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## SOME PEOPLE

Some people never come to the door.  
Some do. It is an Irish thing  
or a matter of the newspaper  
to snatch it from the rainy steps  
or some business with the dog.  
Some use the door as commentary,  
“sporting the oak” they used to say  
meaning I am closed on purpose.  
Leave me alone. For the season.  
I am an animal too much hunted,  
I am small game, vermin, scarcely  
a rabbit. Hence I need a door  
to conceal my uncelebrity. He said,  
and I was waiting for some translation  
into our own case, this situation,  
some pals at the waterfront, but no.  
Some people internalize their doors  
he said. This is turning into psycho-  
babble I said, meaning You’re getting  
warm, back off already, camerado,  
we don’t want to quarrel, it scares  
the fish, the sea spread out for us  
wider and wider, not a door in sight.

27 June 2007  
Cuttyhunk

## SOCIOPOETICS

Why are poems suddenly people  
talking? Shouldn't they aspire to be  
people listening? One at a time  
the words come down from heaven.  
Dove. Hydrangea. Blue. Haze.  
*Four entered the garden.* It is  
the same story every time. The one  
who comes out constructs  
the history of every garden. What  
he says becomes the truth.  
There is no other. We stand  
peering into the trees, wondering  
even if we would know how to see.

27 June 2007  
Cuttyhunk

## LINDENWOOD

The calm of home. The here.  
To be among itself  
the thousand  
pieces of my life one stone.

28 June 2007

## QUESTA

I don't have to do the other thing,  
only this thing. Smooth as remembering.  
The polished table, the magnifying glass.  
Be big again, little world. The distances  
he claimed now hem us in. A word  
named you, a thing took away your name.  
I would expect it to be a kind of air,  
bluish, if it had any religion at all.

28 June 2007

## TAKE IT EASY

The music box plays the famous  
magician displaying his workshop.  
It is like taking off your shoes  
after a long day, or it is like a bird  
you're proposing to study taking  
off before you're done focusing.  
The bare branch. "Situations  
change." Love does linger  
but in the strangest crannies.  
On quiet islands noise hurts more.  
Here the highway is the jungle.  
alarums of baffled infantry  
campaigning their commute.  
Windows open to let out  
the drumbeat they twitch south  
encouraged by. I have not yet  
let myself feel how glad I'm home.

28 June 2007

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She was dressed  
to be caressed.  
But a touch  
asks too much.  
Every body  
means to bless.

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## THE VALENTINE BROKE

My old friend the alpinist  
is on his deathbed. But on this  
island there are no squirrels,  
no ordinary crows. The deer  
are bred to attack pedestrians,  
they stand their ground like  
Brookline matrons rigid with  
entitlement. You said coming  
across the border into New York  
felt like leaving Switzerland  
for amiable France, a deeper  
country, with more give in it.  
But countries we can name  
are not really places at all,  
shadows of feelings, breath  
from no one's mouth. But here  
there are plenty of squirrels,  
I've got my eye on a couple  
over by the linden tree, and sky  
is loud with crowful meanings.  
We came from a distant planet  
and must soon return, carrying  
the *Times* under our arm, a sign  
of real prestige when we get home,  
proof that we have been somewhere  
and learned how to be secular  
at last, be part of the establishment  
even, of otherness itself, no matter  
how insignificant a role we played.  
Speak for yourself—my aura  
is ample as a golf umbrella, wing-  
spread like a lammergeier's  
poised to snatch a sheep. Sounds  
just like you now you mention it.  
Yesterday we crossed a path  
in the mountains he used to use,  
I suddenly thought of him, his shoes,  
his walking stick. He had in fact  
already died, this very day. But why  
do they say very when they only mean now?



28 June 2007

## HOME

Some, or so many.

Miracles.

Marry me yes.

Let the sun  
rise one more time, ok? Touch  
this.

And then at noon  
to thank the night for remembering

us, for being on its way. Home.  
The miracle of home.

Not *heimat*,  
not climate, this. Just this.  
Wherever it is  
you are.

29 June 2007

## *HEIMAT*

Elderly gent in dark blue sedan  
has HEIMAT on his license plate.  
I swoon away into bluish reveries  
of Eichendorff and Riefenstahl.  
Poughkeepsie, the mile of mall  
below the cemetery. Is he  
just Bavarian hence can  
if he wished go home, or Nazi  
with no home at all except  
the internet and Paraguay?  
I hope the former – imagine  
Germany right now, potato fields  
near Potsdam, under the pale  
accusation of the concrete blocks  
Guest Workers are housed in,  
who at twilight in their windows  
read Turkish tabloids that tell  
sweet lies about their *heimat* too.

2.

But what do I know.  
Everybody entitled to own illusions,  
me first. Everybody  
has a foreign accent here,  
weird. I was born on this street  
but you'd never know it.  
Candle flame and dripping wax,  
never ski in nylon socks—  
that's what my German lover said,  
I said I never ski at all, what a docile  
child you are my lover said!  
But are we home yet is what I want to know.

29 June 2007

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To be at home then  
like a chessman on the board.  
one piece of the action, defined  
by how I am permitted to move.

But some hand – we could call it  
a child's hand to quiet  
theological anxiety – could  
reach over and move me where it would,

move all of us,  
with no one to care at all  
about the rules of the game,  
pick us up and scatter us,

pound us on one another  
till pawn breaks queen and the bishop  
loses the little knob on his hat  
and there we are. This also is home.

29 June 2007

## ALCHEMY

A process of refining sunlight  
that strips it of extraneous colors and textures

(incident upon weather, on topography;  
thriftily, they will be used later  
to render livable certain otherwise  
untenable structures among men – see 'Art')

leaving the light itself alone, which can be conceived  
with the aid of the following analogies:  
liquid mercury without the mercury;  
a flame without fire or heat;  
the sea without a single wave in or on it;  
a white lion leaping at you from the snow;  
smile a child sees just before she falls asleep.

Lo! The dictionary has begun  
and already we're at the first letter  
and the last word has been uttered.  
Look in the sky: you may see an image  
of a wise old king swallowing – or trying to swallow –  
his radiant young son, who does not struggle at all.

Call this: the mysterious compliance  
by which the world is made,  
the final secret of the light itself.

We sustain ourselves by and on and for  
the child inside. Buddha nature—  
you give birth to your mother at last.

30 June 2007

## ORPHEUS

Orpheus can never look back at the real woman trailing behind him out of hell, the woman that anybody could see with ordinary eyes. Orpheus must keep his eyes firmly fixed on the imaginal Eurydice before him, towards whom he has struggled all his life. She is not imaginary, not at all, but realer than any mere apparency, than any momentary act of seeing. He must move always towards that perfect image of his wife, and so sustain himself and his song. If ever he turns back, that is, regresses into seeing his wife as an ordinary woman, she is lost. And he is lost.

30 June 2007