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## SEED EATERS

Beak crack

husk even

the insides have fight

redbird grosbeak waxwing

as a kid I wore a mackinaw against the cold

but an orphan now I walk out in my shirt

I have been hulled

and swallowed by the bird of the world

every part of me cracked

but nourishing withal,

and of books I ask

are they the husks

of what was me

or I the hull of them?

Eat me, pour

across the river into Paradise,

that Brooklyn over the bridge.

12 June 2012, Cuttyhunk



=====

Mysteries of sunrise  
island life wake  
when you wake sleep  
when you're sleeping

what would it be like  
if love and art  
were this way too, and money

that breeze from afar?

13 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

The lymphatic history  
of a swollen economy  
about which I know nothing  
but paycheck and anxiety  
as if in a dragon's gorge  
we lived and there really  
are no dragons are there?

13 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

=====

Tumescent telegrams of old

I cherish the news

said I will be there

at midnight, count

your adjectives

till I come.

After years pass

it's enough to say the noun.

13 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

Let spirit talk about what spirit tells  
*a long book beginning with a war*  
a boy sitting sixty years in a café  
shyly watching the other customers  
or in love with the slim barista or  
thick notebooks piling up on the round table.

Tell me again the part where he comes home  
and thinks his wife is a sea cave and all his friends  
seagulls screaming at him and flapping away.  
Oh we who live bent over an ever-expanding Talmud,  
every word we read proliferates another, oh we  
who crept out of daylight to discover  
the broken stones that Moses left all over the Earth  
in every cave and tumulus and tavern—  
we find them everywhere we read.  
For once the Bible told the truth—the fragments,  
the fragments! The tablets of the law are everywhere.  
So here in the steam of the espresso machine  
the boy fits the pieces together, saying them out loud  
one by one, but softly, so only the notebook hears.

13 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

at the old anchorage  
a taste of pie  
a food nobody eats  
the fish falling out of the sky  
and the gulls waiting down below

apple and cherry  
sometimes I will eat rhubarb  
a woman keeps her man by she says  
learning to cook and keep

but I hate that, I am a gull  
waiting for the sky to open  
no woman need apply

for I am a statue of myself  
and content myself with the long weather

13 June 2012, Cuttyhunk



= = = = =

So many near  
and there's almost enough.  
The soft rain  
the headland sliding  
across the sea—  
*subrisio materiae*  
a smile in matter itself, the long  
ancient endless  
glee of thing.

13 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

Lift the sea up  
and read what it's hidden  
all these years,  
mountains and valleys,  
ancient citadels  
books made of coral and nacre  
who put all this water here?  
Who drowned a dry planet  
where people lived  
on oxygen and hydrogen unmixed  
not shattered into water.  
Is that what Heraclitus was remembering,  
death for the soul to be wet?

13 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

I live in a forest  
I come to the sea  
the landlords of earth  
are loud in my ears

the hum of their long habit  
—autumn and equinox  
blackbirds and spring—  
is my drone or thorough-bass

like a certain woman  
walking through the trees:  
the sea.

2.

So it is for liberty I come  
the wash-out of expectation  
in the flood of the ancient  
freestanding bluetailed actual.  
As if I were a sailing man  
a Portuguese or sleeping child—  
all manner of supposes

fit my shadow  
neat as flame fits a fire.

3.

Now the long part begins,  
the song, the sound, with *you* in it,

the master tone,  
the zone of intermittent ecstasy  
pinup on the wall  
waiting for it to be light enough  
to be seen, we all  
want that, the cavalcade  
and royal summons, the bluetailed yammer-bird  
to mind our clamor,  
when we touch each other  
we become celebrities—  
isn't that better far  
than your seders and high masses?

4.

Do you think the girl knew  
how ancient she seemed,  
a half-naked dryad on an Attic cup  
running away so that we'd follow,

did she know how old the words were  
that she was speaking, did she remember  
Chaucer's hand caressing the back of her neck  
or Jack Donne panting on her breast?

*How do they know?*

That's what young men wonder,  
how do they know the core?  
Is everything inside out?  
Do they really think with their skin?

5.

Vocalese. Means  
the no-word song  
of voice alone  
stripped of all the other  
meanings hums  
just its own.

14 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

The blackbirds come first.  
That's what you learn  
by getting up at dawn.

The miracle has happened,  
you can see again  
and there they are,  
the fluency of everything out there.

14 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

Delicious fog resumes its bay  
a man climbs down his steps—

we are ladders, Hildegarde,  
and we are climbed night and day

sometimes I feel your absence  
when you're on your way to things

things you never write about  
the car the kids the leprosy

or whatever the ailment is  
we secretly suffer so and cherish

and a dog runs after him  
because that is what we do

I loved your new book  
but it scared me

Hell is getting closer these days  
not just the drones and Syria

something smaller and quieter and very mean  
lean as wrinkles in an old man's face

when the devil signs his name  
you can hardly make it out

water dribbled on a napkin  
cute waitress flouncing away from me for good.

14 June 2012, Cuttyhunk



= = = = =

Big surf on the headland

wind calm.

Everything surprises.

Trim the cloud

till it shapes something

Arabic letters

water snaking through sand.

Obvious, almost true.

The way a book

can almost be.

14 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

Bring the empties home  
and use again  
the glass tunes  
Schubert left unfilled—

there's always room  
for music, easy  
as bones inside the skin,  
the old game

measuring each other's spines  
by language alone.

14 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

Footsteps of the dancers  
heard under the music  
thrill the body-self  
of the spectators—  
each soft or firmer footfall  
on the hollow wood  
is the old story,  
the Eden of our skin,  
the faith of touch.

14 June 2012, Cuttyhunk