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Having things to talk about and having things.

Wood presses leg flesh stars hurt sky.

Nothing but contact everywhere but the distances remain.

Alternatives are interferences there is only one way.

84000 directions walk the same road have I heard.

We are proud to come and come again but where are we.

Leash makes lust law makes sin we know all that.

These stars are mere stairs but they go up and down.

Sit on the steps and feel the way down.

Basement light flickers every house Lascaux.

But where are our hands red pressed to the wall.

Ocher of the inheritors teeth of the windowsill.

I live in a skyscraper no one can see.

When you're finished with me at last snowing in Paris.

She slept behind the wheel but I was driving.

There are seven seas Water Air Darkness Sunlight Consciousness Memory Death.

What did you learn in school to hate school.

School it kept me from learning kept me from books.

It took me so long to listen with respect.

Or how does love linger in a silent earth.

Ask more of me and less of it there's Gan Eden.

Can I get my language back before you go.

Dismiss this I-ing personage this Holocene mummer.

The Irish stand on their heads to dance.

Every book a new religion.

Let adequate strive to be superfluous.

Minnewaska naked cloud no rain small river.

If you can remember a tower you'll be saved.

Intricate intercourse of tongue and object.

No one ever ever knows enough.

The spear of Woden baptized in Christ's blood.

He had no lasting business with the sky he's here.

Wherever there's a lake you'll see him sometimes rise.

The pagans kept Christ alive safe with us in Avalon.

Master of the Word spoken by no one outside time.

Secret Christ inside the Baal Shem Tov.

Or anyone at all the miracle persists.

Retain the obvious it rhymes with your life.

The function of bunny rabbits function of lawns.

Snow scurf in Paris I woke afraid the boat the boat.

I am he who told you he was not.

Girls know the best lovers study Ancient Greek.

Where are you going with all this I've been and gone.

It's here now like anything else all there is.

Nothing kills a wish like getting it.

Childhood shul a sycamore tree a simple hat.

They shaved their heads to feel the sky.

Pagan people are always at home.

Carloads of circumstance and one spray of lilac.

Late for the season but in the graveyard.

What Proust knew and what he didn't .

Princess tree they say flowers before leaves.

I sit beside you lost in the wedding trope.

Over Berlin a skin of uneasy light.

LETTER TO JENNIFER MOXLEY

I am weary of this moon I bid you set
back to your badger den and stink the dark
Love Island mystery the lepers howl
you hear them cross the mile of sea
they have no feelings they walk on waves
every night the same they come for me
disguised as dreams but I smell their smell.

2.

There is this sudden pathology you talk about
Jennifer at the end of the wonderful *Coastal*
as if the poem finally comes to terms
with its mortal poet—but the poet actually isn't
mortal or not very, sickness is a dream
it's hard to wake from but you have come
from the love-sick West to where the chill
of Quimby and Eddy soaks the fever gone—
curing winter of Lutheranism as you say
Or did I say that. And maybe take the leprosy away.

3.

To be dull as Shakespeare and get away with it
all those family stories when I want instead
Yeats's chick just standing there
on the other side of politics, no family
but desire, no narrative but getting some.

4.

Enough of poetry, back to the poem.
Sunstead soon. Slim ankles of desire
have to support the massive trunk of knowledge,
we founder in omniscience. Now what.
Toothy smiles and studied lies
I could speak Latin if it wanted me to
my neck sore from sunburn on the beach
the shingle beach the winter left behind,
protestant pebbles instead of sand
I walked easy last year on, the waves
knew how to find me and I slept.

5.

Not sure about all this but it's like a ballgame
in another language or an orgasm
in the house next door. Sharp profiles
of the audience asleep in narrative. I do
love faces. Eyes lips hips, like they say.
Bases loaded but two out, Getting dark now
over the whole sea. This man is an island.

[6.VI.11]

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How many children to no school.

Hypotenuse of desire mystery origin of fugue.

Linger at the philtrum kiss the unremembered.

In wet clothes in Canaan *bosheth* is shame.

Erase the radicals and the scriptures disappear.

Caught in moral languor like a beach on fire.

The senses six rehearse their tragedy all day long.

Those who worship images eat nothing but images.

Linger at nape nerve and breathe you my truest word.

What have you done to me I am alive.

Every mother is Doctor Frankenstein.

Shimmering parts of shame decode as genesis.

It must be philosophy if nobody understands.

A reef a rock a riff *anguis in herba*.

Today's intellect takes the form of glare.

Flaunt them when you're young then hide the key.

If only the way of the world led to the world.

Translate your body from Ancient Greek your house.

Working hard to be a man a minute.

One tree silences a whole sea.

And should was burned away and maybe.

White wood white wood be my god.

What I wanted to say in love with your material.

Filling the ocean a priest for supper.

Blue novels of the Sanhedrin matter is your mother.

Keep things near the wood will love you.

Gull in cloud ram caught in thicket cherish.

We did not come into the world to be understood.

The father mother is the first and final mystery.

They made me and I know not who they are.

We stand the same sea the same shore.

You run up naked over the stones to me.

I slap you gently on the hip you pull my hair.

We are children together there is no world.

Nowhere can be adults we grew in not up.

We are so close no way we can be together.

7 June 2011, Cuttyhunk

[to Moxley, continued]

6.

The monster had no name of course
or none we remember. Only his creator,
the mad scientist, the daffy lakeside poet
and his tribe get their names in books.

The monster eats and sleeps and lusts
and weeps, what else is there to do,
he is created to be terminal, half
Last Judgment, half pitiful klutz.

He kneels among the reeds and watches
girls splashing in the pool, geese
squawk away from the girls, and boys
shy corncobs at the geese. The world.

Is there anywhere I can go and still be here?

7.

I try never to go to doctors, what can they tell me
that death will not more comprehensively explain?
So far free of pain and full of discomforts I wobble
downhill like a blind man on a shingle beach
never knowing which step is my last. The fall.

The flood. The fire creeping up the vein.
I get worried about you when you talk
nosologies and procedures with odd names.
I hear the glad piano and the trifling strings
(Henry Charles Litolff) are medicine enough
to keep me going. The radio knows all.
Listen to the radio and forget myself—it worked
ninety years for my father and who am I?

8.

Negotiating the marshland between poetry and monstrosity
is a religious sort of business, lots of wet socks and run-on sentences,
full of miraculous sunsets when everything becomes one
and then goes out. In fact everybody really does know everything
but we keep our minds on other things, safe in whateverland.

7 June 2011, Cuttyhunk

[Moxley, continued]

9.

I don't use such words myself.

Like a hammer too near a thumb

or toe in danger in the dark.

Doors are so intractable, what is hidden

may be supposed to stay hidden.

Out of sight is out of trouble.

Sledgehammer to break a peanut from its shell—

never see cashews on sale that way,

the aril is poisonous, did you ever

stop and wonder? Of course you did.

10.

Always hoping there'll be enough

ink to write the next word,

shoeleather to cope with the next

rocky road to Dublin needs me. Culture

is mostly shtick anyhow,

gilt-tasseled mortarboards and skilled

complacency. But I digress.

8 June 2011, Cuttyhunk

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Glaze of day mild spilt milk descending.

An argument of birds interrogates some seed.

Rock-handed interpreter brother strong lifts against hollow.

How do you kill an emptiness? with names.

Which way did the wind point that morning did he listen.

Keen and able and wet was the stone.

What was the stone's name your honor we need to tell.

Travertine or gneiss schist or circumstance.

Everything we see is evidence of that crime.

We read the world backwards and wrote it down.

Unship your mastwork and bend the Bible back.

I know there's a lover hidden in the salt.

And from the cloud her voice rejoins me.
Broken like sea beasts I weltered partial on the strand.
And foreign people walked among my bones.
O lick yourself together and stand up she said.
I stood like Christian hungry for authority.
My mutinous bones came to their senses from her voice.

Hexagon my beehive my little room of rooms.
Be solid like the wax lost when the bronze is cast.
Airy perennial like those flowers made of cloud.
I read them once in a book I had to write.
And there you are caparisoned with live breath.
Lasting no longer than a Pentecost of minds.

8 June 2011, Cuttyhunk

[Moxley, 11]

11.

The Twitchell girls don't mow our lawn this year.

A tiny loss that makes me triste, two sisters last year

one wielded weed-whacker one throned on mower,

nothing special, just girls. Girls. *Kourai*, girls

taking care of the earth. I miss

the thought of them, of all the little lovely things

that vanish when you look away.

Brightness falls from the air. O it's ridiculous

to use that sublime mysterious line

to make a fuss about some missing chicks.

Can't help it, it's a culture thing,

an old man thing, to celebrate

the endless link of women with the earth.

I miss my tiny evidence of that green union.

And every loss is all losses. There's a guy

on the riding mower now, and a tall blonde

girl, it really is one of them again, grinding

away at the weeds. A consolation,

this daughter of Athene, an artist

eliminating the superfluous afresh.

8 June 2011, Cuttyhunk

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Of course I mean you who else have you ever been.

The pewter sky Iago's sneers unheard.

Trust nothing I can't touch the leper said.

An island is the furthest thing from sea.

The invisible kingdom speaks all night as waves.

I hear memory dismembers the mind.

Lost at sea the eye recalculates the heart.

I am alone the owner of all distances.

The sky turns into a flock of birds and needs me.

Their wings unruliness wakes up the wind.

A sack of sand to bring the sea back home.

Null irrigation paddies pure seed your mind.

I do this for the eyes of women with which all men read.

Soon it will be time for now it hurts.

The monster of Capital can't help itself nobody home inside.

Every vote sends men to war.

How can you be tired of what I haven't said.

This massive fugue escapes from no one.

Leave the heroics for Sunday go to church.

Say your prayers make your own meanings in the words you say.

Moths were made to serve the candle flame.

I am clumsy with eternity.

Now I stare across the sea and read.

The white cliffs of never.

Live simple on the edge of yourself.

Make an arrow won't miss the heart takes thirty years.

Its point so keen it opens wide but does not kill.

I found a trace of her beneath the hill.

Followed her footsteps till I caught fire.

Things are allowed to follow one another.

The way the sky is always letting go.

Truth is geography the shortest line between here and you.

Close the book and open up the names.

A name is a bell that tolls true in your head.

Ignore the specious identities of men and listen.

Once a door is closed it never opens.

I put everything in this little bowl it all fits in.

Will anybody ever really fill the cup.

How big a car is yet it goes.

Let me hug you from behind so I see the things you see.

Nature has no nature of its own I think.

Blood rhymes with madness rhymes with glow.

9 June 2011, Cuttyhunk

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Rhyme tells us nothing but does make us doubt.

Gifted raptors glide along the mind.

Mud remembers.

Ask forgiveness of each thing before they sleep.

When you're the only one awake you're most asleep.

Hume's golden mountain believe anything but your eyes.

Half an hour into judgment Jericho.

We named our roads from books we don't believe.

But language is the purest contradiction.

Lights on an island that isn't there.

Help me to know beyond beyond and no believing.

When you're there it's somewhere else.

10 June 2011, Cuttyhunk