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## AS IF THIS ONE MORNING EVERYTHING CHANGED

How could *this* be more or less than one morning? Strike “one.”

How do I, how does anyone, achieve certainty that somewhere something is not changed, whether by accident, neglect of will, or through possessing a nature impervious to change?

Is there such a nature?

If so, who or what has it?

If not, why introduce consideration of it here? Don't you *know*?

The word ‘changed,’ thanks to ending in that archiphoneme *D* that expresses in so many languages (Germanic, Tibeto-Burman, Latin) what Wittgenstein once called *pastness*, indicates that the changing is already finished, done with. No more change in the changing. But isn't change an unending thing, a process not a deed?

Revise. (Revision is change.) Hide instead in a novelist's stratagem:

**as if this morning most things seemed changed**

But that sentence expresses seem twice. Strike ‘as if.’

this morning things seemed changed

That's a pretty dull sentence now.

And we have to ask, whenever change is introduced, so as to be clear: changed from what to what? From itself to something else (like frogs and princes)? From itself to some other phase of itself (like Rip Van Winkle, or water and ice)?

And to whom does this change, assuming it really has occurred or is occurring, now seem?

If you don't know, don't go there. Say a name or pronoun. Or strike 'seem.'

### **things change**

Which is safe, dull, true. And slightly annoying to be told. Full of hope (for cure, improvement). Full of menace (for failure, dilapidation, relapse).

Maybe you have, or there is, nothing to say about everything.

Maybe you have nothing to say about things.

Or change.

Do you have something to say about this morning?

Yes. What about my feeling. I looked out the window. Fog, rain, a woman walks downhill, I can feel her bones ache. The sea is too quiet, not a sound of waves. How do I feel? I feel as if everything has changed in the night. But I don't know how, or why, or in what direction, or what it means, or what will come of it. What comes of my feeling. I write it down. You give me grief. I feel displeased with certain friends. But won't let myself know who – but whoever they are, I don't want to be friends with them anymore. That's a change, isn't it? And a feeling. A feeling about feeling changed. We don't have to go through every permutation, do we? Or we have to go through it, maybe, every one, but we don't have to tell you so, do we? You don't like to be told. At least not so much. We don't have to account for everything, do we, don't have to count everything, mention by name everything that has changed and everything that has stayed the same, if anything has. If anything has changed. Maybe the bones I feel aching are my own. Raw cold weather, and a clever wind. Isn't memory just a broken bone ill-healed on such a day? Any day. Isn't the new light enough to warrant Morning! Morning! Do I have to know what makes it new? And if I do, do I have to tell you?

Maybe I don't want to tell you or anybody what has changed. Maybe my feelings are an important secret that should be kept hidden in the leg of my pants where it could warm my right knee. Maybe all I knew anyhow was skin, and my so-called friends just shadows cast on my skin.

17 June 2005, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

The sea a constant offering  
and those who live in sight of it  
can offer and offer every changeful  
glimpse of it, offer the obvious blue  
of it, offer the slaty winter of a summer  
storm, offer the stone of it, offer  
the change itself, because of all  
things true to human life change  
is truest and what else do we  
really have to offer or to give?

17 June 2005, Cuttyhunk

## **KREUTZER SONATA**

how small my mind is  
under big music  
like a snake hiding in a hedge  
aligning with branches  
hidden in the shape of things

17 June 2005, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

but what could happen  
could a stone do it?  
nothing but what we think  
is anything to think  
bounce off the wall  
fall to the center  
of the room now be a chair

17 VI 05

= = = = =

to say something easy  
never thought

to be mute out loud  
and sing inside wood

crack the rock and see  
crack the sea and say

17 VI 05



**INSELF**

Inself the order

18 June

= = = = =

Two men standing on the sea  
there seems to be a boat beneath them  
a man standing on the sea  
is a fisher man  
a man inveigling alien  
presences in an unseen realm  
getting them to rise to him

18 June

= = = = =

Wanting to give pleasure  
what more is there in quiver  
but desire, to strike  
and vary, to touch  
what turns target, moving,  
still, to arrive in that one's  
chamber or with that one ascend  
rocks of the sacred mountain  
or this meek grassy headland  
over the unstable eternal

and be the sea gull land crow  
the air both belong to  
belongs to you and be  
all round inside no  
end to the giving  
one gives by taking.

18 June 2005, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

If you were a person  
would you hate to be described?  
Would it be morning or the first day?

How many words can you hold in your hands  
without forgetting even one?  
Suppose I told you something about your life—  
would that make you a person  
and what would it make me?

Say after me: “I hear the sea,  
the sea and some black birds,  
nothing else. It must be the first day.”

Now tell me what to repeat.  
“I hate the sea.” Slowly  
the day turns into language.  
You slap your child and feel guilty.  
You open the door and think:  
“There is so much wood in the world,  
why bother?” But you do.

Usually walking with another.  
Usually having a bone. A bone

you find reassuring, like a hymn  
From Greenland's Icy Mountains  
or at Yule a tipsy misunderstanding  
about God. What do Protestants  
believe? But now  
I cant follow what you're saying.

I admit it. I was trying to keep  
the candle from going out so I dropped  
some of the vocabulary you handed me.  
I was trying to be helpful, the sun's  
cheerful light stays up in heaven  
doesn't get down to the sea. I'm cold.  
And you're right – I know nothing  
about the sea. But you're only mad  
because you slapped your only son  
and now which way can you turn to feel  
like nobody again, when you were glad?  
Judgment Day comes down from the wall  
behind the altar and goes off in your chest.

18 June 2005

Cuttyhunk

## THE LAST I SOMEWHAT AM

you cant *have* the body without the mind  
why Henry James is all about sex  
the mental landscape before, around  
any possible act, intimate.

Caressing the sea.  
Pushing the news  
out of your mind.  
Polishing the air  
Taking revenge on the wind.  
No, marrying it,  
sneezing sunlight often.

White-throated sparrow puffed against the cold.  
Can't hear with the.  
Infinite measure  
strong words  
contradictio.  
Dante's was called divine because.  
Never knew if B meant the text was  
or the meaning was  
or God's a fool and all his world is  
born in lunacy

adjectives never say what they really mean  
leave Leiris and a girl alone in a book.

Dangers of Africa.

Titles on the march towards books.

Regent Street remembering Orchard

where it becomes Baker and the garden

of the queen slides into view and then

we turn around and walk

to Marble Arch through a fog of names

nothing clean, kitsch of the actual

from which the name rescues

grass grows over your shoes

samphire pickerel

Suburban Mall: the abomination of the market place standing in desolation.

Outside the Town there is no salvation,

outside the Town no one will be saved.

Can't hear for the.

If I opened the window I would hear the sea

then everything would go backwards

fold the old

comforter quilt over with shavings of cedar

stored against the miracles of decay

early man goes fishing  
a diffident diorama walking down the hill  
will the hydrangea bloom in time  
our month is up on Thursday  
“bat balk”  
Sunday work to be done  
God is a thing a fisherman never talks about  
alone on the.

An island is its own religion.  
Bring down the striped towel for the rocky beach  
o where has winter put our sand  
away away where time’s things are

asthmatic heave of the sea today  
for all the sparkle  
fades, the shadow of my hand  
vanishes from the writing paper

because of a light eight minutes away  
or a little cloud *nuvoletta*  
what could B be thinking?  
How many cc’s in courage?  
Midnight golf cart derby lightless foam  
and then he woke like an impoverished aristocrat  
in *The Golden Bowl* promising to tell  
the truth if only there were a truth to tell



if the sun went out  
it would take us eight minutes to notice  
sometimes when the heart goes out  
it takes a terrible time longer

only Africa would know  
only the great blue dream  
only the hand's shadow coming and going  
weaving

over the years I find I can't keep interested in plots  
movies are more like looking out the window  
and books are stained glass light to bathe in

strangers on pretty streets

to be free from plots  
and have only language

to be free from plots is to be free from my own story  
free of my fate

overcome the overman

destiny

language is a way of sitting still

language goes there and does it

and you have blood on your hands at the end of the sentence

language meditates  
the lapdog burrows through the lap  
the sky never gets a minute off

never for a moment stop perceiving  
and even the stone has something to say  
paperweight  
weigh my meaning down  
give some gravity  
to the sunlight's laughter  
and my gull greed  
soars off the earth

paperweight  
hold the music down  
can't hear with the  
such papers rustling in the night  
put a seal on every one  
then press into the wax  
your ancestor's signet ring  
you too belong to somebody else

you too are part of the plot  
the insolent unfoldings of the actual.

Don't prompt me

I know the answer  
it's Africa isn't it  
the incontinent dark

come to claim me  
the cloud is everywhere  
but where it could shield me  
from the endless sun

winter run-off canyoning  
clamor of parsimony  
costs too much, no  
bats on the island and no crows

the shadow comes and goes  
it's almost enough to eat

grim silence of the ear  
determin'd dar'd & done

I speak  
my peace.

19 June 2005

Cuttyhunk

## EXPLANATIONS

The current is not something the sea knows  
it knows the sea. Joy  
runs through a tender bone  
only.

A child three  
years old holds  
a fishing rod and does not see  
the death it dangles.

“Fish feel no pain.” “Fish never die,  
even when you eat them, something  
of them swims away  
and leaves the bones and fins,  
fish fly like sunrays back to the sky  
or wherever the sea comes from,”  
he thinks, putting together  
all he has been told.

The explanations people give  
for everything.

Where is my joy  
now? Why have I turned

away from what I never knew I faced?  
The Ahab turn. So young to turn.  
The leg slowly turns to wood.  
The body *from the Sun*. The sign:  
to feel love yet cause pain.

The unintentional, the coarse,  
the accident, the dumb. In England  
as I slept the woods were green  
the animals were talking again.  
To be a child is not to know  
how words strike home.  
I want to believe.  
I want to be slow as it is.

Maybe even to be accurate  
the way it is. Shadows  
have no life of their own  
until the night time comes  
and meanings falter.  
Then I hold the simple rod again  
and change the sea. The wood  
enchants itself to be.  
Then my arms hold everyone again  
and no one turns away from the word.

20 June 2005, Cuttyhunk

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We chose this pain we might unchoose.  
Nobody nailed us to the sea, nobody said  
Live with this man or die, nobody said  
You are only what you do – no other mercy.  
Turbulence of children running down the halls,  
Their words all being and no meaning,  
A word's what excitement makes mouths do,  
Nobody makes you listen. Whorled organs  
Beside your forehead are your fears  
Left and right. Then left again into the dark.

20 June 2005

Cuttyhunk