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I see her shadow walking on the sea
then up the great boulders by the shore
where waves crash yet cormorants
perch with wings outstretched to dry

then she steps, her shadow does
smoothly up shingle—
I know who this is, I read Latin,
I know from how far and long ago she comes

to be always with us almost, her shadow
takes up the color of the opposing light,
at midnight her shadow will be white
as now it's green in morning reddening

do you understand me now, she is who is?

14 June 2010

Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

Saying the names of things

is not describing them.

Describing a landscape or a living room

means telling what's happening in the heart

of someone entering the room or looking at the hills.

If it doesn't do that, it's just trees. A chair.

14 June 2010

AT MERANO

Sitting in the chair Pound made
for Yeats to sit in
I thought about continuity of furniture,
the lineage of poetry—
how somewhere in the world is the tabletop
where Celan wrote Atemwende.

Not true. As I sat there
I thought how lucky I am
to sit in the armchair Pound built for Yeats—
something like a Morris chair,
sturdy, angular, vaguely comfortable.

Lucky. This wood for a blessing.
And now I think: it's all in the furniture,
the poem comes from the pen,
the little kneehole desk across the room
where I wrote Fire Exit a year or two ago
staring at the same sea still.

14 June 2010

= = = = =

To walk there yes
among all the yesses

walking there in the leaf
language, all the story layers

single now, simple,
could find in the hand
the way a hand can

a quiet adjustment
fingers make by themselves
holding,

so in this place
walking together
we string our wireless identities
exiguous community
of desire,

webs left of the dead spider.
Nowhere without wanting.
Nowhere without need.

15 June 2010

Albumblatt

A postcard for the blind

feel

the shape of a mountain,

Eiger, or Jungfrau

maybe,

and not mistake

for any other woman

this

elevation this ecstasy.

15 June 2010

COGNATES

Walk with. In German
with (*wider*) means against
(*wieder*) or again.

Walk means with you.

There is a hill in everything,
there is a forest in all things.

And a strange town
we come to, walking.

Half a dozen steeples
and a big town hall.

We get married there.
Because there is a wedding
(*wager*) in everything too,
a whole family history
happens in an afternoon.

We're different, we're the same,
we go on walking—
the trees are small now
close to one another and close to us,
they form a path

for us to go along.

To go between.

Before we knew it

we were inside each other,

morning is some other

place we also were.

When we wake we hear

them talking our new tongue,

gods with no steeples,

fruit with no trees.

15 June 2010

The miracle is everybody doesn't—
the freemasons sit around on boulders
telling rude stories about the sea
until one cries out We belong to the moon

then the whole world is silent.

15 June 2010

= = = = =

After fifty years of work

I have written into my own world.

Now I have to write my way out of it.

15.VI.10, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

Every whirl or swoon of energy
tries to be a thing.

Every word in your head
wants to be, is on its way to being,
a poem, a love letter, a manifesto,
doesn't matter, wants
to scribble itself on the wall

brick wall, wall of time, doesn't matter,
it *is* matter, energy strives
always to find form, we guide it
or it guides us in our hands,
to find form and take it as its own,

to be a thing. What is alive
constantly tries to die into form.
Because death is the life of things,
the whirl stilled into bound meaning.
Stilled into glass or the wood of a table,
wood the twice-slain, table
of the philosophers, no clean slate
in the universe, everything always
trying to write on everything.

And when the glass breaks or the body dies,

decay is matter trying to come to life again.

16 June 2010

INK

I have something to say once in a while
but it has something to say every day.
This takes a lot of ink.

16.VI.10 e

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= = = = =

Old men too said rosary beads in church
at early morning Mass when they should
have been following the liturgy, the two-natured
ecstasy of Eucharist, they were kneeling
on their sad old knees talking to their Mother.

Now I am old I do not kneel
but walk on the green hill looking for her too.

16 June 2010

= = = = =

Am I now enough

to take a nap

across the cool grey afternoon

and let sleep be the cloud

covers up the sun in me,

the glaring operatic ego

only sleep can put to sleep?

16 June 2010

SPERMATIKOS LOGOS

and the sea

clustered under fog

place names sick the shore

means everywhere

the traveler

knows the place by tree

rock night and only oak

change the alphabet

dawn is an autistic time

soft the lips seem to say such words

I am waiting for a splendor that breaks rocks

the way in old poems

churches are built up from the sound alone

and light pours down in sudden chancels

from names alone arise

the color you cannot name

sometimes you can tell though

where you saw it

who was wearing it and what was spoken,

did you know that colors speak

did you know that words say nothing

they only build opaque monuments

o pyramid my waste of time

o Ephesus to hide the one who shows herself forever

all her breasts forever

whereas in squinch of letter and the vault of sound

voussoirs of our meek alphabet

secular cathedrals rise and stay

I write postcards to you from

this magic chapel called a little house

no mater what

some rat yet will gnaw this bone

Diana ever after.

The hips of Sekhmet—

but isn't what you see on the street

sufficient glory for one afterlife?

For that is the meaning of sin

(*sein*), we have lived always,

always and ever with no beginning,

each new life a heaven of what came before,

every life is afterlife,

born from the Original *Sein*
rewards and punishments hard to tell apart
in the sea fog,

the light lifts

only so far

as music goes

you turned off last night and went to sleep

now see the world that Mercadante made,
and Bellini, and Filippo Marchetti,
value him highly, his love hot as Keats,

they did this to us,

the sound of them

resounding in the sound of us,

daunting to look out the window and see
everyone who passes is in love,

and only the different of them ever say with whom—

wait, this stone from no frivolous quarry

I build dark buldings for you

(think Saint-Sulpice

with yard-thick pillars,

think armories)

hollow places where you can hear stone think.

the golden pot and the strange turbulent mixture
that's been cooking in for 200 years,
all the stuff

like the vast *accumulus* on Charles
Stein's fetish altar

where the oldest religion
still is practiced, Holy Youdom,
my heart on your plate,

every mortal thing is there,
the broken glass you drank from once,
the crocodile,

the stuffed baboon hung in the window
to make the dawn come up.

For I too have seen the light come
up out of Araby the Blest.
out of Sharm esh-Sheikh it saunters,
cruel Finder of our sweet benightedness—

the air inside and out the same today
but it has birds.

Even now a red
bird comes to look in,
looking for the woman I'm writing to,
come look with me,

come ask me

a question I dare not ask myself
although I knew perfectly well.

An answer isn't everything—
a black eyebrow'd russet
sided sparrow is more,
a no-account bird in dust—
but such dust as micron
by micron would chant
softly the whole Lucretius of things
and we would know where past years are
and who you were when last you were.

A man walking on the beach—what purpose
does any of it serve?

Paracelsus tells us,
we are made of one another,
all matter is holy, or is the only holy,
we seek in it the seeds of us,
seek in the other.

Find your tribe
and belong, he said, for I have none
and of all humankind
have no fellow or consort apt.
So I must be everyone.

17 June 2010