

6-2001

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But in the sad slow motion called Real Time a dirty  
trawler and a dirty tanker crashed together in the bay  
half naked sailors running around like crazy

blackbirds and grackles hop along the lawn in another  
world the one called Here & Now zen preachers tell us  
hardly anybody gets to live in though we visit time to time.

6 June 2001  
Cuttyhunk

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Motor launch slicing through the sun glare  
Down there — that also is me  
I mean you, deva, my oldest best confusion.

6 June 2001  
Cuttyhunk

## ECRITURE

So I'm writing with a German pen bought in Italy  
not last summer but the one before

now I'm dipping the nib in my black coffee  
(I'm shameless) to get the clogged tip fluent again

I'd dip you in my cup too if I could  
and milk the lordly essence of you out

for all to read, an Elizabethan tragedy,  
night game at Fenway, your heart on my sleeve.

6 June 2001  
Cuttyhunk

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Afterimage of sun on sea  
man walking to the dock  
breakfast inside him  
like a memory of liberty  
a hint of his destiny

6 June 2001  
Cuttyhunk

---

Saul on his way to Damascus  
could have ridden this wave of light  
if all he needed was to be blinded  
to everything he meant before

all his ideas and understandings  
scorched out of his head

Eventually Time, the third man in our marriage,  
would have brought everything back to sight

only now love would be named Jesus  
instead of The Law. It scarcely mattered  
after a while. Love teaches, love leads,  
love kills. Love is a set of commas  
that stretches out infinitely dividing

anything we mean from what we get.  
And it was no Christian who wrote  
the sun reached out and struck us like a sword.

6 June 2001  
Cuttyhunk

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Arcane measurements restore old sense of place  
to be so many ells or rods inside you  
so neither of us really knows the point of union  
only that sometimes we fuse together then later  
come apart with a grand glad memory vague  
but adequate of our brief and everlasting work.

6 June 2001  
Cuttyhunk

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Some wanderer  
at the door  
a king you say  
a boulevardier, a sheep  
in wolf's Gore-Tex, a smile  
in search of a face?

6 June 2001



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All of these. Blackbird  
singing from a dumb old song  
be articulate from me

you are the repressed returning  
my turtle dove my potency

all that. Smug charmer  
of so many prophets, my Lou  
Andreas Salome, how fair  
the letters of the alphabet  
are and stroke your serifs too

you mild inscription in a fever ward  
Christ even our diseases are so old.

6 June 2001  
Cuttyhunk

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**(Prescription)**

Eat herring  
to help the prostate

speak words  
to spare the heart.

6 June 2001  
Cuttyhunk

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Public health amazements  
of disease efficiency plague  
was profligate and killed them all  
AIDS so magically efficient  
kills them slow and leaves ripe  
for years as donors  
to get the body's immune  
system to do work for it most  
efficient of diseases modern  
technosmart malady infects  
only the most active pilgrims.

6 June 2001  
Cuttyhunk

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No hermit. No waves to hear  
yet they're there.

Middle of the night in island peace  
no lights at all

a dog barks uneasy at  
what neither one of us can see

the other, villain of the piece.

6 June 2001  
Cuttyhunk

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Will I see what I've been meaning  
or will a wave ordinarily arrive

and have positioned myself on the other  
side of everything, snug surfeited

a little sunburned, my desire  
loose in my hands, a dowsing rod

trying to name whatever moves it.  
Let this be you, a kind of answer

to a question we have not yet thought up.

7 June 2001  
Cuttyhunk

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Already the undertakers are studying  
to make me look like an ordinary person.  
He doesn't look so bad, people will say,  
I don't know what all the fuss was about,  
two eyes (closed) one mouth (ditto)  
and a sort of nose. What was he, a fisherman,  
a minister? A crackpot scientist I think  
convinced there was a Fifth Force in physics,  
the one that keeps us interested in each other.  
But we're not. He didn't know that, died happy,  
or as happy as he could, considering he died alone  
though in the middle of all the people he ever knew  
and some of their friends too. Listen, his best friend  
stands up to say the eulogy: He  
was the one I loved, what more can anybody say?  
And they all said that too, and went away?  
No. They were silent, lingered with him, the sorry  
effigy stretched in the pine box kept them together  
after all. They said this and that, but stayed.  
He had finally become real, that is to say  
an object of fixed reference and shared meaning,  
an entity almost fully known and named, like god.

7 June 2001  
Cuttyhunk

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But then the mail came,  
and who was I? A starling  
in Prospect Park, that's why.

Bronze panthers at the gate I rubbed  
adoring the curves of their haunches  
worn brassbright by incessant adoration  
of touch. A hip, a geometric god.

7 June 2001  
Cuttyhunk

## MANUAL OF LETTERWRITING

*“resigning from a post — Waiter”*

Something about the scallop shell wearies me  
The long traditions of béchamel, the night  
Itself an uneasy patron, time keeps  
Wanting something else from me.

Demand

Is different from desire, doctors declare.  
I am tired of the sounds of words, of standing  
While you sit down, the way you shift  
On your hips and vulture up your shoulders,  
I am sick to death of wanting you.  
The food is my only friend and I give it all away.

7 June 2001  
Cuttyhunk



## SOLSTICES

Solstices stand on their heads when a man  
Walks on the water of the sky

2

who are these people I have come  
to a strange country where men hate rain  
and all they want to do is lie in the sun  
and would be dogs,

indeed a dog  
is popular among those mainlanders  
a dog and a gun

3

nonetheless Americans have small teeth  
leave the signs of their hatred to the dog to the gun  
and the wheel and what makes me so uneasy  
in this republic is how long I can use  
language without saying a thing

4

o my repressed return to me  
it can't be all their fault  
can it evening star Freemasons  
my sweet new roses  
clouds sky poses  
gazes

at the plum version of a deep sigher  
only mad make sense.

8 June 2001  
Cuttyhunk

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Tell a scopic fixated  
she isn't really there she's  
over here a trace or aftering  
on your brain's  
disposition to interpret and attend

and alchemy is still green tea  
a Polish answer to a Roman question  
pronounced me with your tongue in my mouth

(the only way you can speak my language is be me)

8 June 2001  
Cuttyhunk

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Sensitive afterload  
fingertips dug into her hips  
pulling the whole not unwilling nearer.  
This is sunshine on the Vineyard Sound  
dragging the headland onto the sea.

8 June 2001  
Cuttyhunk

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Apt to intercourse the flower the curtain rod  
snaps a blue chalk line against the wall  
against all the measures I am there

and years ago I praised your overmeasure  
you thought I blamed now come again  
past the rubber and the fire the measure

is a line we walk to get there  
to mark the way between  
the ice rink and the movie theater  
between the sign you made and the sign you are  
we will always be each other's measure

8 June 2001  
Cuttyhunk