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Solitudes the flying saucer
the children missing for a week
coast of America far off late afternoon
then seems so close at sunset

you can almost see the lives

Apollo, Hermes, gods doing each other's work
how can that be possible, isn't a god
nothing but his work? Or is he mood too,
velleity and doubt,
a vagrant personality just like me

captured in a spell of functioning?
Can we be kind to a god?

For Juno surely listens to what men say
when their wives are not in earshot

surely she is response and in reverence
we know where we must travel
to stop being we and start being me
and then stop even that and just be—

sun on the sea assures me this is so,

soft page of some book left out overnight
the lines on it look fresh
as if someone's just been reading them.

8 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

CHORALE

fits together
in his mind's eye
Bach sees a girl get off a train
at a country station in the northern heath,
hoist her backpack and walk two miles
humming stuff she heard last night

and he hears now
he writes it down, inverts it
writes another tune across it
one he heard himself
a year before he was born maybe

the parts must work
unobviously but audibly
together, the harmony
men talk about is vertical,
what gets piled on top of what,
the backpack of the tune
a country niles in sunshine
cow over the fence, her cigarette
hand-rolled along the way
walking in shadow with hands free

but there is another kind

the memories must be fitted together
so they stretch out beyond the final fugue
but he never gets to see where she's going
so far in his future
or who might be waiting for her there,
sister or lover lost too deep in the music.

8 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

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It has come to this
I will consent to seeing fairies now
asnd other scarcely seeable beings
ancient landlords of my earth

the first british who wrote about the Dakinis
called them Fairies—
faerie had some power over my people still,
might of Oberon, beauty of Titania
still clothed the image of them
in the language's mind.
So now I will see them and see what I see.

8 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

GODS

The gods are our armor
against non-being.

Thinking with them
we take our places

in n natural world
not just the seeming

we call everyday
but the real world

deep as dream
where we are all still

present to the possible.

8 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

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The certainties
are possible too
the even-handed distribution
of beast and ardor
the willful heart
that has me in its cross-hairs
the remnant of the Tuatha
faithful to the last immersion
and her red bird! and the porcelain sink!
and grating the potatoes for Friday latkes
am I not a son and a mother
isn't the Sun somebody's flag hung up in the sky
and I came from Cathay fifty years ago
with Karlgren in my hand
Orientalia on 12th Street
Nic Cernovich who had been at Black Mountain
and I didn't know it
and Olson had written *Apollonius of Tyana* for him to dance
and he wouldn't dance it
and I didn't know it
and Olson had to dance it himself
sitting there in the middle of the known world
a dance
and I knew nothing of all that
till ten years later in Gloucester

no closer to Cathay
than the Japanese fishing fleet
scouring out waters

then it suddenly seemed
on the glacial moraine looking down at the sea
I knew everything at last

at least that hour. And that's enough.
We live in time.

8 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

FLORENCE MARLES 1859 – 1933

I am your illustrious ancestor
brocaded now with summer stars
but I was a commoner then
daughter of a hatter a soldier
a poet a traveler, I made
your father and my own poor hat
was held on with velveteen
a ribbon like a shadow
and I lived through so many wars,
like a shadow beneath my chin
and to this day no one has seen my face.

8 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

HYMNS TO THE SUN

Hymn I.

We see sunrise

but what does sun see

starting up over the next island

looking at me?

Hard to believe that flame is not intelligent—

luminous, compact, and full of energy

shapely and enduring,

scholarly pointing out distinctions

president of light—

 how shall she

not have more mind than I have

who merely watch her lift

her almost unbearable question

right this minute over Low's house

so for fifteen hours nothing will be the same?

Hymn II.

Stay till the sun says
it's time to go
or only time is going
all the rest of you
is always here.

Hymn III.

Solar hymn from the caverns
imagined under the Dordogne they
looked out and saw their mother
naked in the sky.

If we perceive the sun as a woman
human history shifts meaningfully to the left
and father power wanes.
Who makes the child?
The father is an accident,
a seagull crossing the sky
lost a moment in the sun's face.

Hymn IV.

Hymn. Herm. Herself
empurpled underneath the gold
far star great wander us
formidable cushion of desire
the sky on fire.

Hymn V.

The sun is a hard pillow
the sun is a wake
left behind when she passes.

There's always someone after me
I want to be doing something else
sit by the fire and read an old book

has to be from before my time
has to say I was not born
I will not die.

Hymn VI.

And sun knows all of that.
We could shove historical process
back on the rails—production of pleasure
the goal of society,
no parenting, just mothering,
no Pentagon just hexagon
the hive the lap the lover and no state.

Hymn VII.

Or hymn of kind the stalwart sea
from which she rises out of foam
she changes her name all the time
she's all we really understand
faint trace of Egypt round her hips and eyes
then a prayer book flutters down from the sky
lands on our deck and eats sunflower seeds.

Hymn VIII.

She is the glamorous librarian
and we are her books
she opens us seemingly at random
and reads for a while
one by one she puts us in our places.

Hymn IX.

And she is Artemis of course
look at her naked
and be blinded, go mad,
be torn apart by your own desires,
desires you didn't know you had,
desires that don't know you.
In modesty cast down your eyes—
she makes of the boldest a nun at prayer.

Hymn X.

See without looking
is her best song
line the path with monkey flowers,

escholzia, tiger lilies, vetch—
are trees her miscreants
hungry for the light they hide each other from?

See without looking,
only she shall look—
the grizzled pilot finds his way
skiff into seacave
shelters from the storm of seeing,
be close to me now
caressive power of the world,
the sea nymphs are some of your names
let them come and speak them in me
so I can for a moment think I understand
the ruby hummingbird right now at the feeder.

Hymn XI.

Every hymn comes back home.
What good is a god who is not in your face
and at your back at once?
She on our hand avails.
And in her womb of light we live.

Hymn XII.

Hymns to the sun whom
our delectation fastens on
and broken sentences and cries
are all our liturgy
like baboons up the Blue Nile
chattering ur-ur to Aurora.

Hymn XIII.

If she, then me.
Thrall, I serve.
Knave, I natter.
But this chatter
is all I have.
Be it sung
very long.

Hymn XIV.

Jouissance I gave you
my first bliss you
gave me my second kiss.

Nothing makes sense anymore
except you sparkling on the sea.

Hymn XV.

Come back to a topic again and again
as you do to me
chaque jour Shakespeare
we live in your collected works
a semblancer a rogue
a resurrection man, bodysnatcher,
of archaic wisdom,
sunbeam glossing new-laid ink
fast as I write I can't escape from you.

Hymn XVI.

Your words are flesh, come to me
with heft and honor, you mean them
you mean them in me
and I hear an excitement inside me
when I see your name on the horizon—
you are the fire that could be a woman could be
the sun sitting on my lap lightly, the absolute
your tongue in my mouth my hands in your heat.

Hymn XVII.

But it's always the same word isn't it
the log cabin the bucket full of maple sap
the last snow melting in the woods, always the same
word the pebble in the sneaker the driftwood
the yellow lichen high on the sea rocks,
you live over the water, you speak always
the same word, we're hard of hearing,
you speak one word we hear thousands
of thousands, you have one face and reaching
out to you I touch everyone, the word
has been spoken. Amen.

9 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

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Drive personal relationships

into abstract principles

of union and saying.

Call these gods

and live surrounded by them.

Every man his own theology!

Down by the little stream a boy and girl

kneel in the grass and watch a toad

do nothing but sit there. After a while

the boy says What have we learned?

And the girl answers Now we know what silence means.

9 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

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WHAT I THINK DOUBT WOULD FEEL LIKE

We do too many things
to accomplish so little—
a sparrow on a fencepost
does more for the world.
Than what? Than all my
words and deeds and wild
gesticulations when I speak
in my town we talk with our hands.
The sparrow talks
by flying away.

9 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

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What does the dreamer dream?

Can he even tell?

And when the dream is told

is there anything left

still inside,

in dreamland,

some sacred remnant

never disclosed

a secret seed

that grows

his whole life after?

We grow from dreams.

9 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

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PARERGON TO MY IMPREGNATION OF GEORGE QUASHA'S TEXT

Yes, I'm putting words in your mouth—
why shouldn't I do it
when the world, that voluptuous muse,
does it all the time,

language language
made by humans and ruled by gods
the juicy paradox between our lips,
why shouldn't I?

And don't you do the same to me,
your words I have to go through one by one
and have to use every single one
before I can find out what I mean?

9 June 2012, Cuttyhunk