

6-2005

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Early. Two sounds.  
The deep sea heave  
And a higher, brushed  
Cymbally sound  
As if I were hearing this  
Sun sparkle on the bay.

Then I know the two  
Are one, the lift  
Of the wall and fall  
On the rocks along the shore.  
Then the wind  
Near me. And a blackbird  
In the elm tree.

Nothing else but me.

5 June 2005, Cuttyhunk

Material trace

Everything he heard he kept hearing

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As if there were nowhere to go  
and I went there

you were there with a cup  
full of pomegranate juice,  
the kind you like to slurp  
noisily through old Faßbinder films

all my own blood went away  
long ago  
like a blackbird on the rock

my eyes are dim  
the books are Greek  
I used to speak  
a thousand years ago

when you too were young  
a meshwork of bronze cabling  
snug low around your hips.

5 June 2005, Cuttyhunk (Palm)

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Afternoon. The breeze  
is coming in now  
from Naxos, from Mytilene  
across the water.

I am only an island  
I live for what happens to me  
for what you do  
with all your comings and goings

the heavy-duty remembering  
that breaks anybody's heart  
and no repair. Wine,  
not wine. The church,

black smoke, opium,  
not opium. Nowhere but you.  
The only one I ever knew  
who was not an island.

5 June 2005, Cuttyhunk (Palm)

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Fear and then desire.

A meal among friends  
or a mill abandoned  
by the dead river.

Desire for what?  
What did the mill grind?  
Or weave or press?

Who are my friends?

6 June 2005, Cuttyhunk

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Opalescent  
cloud with one  
sun in it:  
coat  
of arms of the day.

6.6.05 Cuttyhunk

## C'EST LA VIE

Sneeze. Fleabite. Mosquitoes  
out at last last night  
after the first mild day.

One of them came in with us  
and sang now and then  
beside my ear, a small  
song she only knew.

Ticks and fleas  
on dogs and cats.  
One for you and one for me.

And then all night  
trying to share my dreams with myself,  
an aching ankle in the bed with me  
like one of Pessoa's *othernames*,  
my body my final pseudonym.

6 June 2005, Cuttyhunk



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There has to be some place where it's true  
the way an egg balances on equinox  
or right on the equator water  
doesn't whirlpool down the sink  
just seeps down fast. Or sun hides in cloud.  
Or you can discern your lover's disposition  
by counting daisy petals. So much is true.  
There really has to be some thing  
for every word, and that's the trouble,  
entities multiplied beyond necessity  
throng the mind spaces, word choked,  
for that is where the language takes us,  
dahin, that country where a fruit  
you never tasted grows quick and juicy  
beneath an extra sun. And they have  
more moons down there than you have pearls  
around your neck when you go to hear *Tosca*  
and the whole night congests with music too  
and harmless ships sail the soul away  
to a skybound place con men call 'home.'

6 June 2005, Cuttyhunk

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Subtract the sea.

What's left is me.

Get rid of that

and you have something

real as they say

around here a mouth

desperate to speak

content to silence

itself in a kiss.

Or is it always

the other way round

nothing on its mind.

7 June 2005, Cuttyhunk

## DAS BUCH DER VÖGEL

My hope is the outside.

Bunch of blackbirds  
gull on the roof.

If there were any girls on the island  
they'd read Neruda

and then where would I be.  
A fog with the whole sea in it.

Have I have to have it again  
like the sun, dependable as light,  
choking with comparisons?

If I were in my shoes,  
I'd sing a different Lied.

Falcons. Egrets. Woodcocks. Doves.

The four rivers of Paradise  
are birds flying overhead,  
are birds flying away, the escape  
from the center, fugue,  
the Mendeleev conspiracy

to flee the unity. The dread.

Falcon fire

Egret water

Woodcock earth

Mourning doves the air

they sing is plaintive, mind us,  
gives us their name –

how low I have to fly to meet myself.

A sense of meaning soars through the earth.  
Tesla heard it, the literal,  
ground of the ground.

I reach down  
to loosen mulch around last year's  
new-done hydrangea – blue in its  
day briefly – and I feel that surge  
of something, quiet, steady,  
rising to meet my fingers,  
if I let it, flowing into me.

What does it feel like?

It feels like a word  
some nearby voice pronounces

like a child who learned it  
that afternoon in school  
and is very sure of how to say it  
and says it, and says it again,  
not too sure of what it means

my fingers hear.

7 June 2005, Cuttyhunk

## **THE ELM TREE**

Takes the sea fog  
saves it along each leaf,  
shakes in the sea wind  
so it's always raining  
under the elm tree  
even when the day is dry  
and sun shines everywhere  
but there, you walk  
in fresh remembering rain  
beneath the leaves  
quivering between you  
and society, a grand  
dream, a poet tree  
making its own weather.

7 June 2005, Cuttyhunk

## FROM THE DIARY OF PARACELSUS

Waxed over sea the sun  
is a bee the light is wax  
someone eats the honey

I need a pseudonym  
to say what's on my mind

the sun is God's monocle  
the poet said, slipping  
on a wet plum stone  
in market dawn

forty years before I was born  
the sun was also shining  
amazing things  
knew how to be  
before me and to do

one thing leads to another  
that is the great rule the E at Delphi      ε  
the vav at Jericho to die      n

and not let it matter to be born  
in no one's way the light decides

you have heard pure agency stirring in the ground  
have kissed such things as rose  
and bent to them that didn't flower

in those days holding a leaf  
meant business silo full of wheat

nobody asking questions where did you  
get that rain who hung the stag horn  
sumac with such raw meat  
why is the moon?

8 June 2005, Cuttyhunk



## **LOVE LETTERS ARE OUT OF THE QUESTION**

Who would read them even if they wrote  
themselves, automatically, every time  
the sun comes up our heads  
fill up with love's valuable garbage,  
garbled messages that nobody sent  
but everybody means, and you  
get elected to be the shivering  
sweetheart of some blue galaxy  
in which we barely manage to survive  
pain after pain and a gentle wind.

8 June 2005, Cuttyhunk

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a gentile mind  
I thought he'd written  
him with his rings on his hoof  
and the ink in his heart

blaming himself yet again  
for Brith-lessness  
and the only covenant he makes  
was with his mind.

8 VI 05, Cuttyhunk

## **RABBITAT**

this hyper-bunnied island  
last night the leapers  
all the little ones  
wherever we walked

they turn their backs  
to be invisible  
then they doubt  
and hop away

what does that  
remind me of  
always a hedge  
to hide in

some convenient  
natural fact  
to distract  
my enemies.

Rabbit hour  
light fading  
waves coming  
also in fast.

what the rabbits are up to  
eludes conviction -- there is  
hardly anything less plausible  
than a rabbit

8 June 2005, Cuttyhunk

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Keep waiting for the other side of something else.

Fulmar or jaeger. Not a hint of  
surf today, just waves rippling quietly  
in.

--Who care about your endless ocean?

Does it put food on a poor man's table,  
red tide swamping the whole coast?

--There are no poor men anymore, only  
women. The men are in the various  
armies, dying – poverty is the government's  
basic inducement

--you don't know

what you're talking about, who are you,  
everything is just the same. Molecules  
change position, there is no net gain.

“The poor you have always with you”  
said the Lord.

--Meaning what, precisely?

Social irresponsibility, mystic escapism?

--Meaning what he said. Do  
what you can do with what you have.

--And if you have nothing?

--The world

is full of consolations, rich with seas,  
stones, mandarins, other  
people's diamond rings  
glimmer in your morning sun  
just keep an eye on change.  
--I thought you said nothing changes  
--No, I said everything changes  
but change doesn't mean a thing.

8 June 2005, Cuttyhunk

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not after under the bright  
day the shore all rocks  
the sand gone in winter storm  
and the bay huge and one  
big eider floating close  
I tell this from the end of life  
when the target card is shot  
full of holes and you can't tell  
no more the misses from the hits  
.22 rifle but twenty two what?

8 June 2005, Cuttyhunk

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Who am i?

it asks suddenly inside

it shocks me to stand up

like a blackbird hurtling off the fence

the danger close.

Is I the I that means you,

myself talking to me

or another altogether different

identity, ipseity,

some other I

telling me to answer?

An answer has to be a kind of remembering.

Every man his own sphinx

I think. But it matters



am I asking myself or is  
someone else asking me

why does it matter  
a self is a self

'who am I?' asks about any  
but what is the answer?

*Nescio.*

Let me hide in the question.

8 June 2005

Cuttyhunk