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I could call anyone
I have a phone
phonê means voice
why does elegy always seem my truest measure?

but could they answer
even if they wanted to?
ever since I first read Rilke
I have gone on writing his first elegy

we all have, that is the problem,
all those Moslem angels,
all voice and no hearing,
why is hearing so hard?
there's nobody home

no wonder when they want to say false
they say *phony*,
sounds like a voice but nobody talking

all that calling and I'm not even home.

6 June 2010
Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

The man who tried to rub his mind away
used little swatches of brown velvet
soon found instead the mind's first layer
wore away and left a dozen floors below

he paused in the style of repentance and thought
for the first time with the new stuff down there
you don't have to run the whole mind away
just scrub off the top layer of you

and there it is, the downward mountain,
the town beneath the woods, the streets
full of rivers and o my God such birds
you can give your velvet to people you meet on the beach.

6 June 2010

TESTAMENT IN ORTHOCLASE

None of this was easy
but I call it living

now you do it
one word at a time

not immortal maybe
but a very long afternoon.

6 June 2010
Cuttyhunk

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No internet so I can write
anything I like and not look it up—
my own history! my own organic chemistry!
just put down whatever sounds right!
resublimated psiomorphogen!
Charlotte Queen of Scots!

6 June 2010

ISLAND

Little hour of bright before the wind
sea and land the same temperature
and the air is still
and only the sun moves
slowly drags its sheen across the Sound.

6 June 2010

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In shade alongside house
sun-breezy

snug in old Savoie
or island now,

memory is the only lie.

Truth is what happens to your head.

6 June 2010

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Put something in the cup
and learn from it. An ice cube
fresh from a physics textbook.
He had reached the era
when he couldn't even read Agatha Christie—
something was broken in him.
Put it back. Like the small
hand of the clock. Isn't this
Flag Day? Or Victoria's b-day
or the day they sell cuchifritos
in Portuguese though on the steps
of St John the Baptist? Sixty
years of armed resistance
to ecclesiastical authority
and I still believe in all the gods.
Kiss me, for I have sinned.

6 June 2010

WE ALL ENDURE AN UNKNOWN DISEASE

No name for what ails him
he looked up the skirts of the wind
and saw a great light.
Now help him grasp the function of a door.

6.VI.10, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

I who can get happy
staring at a glass of water
here have the whole sea.
Every time I hear the word
skin I see somebody else's.
As if the simplest, closest thing
were furthest away from me.
She has it, she, the one
this minute leaving the room.

6 June 2010

Mr W.S.

Prompt to litigation,
of no known religion:
our master.

6.VI.10

= = = = =

Padanaram horizon
a door swings Sunday open
old wood wants your touch

far off in haze
the sinister low coasts
of America our own

here in the people's
republic of any random
island all we own is wind

gale force now on the Sound
the lift of wave
white writing

we are the sea's wet dream.

6 June 2010

= = = = =

Somebody was always giving me a hard time
if I left the fridge door open
while I poured milk
or cut a wedge of lemon off—

in the old days it was money
more recently ecology

so a little before six this morning
I stand at the open fridge
deciding what I want.
My guilt is moderate, anxiety-
level medium low.
I can even turn my back on the open door,
pour milk in my tea
then put the milk away
and close the door.
If I so choose.
The “voices of my education”
chatter as usual.

But I am at peace.
I can even call this throbbing
almost new snow-white machine
an ice-box if I choose.

7 June 2010

= = = = =

Two blackbirds on the rail
the sea calm today
after Sunday's tumult,
the waves just nibble at the beach
and for the first time in three days
I can see the Vineyard across the Sound.

Signs us everywhere
and the Sign Bearers adjust the world
to frustrate or accommodate
our impetuous arrivals.
Here I stay. A day
is know to last forever.

Not just the last day
in this boudoir of heaven
where sex dreams us into play.

Darwin did it. Spoke
the new spell: What moves us means us.
Attractive traits persist.
Spasmodically I kiss the sky.

7 June 2010

= = = = =

The paper trail is endless.
I uncoil the alphabet
backwards. What came
before A. What lasts after Z.

A boat full of apostles singing
curves on the night wave dark of moon.
It rimes with sea. It rimes with bed,
hymn tunes hollow out the head.

Then the scant lights in island fog
save them to shore. No one
is waiting for them everywhere, has
supper ready for them. They smell the fish

frying in the pan. They can stop singing now.

7 June 2010

= = = = =

Over Martha's Island
a cloud with a mouth in it
says my name.
The sky is only a mirror
we must learn to read our faces in.

7 June 2010

= = = = =

I dreamed a voice saying
just after I woke coughing
your dream is broken
you must fix it

so I got up at dawn to find
the specialist to mend my dream
Is she in water or is he on land?

Bright sun today might help
but the dream nurse must belong
to night's own personnel
or maybe dream has ,nothing to do with the dark?

I've never seen his black fire at night
or her candle flame invisible at noon.
Where can I find the one who'll heal my dream?

I'll put an ad in the paper. This is it.

8 June 2010
Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

Be hard
with this.
No scented *Pragerdeutsch*
no Viennese.

Just be angry for once
at the world, your smile
makes me uneasy.

But what after all is there to forgive?

8 June 2010

ECONOMIST

If I had all the wheat in the world
I'd bake in all into one great loaf of bread
and give a slice to everyone on earth.
Next day I'd think of something else to do.

8 June 2010
Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

But to be angry is no government.
In summer busses take pilgrims up the mountain.
When things get too much like a church
I begin to pack my books and astrolabe
and set out with a donkey on my back
to find the rock-shelter—only a romantic
would call this a cave—whre I can be
as the old book said ‘alone with the Alone’—
talk about romance! The rock
reverberates whispered conversations,
the mind behind the mind.
Even when you stop using language
that lucid dialogue keeps going on.
(I recognize the other speaker but who am I?)

8 June 2010
Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

Knocking on no door
I doubt my daughter.
No one loves as she should—
it is not unfaithfulness I fear
but indifference. How
could she not bask when I shine?

That is the matter.
This world is meant to play
up to each one of us
a king in tatters or
some beggar on the throne,
that doesn't matter
but what does is she must
be everything again—all
I ever was and so much more
come back to me beaming.

But she doesn't. All her words
elude me with sly poetry.
Daughter, I want you right here
always. The life I gave you
I claim back now. Be
on my lap and idle
my furious empty mind for me.

8 June 2010

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By the time I get tired of blue
the sky will be black.
With a star in it ove the mainland
who is I think a girl I know.

8 June 2010
Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

I dreamed a voice saying
you can go home now

and I looked up—
the rock was speaking
I stood in front of,
a glacial boulder
what else could it be
stood between me and the sea

yes I said but where is that?

You know, the rock said,
you have always known.
But never gone. Now go.

8 June 2010
Cuttyhunk