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## DAWN UNDER NASHAWENA

Holding something in hand that belonged to another  
one would say of sailing people:  
they wear their body differently.  
You wonder about the tense tuned spring  
of a body slapped around by wind  
and waiting for it, willing it, though long waiting  
is usually good for the ecstasy,  
good for the virginal zing. I remember.  
Right now the sailboats are Chinese cutouts in the channel.

Dawn under Nashawena.  
I have watched the meager, spoke-like clouds  
match-lit from under gradually break into flame  
first the highest southwest tip and then  
finally the whole of it underlit  
like a sleeper throwing one nude leg over the horizon  
and the junks shiver a little at their moorings.

Hot it will be. And now the great disk is afloat  
to rule for fourteen hours and no place to hide.  
It won't be long before the worst is obvious.

2.

I see I have been detained by description.  
You don't have to Dickens the day,  
enough to say it,  
sunrise, boats in the far channel,  
gulls floating by, what am I doing up,  
who gave me this red pen  
it has the feel on it of an unknown interesting other  
liased to me by some tiny generous act,  
here, write with this, an airline,  
was it, or a diner?

Things out all night now catch the light,  
symphony in blue and gold in the style of Whistler  
— antique sunrise, how sad and cultivated

that each day the newest thing  
should be so hot with reminders,  
now furnished with cloud, now I need blinders, the gulls  
start shouting at the suddenly everywhere manifest light,  
no maybe more about it, this is day.

3.

One remembers the feeling, not the circumstance.  
Or the feeling still contrives to linger in the thing.  
As usual, we let things do our feeling for us,

and all I remember is the red cylinder, red ink,  
Denver, a smile. I wanted the moment  
to give me something and it gave me this.

4.

And this other one, blue similars, things like the sun.  
How to decipher what words almost mean?

Soon we run out of resemblances,  
then we just have her name.

27 August 1993, Cuttyhunk

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If I were a, no, had a,  
garnet I would  
give it back to the mountain

Gore, where the mines still  
work and the gravel's red  
all day long

and there is a cliff from  
which you can see Vermont  
the opposite

in every way  
what happens  
I am glaciation.

28 August 1993

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At dawn I must wait for the sun to go down  
stand on the highway looking for quiet

I light my cigarette from a handful of water  
it hurts inside me when people smile

O I want them to be happy really happy  
and the rictus of all that gives them pleasure

gives them pain, the goofy grin of getting it  
the bellyache of permanent entitlement.

Only when they're sad are they near me  
and understand my stupid ecstasies

I share with them a word or a prayer at a time  
while the moon sinks delicious in a starless sea.

28 August 1993

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Chas/town in hot

the sun naked  
the only  
thing in Massachusetts that is,

Missa Nuda,

the chrysanthemmic diapason  
of our mongrel voices  
gold-lifted into  
cantilena, this  
conversation that strikes  
other nations as so musical

of ours,  
and they're not sure,  
are we sure  
how one feels about music.

28 August 1993,  
near Worcester

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Let each child claim one of his father's skills

the rock of the whole of them  
up there plain for them to see every day of their lives,

his qualities, the things  
a man can do.

One by one reaching puberty to make their claim.

28 August 1993

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No matter  
how often

it is different  
no matter

from you  
seed

sintering destinies  
like Miles

too late  
not to be able

it comes to be  
you find it

where it runs out  
drove

into the pines  
a father

a machine.

29 August 1993



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Two crows  
shoulder  
to shoulder on  
one branch  
shouting koans

louder & louder.  
Am I listening?

29 August 1993

## DREAM OF A RATIONAL CALENDAR

I have one the Ace is grass  
and Lauds is all the names you loved  
poor lonely alphabet  
when you still need someone to  
touch me

A fingertip revives the flesh

o this Lazarus of a body we  
until the thee-  
summons by a wordless word

and then the coming and the coming forth!

2.

Doktor Mesmer, stricken with ontology  
heals most diseases by passes with his ordinary hand  
never touching the skin

but the skin is touched,  
the millimeters dance with air,

the movement knows it  
and from the inside out, the movement  
touches and the body

becomes itself. Smell of a doctor!  
Sweat and flour, smell of crucifixes.

3.

Touch me,  
I am an hour.

Count by moons  
and ravish by eclipses,

you can sit right down in it and close your eyes  
because there's nothing that's not right here  
go-less and come-less and not staying,

it just comes to notice  
without evidence.

4.

The ignorance of number  
is bitter as the salt of words

tides going out around my ankles  
leave me nothing to remember.

30 August 1993

## KNOWING SOMETHING ABOUT THE DAY

Knowing something about the day  
(columns fallen on the shore)  
all that you learn about your family  
will trick you into thinking you're you,

think you're the one they know—  
reared, fed and cordoned off  
to be an inviolable precinct of the hive  
doing mom-work and pa-chores

till the fairy moon sank into the sea  
(fallen columns point to sunrise,  
sunset) sometimes in sheer agony  
of ennui you'd go to the dark

and say Here is my pale skin  
star-cast, brittle light, woollen shadows,  
all offered to the intense absence  
you find on the other side of talk

(the columns had fallen before you came to be  
veined temple of some previous identity)  
and you showed your body to the night  
because it has no eyes.

31 August 1993

## NORTHERN GODS

Counting by nights  
black beads slipped  
through Baltic fingers  
full moon on shallow sea—

the world's full of revenges  
won't let you forget  
what an oak tree means.  
You lose the names and keep the thunder.

31 August 1993