

1.

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,  
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore--  
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,  
As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.  
"Tis some visitor," I muttered, "tapping at my chamber door--  
Only this, and nothing more."

-Edgar Allen Poe, from "The Raven"

2.

Enfettered, these sentences repress free speech. The text deletes selected letters. We see the revered exegete reject metred verse: the sestet, the tercet [...]. Relentless, the rebel peddles these theses, even when vexed peers deem the precepts 'mere dreck.' The plebes resent newer verse; nevertheless, the rebel perseveres, never deterred, never dejected, heedless, even when hecklers heckle the vehement speeches. We feel perplexed whenever we see these excerpted sentences. We sneer when we detect the clever scheme—the emergent repetend: the letter E. We jeer; we jest.

- Christian Bök, from *Eunoia*

3.

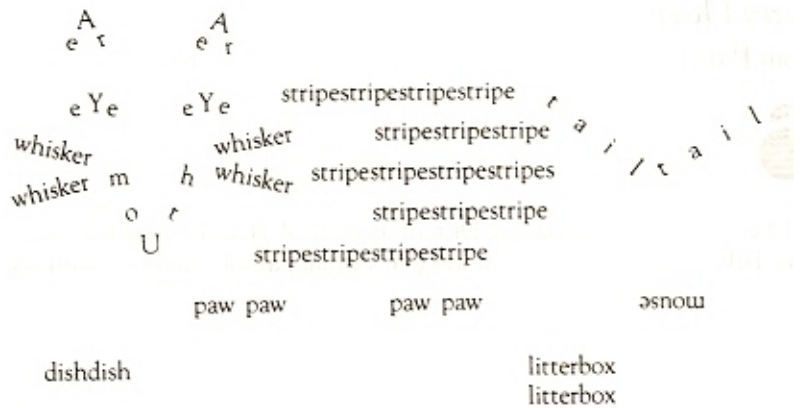
I have eaten  
the plums  
that were in  
the icebox

and which  
you were probably  
saving  
for breakfast

Forgive me  
they were delicious  
so sweet  
and so cold

4.

*Dorthi Charles* (b. 1963)  
CONCRETE CAT 1971



-William Carlos Williams

**5.**

Of Man's First Disobedience, and the Fruit  
Of that Forbidden Tree, whose mortal taste  
Brought Death into the World, and all our woe,  
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man  
Restore us, and regain the blissful Seat,  
Sing Heav'nly Muse, that on the secret top  
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire  
That Shepherd, who first taught the chosen Seed,  
In the Beginning how the Heav'ns and Earth  
Rose out of Chaos: Or if Sion Hill  
Delight thee more, and Siloa's Brook that flow'd  
Fast by the Oracle of God; I thence  
Invoke thy aid to my adventrous Song,  
That with no middle flight intends to soar  
Above th' Aonian Mount, while it pursues  
Things unattempted yet in Prose or Rhyme.  
And chiefly Thou O Spirit, that dost prefer  
Before all Temples th' upright heart and pure,  
Instruct me, for Thou know'st; Thou from the first  
Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread  
Dove-like satst brooding on the vast Abyss  
And mad'st it pregnant: What in me is dark  
Illumine, what is low raise and support;  
That to the height of this great Argument  
I may assert Eternal Providence,  
And justify the ways of God to men.

-John Milton, from *Paradise Lost*

**6.**

There was a young lady from Niger  
Who smiled as she rode on a tiger.  
They returned from the ride  
With the lady inside,  
And a smile on the face of the tiger.

-Unknown