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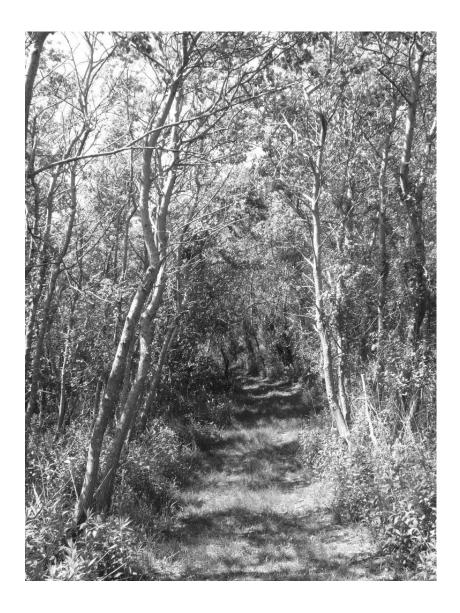
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POSTCARDS FROM CUTTYHUNK

When you think of the island, you think of a fine high wind on the sea cliffs, the surf you listen to every night at the rim of sleep. But there are quiet inland places too, haunted thickets, shallow meadows where the air hardly moves, warm even on the windiest days. And this magical overgrown path through the aspen grove, more like a story than a place.



In secret places like this we walk quietly, quickly, as if not to disturb.



The ferns. Beyond them is the oldest apple tree in the world. gnarled limbs reaching out everywhere. The serpent still lives there, and Eve's loincloth hangs from one branch.

Like Prospero's island, many more men than women. Only one Miranda. And memories of Sycorax who, unseen, still rules the island's manners.

(11 June 2010)

...see them walking in an air of glory

To see them walking now fifty years later the glow of glory gone hidden now but the glory lasts.

To see them walking now quick into morning when the sun elbows its way through cloudbank like a bigshot through a crowd

but they in speed are humble decent meek, they are people in the zone of God, newshowered, in clean clothes, their minds fixed on some beauty they have read or heard or even held in their arms,

stepping now the clean street somewhere that must (because they are) be beautiful too, these ordinary saints on their way to, these people of the town.

See, I was quoting myself, I was leaning back to another time to know who I meant—

who those saints are. No, what they meant in me. What it meant, when I spoke.

We are the intermediaries between the people of the town and the limitless unknown.

> 11 June 2010 Cuttyhunk

Can you hear money? A dog in the dark.

Break a shadow find something better than light.

Touch is the sunlight of the skin music is the nightlight in the bedroom of the brain.

VOCABULARY

One thousand small words chase me around the block. Ringaleavio we played, a cruel embodiment of absence,

hide and seek and find and beat, over blocks and blocks we ran. Or hid. I hid wherever I could. This is personal. This running

away from the words is the deep hypostasis of the city. So many me's fleeing from our enemies. Who love to run the way we love to hide.

Here is a different kind of sleep bright afternoon on the daybed sea breeze piercing, almost chill a lucid sleep unstained by the least dream.

Writing tickets:

a summons to appear before the night and identify which of all those stars was the one that made you.

**

What made you do what you did, what you do. Epictetus said Blame nothing and no one not even you.

But the stars are what they are.

11 June 2010 Cuttyhunk

WALL

As well stand here as walk elsewhere. All there is is what I see.

11 June 2010 Church's Beach

In dream, we belong only to our breath

the fairy tale:

the fairy tale I have come on earth to write

(as if *Faust* and *Egmont* and *Werther* and all the poetry were only qualifying exams for being able to write *Das Märchen*)

Now tell this tale.

Once there was a woman who turned her breath inside out. The silken tatters of her dream she put on as her clothes and went out to work in the world. Aha, she said, at the first glimpse of the sidewalk all fresh in sunlight, people strolling by, aha, she said, the world I see is built of memory. I will understand it by taking it apart memory by memory. I will learn the absolute by forgetting the relative. I will go back upstairs and sit at my window. I will become a window. The light will come into me for a change. Out in the street, people will stop hurting each other. That is all I can do. It is a mystery, but one must be quiet about such things. I am such things. I will say no more about myself. Only this hint: I am soft glass. And there is a bone.

If I were a word what would I say?

I am a man and say nothing

but words. Who would you

believe and why?

Is anything I say true of you too?

When things strike so fiercely and nothing remembers you

then the ferocity we learned in each other an alloyed passion of two inerts composed

sent them mad—a grove of beech trees.

We have forgotten too much.

Call out to the sun to the stone in your shoe

I also am a heathen heathens pray to everything not just some god.

Waiting for forever takes a long time

at the wharf an invisible schooner floats ready to sail

why am I the only one who has to witness these things?

where do the gulls go who does nature belong to?

gathering her skirts around her the boat came in last night gliding through the sunsheen our way and came silent through the morning to the little wharf we stood on

must I go on board to test the distances?

An invisible man is safe from everything but his own desires

what strange seas can an invisible ship invade?

Bottomless abyss of the visible.

ISLANDERS BEFORE US

They were just like us but had no hearts they ran on breath alone

sly tubes like organ pipes ran through them so they sang sort of as they moved

we dissolve our oxygen they took it raw

for the passions of the breath are a deeper mystery than the passions of blood

here they hover still with us the way the sea-side wild roses flurry in sea breeze

but longer and louder and before us and after.

I call it what I call it because I don't know its name for itself, every single thing

every single thing has one I presume

or is naming a human neurosis only

and the far-away and well-within

free of such need—

because they do not call out to one another?

Or only to us?

For they do,

and every

word a man says is some thing calling out to another through him.

We fit in between things. In that sense we are water but not so good at listening.

THE METHOD

Dawn. Seagulls
walk around the lawn
like nuns—
not an original
likeness but a true one.

What is lost into language of the original freshness of observation

can only be reclaimed through language itself.