tay vote Labour?
tell mi that

aw ahm yir ideal aye
aw great stuff

ahm yir fucking gentleness factor um ah
ahm thi fuckin incorruptible

thats great
thats jist great

ahll huvva rare time way that
oor Kit godrestur

oor Kit

it dizny eh
dizny eh

ehm

its

its
coorss

yi canny
ah mean

yi canny jist

yi canny jist eh

ah mean

nay wey
a doant fuckin think so anywey
did yi see that

aa it wuz

christ

whut
whut in thi name a

a me

good god
good god

jesus

its

its

its

its
gor blimey n
awl thaht surtuv

fuckin nonsense n
well a nivir

an
if hey

hey! if

yid fancy
a wee lick uv

yir darlin laddies thighs
afore breakfast

then

GOODONYI—

meine poppetski
dont you believe it
no if yiv
no if yiv
    any sense
a widny
nut a bit uv it
    naw
no way
    nah its
loada shite frankly
thats thi
thats thi beginnin middle n end ay it

    *    *

nah
its not fur me

the question does not arise
the fuckin orthodoxy of thi bastard is irrefutable

its ehm
well

a matter for thi triumvirate, one opines
don’t let them
pull that one:

don’t let them
come the shite
about “patter”

and all their
snobbish fucking
nonsense;

all the grant-aided
fee-paying braided blazer
ten-highers-

43 O-level
rifffaff from
the bungalow infested

homeowning Tory
Glasgow suburbs,
all the stuckup

proud authors of
“the best class essay on
Arthur Miller that Mr Wallace

has seen in three years.”
and their counterparts
in adulthood;

careful pronouncers
of plosives and consonants:
ridiculous compensatory

front-of-the-mouth
hyperactivity
of tongue and teeth—

fleeing the glottal!
its c
cause
 s cause ehm
thit eh its cause its cause a that
it eh
thi ehm thit
well yi
yiv gotty realise
at
wl ats
av got tay get tay this fuckin point here
yi either hug yirsell ur
yi carry on
thats your
    fuckin choice matey
daे yi
stey wi thi rhythm n
    aw that ur
daे yi
    surtuv
ston back n
say christ
thats
thats fuckin
    smashin a
a didny no a
could day that

    well
you day that
ma auld friend n
    its goodbye
goodbye fay
yir cheery wee muse
    nice noan yi thats
thats the spirit a christmas future sunny boy so
    you jiss stick way thi rhythm n
oapn yir presents!
yeh thi

thi constriction uv

thi

thi lack uv movement it

it surt uv

determines

ehm

determines thi

thi movement a thi

the mind

therefore

it surtuv

surtuv forces

forces thi

thi thought

thought inty

fairly tight wee patterns

fairly tight wee patterns
its ehm
also
thi way thit
thi
thi boundaries imposed it
thi end a thi page
thats
thats anuthir fuckin trap
yir
yir mind it
it surtuv pulls in
ur
maybe its
jist it ehm
stoaps in eh

anticipation as they say
jist ti
jist tay

keep gawn
  anuthir wee while
  aye

jist tay

  whut aboot ehm
  whut about thi

  thi dismissal uv eh
  thi

thi concept uv thi ehm
  thi

thi way thi

  its always
  nivir fuckin far away

  these bastards

always

  em
av got tay get tay this fuckin point here

really open it up

this

this way thit

yi can go anywhere
jiss go fuckin anywhere

feel thi rhythm a

a fuckin placement

fuckin precise

rhythm

rhythmn

on yi go pal

its thi fuckin

spaces in between

thit make oor rhythms

(supreme)
wullyi
ach
yi wull

ih
maybi
jiss maybi

z that aw

ih ih ih

z that aw
wullyi
wullyi but
wullyi
zthataw!

naw.
surely no
surely naw
shairly naw
surely no
shairly no
shairly no
ih

spellit.
gawn.
spellit.
surely no
surely naw
shairly naw
shairly no
The more you talk about this thing, the more you stay inside your own head. It's all about anticipation. So just stay inside it, it's your own thing. Talk about this thing, stay inside your own head. Talk about this thing, stay inside your own head. Talk about this thing, stay inside your own head. Talk about this thing, stay inside your own head.
a its got ti
    got ti fuckin

stop. no question.
aye green grow the fuckin rashes oh

green
grow
thi
fuckin
rashes
oh

yi nivir cin tell ih

bentinck street
your no here very shortly sun

seen im? seen im?

other times though

fuckin murder eh

couldny turn a

christ ah.

a mean

yup
if bit

nah its

ast

whut
whut

thi wey she wuz last time

*that* wey
yi surta
keep trynti avoid it thats
the difficult bitty it

jist
no keep findn yirsell
sitn

wotchn thi telly ur
lookn oot thi windy

that wey yi say
christ a could

go a roll n egg
ur
whuts thi time fuck me

wiv nay
cookn oil nwi need
potatoes
if its

m

ach

n

p

obl

f

ih

t

s

if

paw

s

ih

if

its
maybe cz how? don't be ridiculous! it m

ah

wull it wull it

p

ih aw?

yi

maybe cz

how? yi
tell yi that aw?

nah
oh yi think its
easy day yi
well

breathins easy a
suppose its

all jist a
jist a   process uv
neuro  anatomy right

yir eh
brain n ehm
diaphragm

ehm
lungs

spinal cord
lookit im
looknit iz watch
canny wait
days urny long enough fur im
monologues

ahl givyi fuckin monologues
ahl givyi monologues till theyre cumn ootyir ears
ahl givyi monologues till yi dont no whut ti day wi thim

ivry days a fuckin monologue wi me
ma lifes been a monologue

aye
ahl gie yi monologues awright

dont wurry
same time yi wunnir
least ah day
nix wey its jiss
turn left n
yi go along fur
cuppla hunnir yards n
croass it thi nixt
panda crossin

its jist
past a shoap thits
got a windy fuhlla
wee nicknacks

n
gless hoarsiz
n
wee paintns a wainz

stonnin nthir pijies
wan tear hingin
nthir right cheek

wance yir there its
two upnthi nix
close

thats you
a dont give a shite
fur any a thim

a dont give a
a dogs turd

supposin
supposin thi entire

fuckin lot
and all thir fuckin wurks
  an pomps

copped it
copped thi fuckin

whole thing
smack

it would serve
it would serve thim

entirely accordin
tay thaht
which they totally fuckin deserve

thats ma opinion
and having delivered it
I will now have my fucking breakfast
its a

a terrible ih ehm a a
t

yi

c

a mean how

yiv
yiv na ts

ih

its a a

i ch

its a
its a

surta

yi see y

b

st
itll just huv tay be
thaht wey coz it
canny be any other wey
thi noo. no
fur thi moment.
coorss yi might find
that thingzl change—
theyll change
yon wey thit
yi didny notice
it thi time. bit
yill look back
an mine thi wey
it wuz.

n thats whin yill
sayti yirsell
well

a nivir thote ahd see thi day
fyi dont injoy it thirz
no point iz thur
but

yi always think thit
    well
maybe this time itll

maybe this time itll
seem ok
absa
absa loophly
absalootly

    absalootly!

thats it
thats
thats it

    it iz
    it fuckin iz

absalootly
absa fuckin loophly

right
its no sumhm thit
ahm really used tay

ah mean yiv got ti
ti understand thit

ahm no
quite jist

maybe whut you think ah um

* * *

coorss

thirza bit a me
duzny really care

yi no
a

a find yi stoap
wunnirn whut folk think aboot yi

its
maybe its middle age ur

a dunno its
ahm quite happy anyway
coorss

yi canny
ah mean

yi canny jist

yi canny jist eh

ah mean

nay wey
a doant fuckin think so anywey
now. (thats it) noo.
      the noo

naw.
naw.
naw. naw. naw.
naw. naw. naw. now then

(ya daft cunt)
tay thi business.
tay thi business of thi  (leaps)

   (leaps)
   (leaps)
   (leaps)
   (leaps)

its thi ih

tay thi business of thi

aye