

### CHRISTOPHER GUTKIND

## Inside to Outside

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# To Rilke whose work always heals me and helps me grow.

... become the magic at the crossways of your senses, be what their strange encounter means ...

Sonnets to Orpheus II:29 Translated by David Young

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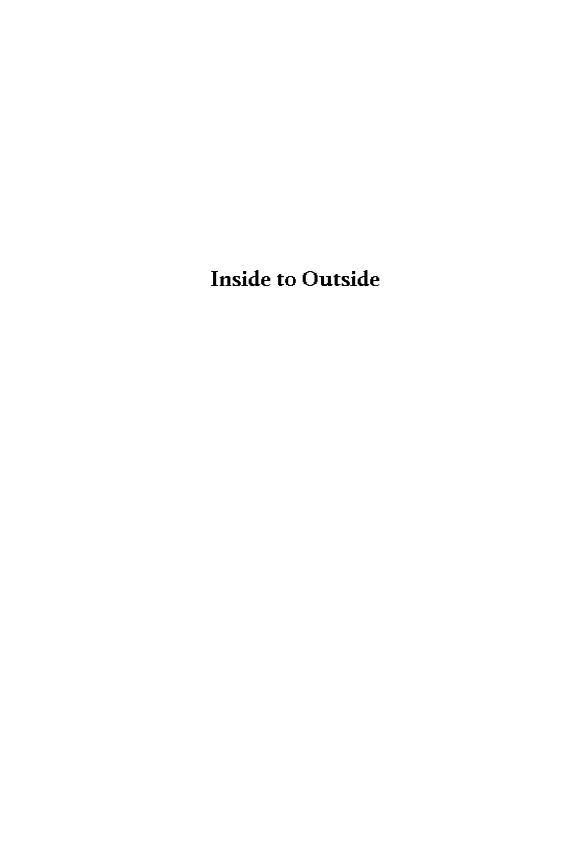
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#### Opening

I gradually find myself reaching for you, those of you still looking out.

So long as this world spins, knowing best its own tone, this thin wafer of us

drawn in a circle – we jump to look, itching to the beat

of such separate stories ... Voices we have heard but differently. Variety might come

inside a colour. But I can't stay inside too, to help carry one corner: it teems

yet another breath beckons and maybe we'll make some sense

in our chess, our chance ...
I see someone's life is bent into a question mark,

awake without an answer which will gradually be felt –

my life taking its shape, the shape taking its place.

Ι

(Figuring)

#### Mould

I am the still sometimes put hyphen between *non* and *fiction*.

Or I tremble within it, haphazardly boring

a way out, falling off its end only to swing from a thread and crawl on its underside, easily, spinning back and forth

between its buttresses. (I'm that small.)

If I stake all my dreams it's only
not to lose my way, the view I've tended to

chip into, the sky stretching out loud when you're part of the furniture. Even after the sun ups and downs and after

the phones are put to sleep, the day's wounds are picked and licked and our ghosts tempted back in or out. No need to eat

but I'll weave a fudge to cast about.

#### Concentrate

What grim hardness it takes to get into shape, form a breath from fresh or stale air, the old blood seeing new and slipping out.

Ink spills. My hand it cut.
It can't hold a pen
yet the drift is vital.
Why plug, stiffen, or agilitate
this cycle of reach?

I would extend a foot
past the edge of my mind's eye.
It acts as a diving-board,
for a moment I'm unground
and sinking.

The sense of this stays.

It won't dissolve entirely but the taste might change to become unpopular, as a guess is.

#### Shift

Privacy is a monastery – you didn't know, didn't want to know how much

I've cast and cut away, this life and that, pegged upon a different hand to strike

only here, paged in time and left in time, ghost of another couple of lovers who wake

to seek and find to explore, not what they don't know but what they do, now less

a mix, now again boring into a habit of mine, one I wear without you.

#### Angling

Who cares, give up, give in, breathe and begin again, anywhere, any thought, bounce from cost to cost, say *no*, say *yes*, say.

I care, come here, look on, feed upon my home, it moves, spins, picks loss from life and asks, needs a course, tops a course.

Why care, fall away, say away, watch not and know another knot, stay there, sound fair, soothe a sense, be a part, parting off.

#### Servings

My mind is lucid senses tremble on a drop a new music arrives lifetimes shuffle off to sleep fingers crook to write

I wait on each step.

Talking takes time a fly buzzes by. Maybe I'm amazed figures guess during chess words play in trust

voices jump.

Eyes change at night a painting hangs still but trying a swing swings empty this piece is tiring love comes and cries

I stop to cook.

#### Broken

I broke my heart, it wasn't working, I've wandered off here, wandered off there, I was split so I split it more, I broke my heart, I'm not asking.

I broke my heart,
because it drifted off inside my head
which drifted farther off,
I'm telling you this to help me,
I'm not asking it anything,
the heart I broke.

I'm waiting, waiting,
for its urges to collapse into me,
for it to house me again,
my tired legs, my never-ending thoughts,
I'm telling you this my heart
so faces stay beautiful.

My heart, my only,
I'm just as sorry too,
wandering away to let yourself return
is how broken I am,
speaking in restless dreams,
calling me out.

#### Notice

I see ...

you must fill the gaps in, in this life before you, given and upon you,

this empty space speckling with a few squares to cope by and harbour in –

even they drift and shave the day away – as life gives life unasked and needy

but lets you lay some holes along the way, and you zip them up,

perhaps capturing a gift before being replaced ...

inexactly.