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Orange weather withers silver dawn
(not) I wrote,
the happy not keeping this rainy bluster misty
sea all over the sky

we swim in air at first light.

Yes I admit it, sometimes
finishing reading a book
is like eat your nice spinach —
why is completion so valued? Completion is the end of something.

Aren't we livelier with brave beginnings —
when I finished Proust I was sad for a year,
that there was no more,

that there was so much,
as if no other story ever needed to be told —
look up from this book
and hear the wind howl,
let your mind drift off
into the living changefulness of things
before you even get this far.

The mind knows when to turn away.

Long before the road reaches
the graveyard of finished books.

Bless the Cantos for never ending —
or leave off where Homer starts,

in the middle of things
 where life goes on
and the story is always beginning.
Close the book and be born —
it has given you enough already,
a book is a charge of matter
to renew, stuff to work with,
let it stop and you go.
Or so it seems this rainy
morning by the sea, beloved place
and drafty circumstance,
 thinking of Ezra
who did not have to make
it cohere, “it coheres all right,” thinking
of Thomas Bernhard, chatting in the KuHiMu
with an old man who would never come to the end.
Stay here and talk to me forever.

9 October 2012, Cuttyhunk

OLOLYGA

Let me hear you,
walk deep in the woods with me
the empty woods
where no one's found,
no one to hear you, let me hear your cry,
your ancient unnerving cry
that broke the ancient darkness
and made the first sun rise,
 your sister,
let me hear you cry, me alone in the gaunt woods
almost winter and you let me hear
you let me hear your cry
and it shatters some wall between us,
I have been screamed
into a permission, I have heard
the outside of earth
breaking in again,
have heard what no man is supposed to hear,
the god blaze come again,
 the actual
voice of light
 and all our silly walls fall down.

9 October 2012, Cuttyhunk

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Unicycle the sun
hidden in cloud
must be there
cause we can see
sort of, tell
sea from island
the few trees
toss in much wind.

9.x.12, Cuttyhunk

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Things need their own measure —
an answer

 is always waiting —
say, trumpeter, will you
announce apocalypse
with no melody,
 just a single
cry from your brass throat.

9.x.12, Cuttyhunk

TO THE MEMORY OF MONIQUE ANTELME

Standing up to life
standing up to life is standing up for life.
Being always the one
to whom it all comes back,
comes home
to be endured, comes
home to be understood.
Standing up to everything that happens.
Being the one
 who understands
and listens,
 you listen to the picture on the wall,
you listen to the snapshot in your purse,
you stand listening
 and letting them say their piece,
speak their clarities all night long
into the dawn wind.
 You lit the lamp
to let them see
what you have heard.
You stand beside them
listening, stand
up to what you hear,
stand up for the right

to speak and to be heard,
the right to listen
and understand

everything.

Stand up for a long time,
smiling, listening.

Stand up for life.

9 October 2012, Cuttyhunk

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The snake-head man
of Navali Çori is a woman,
a woman worn backwards
is a god in fact. Fact
is stone.

The only one he will ever own,
explorer, dim in the 25w bulb
of your Turko-Celtic workroom,
that kitchen of a place —
your poor mother should see you now.

To sleep enough is sleep too much —
you read that in Basil Valentine
or somewhere it was raining
roses, Christ,

you should have stayed in church.

9 October 2012, Cuttyhunk

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The rule of waking
while the sky is dark
the rule of rock
to lie along the beach
learning the rule of water
always to come close
the rule of ribbon
in your hair the rule
of lighthouses to persuade
the rule of thunder
to wake water
and put us all
to sleep again the rule
of dream to wake us
changed the rule
of waiting for something
outside myself the rule
of being me the rule
of being anyone.

10 October 2012, Cuttyhunk

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Running out of remember
a starling
with speckled bosom
the busy light
in someone's faraway
can't tell how far
the textual decisions
of pure darkness
the necessary renderings —
a child's drawing of a house
convert to our ordered universe,
a thing arranged, kosmos,
you could live in the lines of it alone.

10 October 2012, Cuttyhunk

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But systems disagree
there is a rooster on the hill
a euphemism at the heart of matter
call things by the names of other things
there is too much power
in a real thing's real name
argue it down into silence
where it lurks in the forget-strategy of the brain
where the names of friends live long after
the lost love is walking by the sea
dear friend I do not think of you anymore.

10 October 2012, Cuttyhunk

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Finally enough see to write by. Sometime I wonder wether. The easiest cosmology is misspelling, or leaving letters out or whole words sometimes. After all, the word itself is a misspelling. Or do I mean the world?

I always mean the world. I am always trying for the largest voice to say the smallest thing. Oh Robert, you're so trying! You often say. Oh your poor mother! you say, compassionating her for what must have been a ceaseless barrage of language disguised as questions or commentary on passing things. I'm still trying to say out loud what happens in the silence that I am. Silence is so deep that anything that happens must be important enough to report. To you. To all of you. It is our only link, this report. There is no other me and I hardly know any other you.

10 October 2012, Cuttyhunk

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Love a little love so much
Montauk daisies
profusion by the neighbor's wall
from eave to eave the houselines run
and no one knows who owns between
for this is the other side of the mountain
this is where everything still is where it began
the light comes down and tells us stories
and if I hear right, there's nothing else to know.

10 October 2012, Cuttyhunk

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Störtebek the pirate he
took eleven steps forward
after his head was cut off,
stepped forward and fell —
now those are the feet of Dante's verse,
Catullus', the sacred hendecasyllables,
eleven footsteps of a dead man —
music makes everybody dance,
life has nothing to do with it —
or life is somewhere else entirely
dandling his wife on his knee
while Störtebek topples into the Baltic Sea.

10 October 2012, Cuttyhunk

I AND YOU

No problem not taking.
The problem not waiting —
this is the color of no one's eyes
and she's the one I summon to my feast.
I am the secret ruler of the world
and now you know it,
my secret spills all over your hands —
you told me all things are made of light
and I believed you. Now believe me
when I say that all things are made of you —
I am only an interruption sometimes pleasant
in your endless rapture of contemplation.

10 October 2012, Cuttyhunk

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Reassuring God

the way the theologians
comfort their abstractions
with images, recruit
poets to invent
sensuous scenarios
where their sense of
God is present.
They see him in the sea,
the flower, the thunder,
eyes of the beloved,
summer glisten on an asphalt road —
and all the while the silence wants
to hear what we'll come up with next
to limit infinity into something small,
describable, a vine crawling up the wall.

10 October 2012, Cuttyhunk

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The embers of it
know how to linger
affable afterlude
when the will dies down
and lets the body watch
catwise on not much.

And that turns out to be
the day itself, daytime
the long bright aftermath of dream —

it wakes you again and again,
no more mercy than the weather has
and yet who knows,
we all are in God's amber caught,

a bluejay on a looking glass,
an Adirondack chair outside
wet in rain and dry from wind,

everything left over from the dream.

10 October 2012, Cuttyhunk

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The blue mirror
reveals my chemistry
owe you an explanation
or more than one

see the wave? it comes
from Spain Galicia really
where Saint James' bones
in Compostella still speak

to weary pilgrims from everywhere
and tell them what they came
so far to hear, now this wave
tells you, listen, I can't

hear it for you, though I try
all my life to do
just that, to hear out loud
for everyone else,

that girl drowsing in her orchard.

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Light on a rainy day
beauty of that
sharing the burden of brightness

yet from all this walking
I feel windsick
never felt that before,

not even in Arles from the mistral.

10 October 2012, Cuttyhunk

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Reading a recent
Ashbery poem is exhausting
like riding the crowded
subway home, so many
things to keep an eye on,
so many faces you
have to try not to remember.

10 October 2012, Cuttyhunk