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What to listen for
over the roof tops
a splay of cumulus
bluing the blue

was that a song
I heard you hum
or just the tune
a body knows

itself the breath
the catalogue
of all the ships
brought you here

when it comes
down to it
you are in fact
the whole story.

22 July 2012

= = = = =

Things in the day do.
Alarm or intercourse.
'running between' whom and whom
a slender silver river

and then pyxis, the little box
gold or silver or amber
and in it the future's stored.

Who will you be when you become?
The foxes trotting on our lawn
take a shortcut from woods to woods—
and that is human love also,
for we are the ones who know to love,
no sparrow safe from our tenderness.

22 July 2012

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The bird said
Don't hurt me—
that's enough
philosophy.

22.VII.12

ADAPTIVE ARTS

a title come in sleep
fitful as the pther side of dream
come to caress

who do you think you are
a quiet question
to any actor any agent

all the body's energy
focused on *being known*
the other side of thinking

the other side of are
on the blue rectangle
dry-brushed a white

rectangle almost all of it
filled in, only
some of the northeast quadrant

like Rembrandt's etchings
where the emptiness
comes from the top

resisting the fog of line
where we find meaning
something that looks like us

am I not master of this communicate
signal corps of the dream
image-wielder of her sleep?

she rocks on the gilded prow
even as it nuzzles through the quiet sea
sucked by prevailing westerlies

whose sleep? or who is sleep?
who walks so bold
and calls it waking?

2.

Sea raptors as
ospreys ernes skua gulls
go high to find come down to seize

images everywhere
the sea generates linguistic behavior—
we were—like Demosthenes—

taught to speak by the sea
its incessant whispering
or roar or in between

the businesslike comportment
of your daily waves
pish-tushing on the skeptic shore

it was the smaller birds
that told me this
razorbills plovers terns

3.

Rhymes with lovers
and their eggs on the sea-cliff
stored boys raid

tell me again
what it's like
on the other side of the rain

dark day muchacha
cars in love with trees
trees begging for sky

envisioning some other side
hopscotching over this
we breed by being seen.

23 July 2012

TRAVELERS

He walked forever
waiting for some barrier
to rise and close his road
to make him live there

always, to live
in the word
he had spoken,
the woods around his mind.

2.

There are no bodyguards
in that country
and the mills go silent
most of our days

beside the quiet streams
time knows
how to pass
and come again

but our traveler
is not there yet
the road like thinking
never stops.

3.

What does it mean to *be* with the design
or walk the way your feet were made to go
as many questions as there are footsteps
and never one answer anywhere to trust

4.

that's when she began listening to stones
stones at least have hands
the spotless morality of granite
is her good church and it sings

the hymns she hears are praising
and she praises along with them
the many small gods of this
natural world

their names

she doesn't know but she feels
their breath on the back of her neck.

5.

so learn another language and touch
my skin for a change
everybody needs to be invaded
not just you

that is the accursed beauty of grammar
it works both ways subject and object
dance in a circle in our new languages
position in the utterance is what counts

wo ai ni ni ai wo and what do we do
on rainy days when the verbs
forget to shine? we play with ourselves
in the terrible patois of pretend

6.

but everything pretends

the words we say
mean more than we mean

they sink deep
deeper than the heart

we hear what we want
to hear

how huge the appetite
how little we learn to make do with

that's why we listen to stone.

24 July 2012

SUPPOSE I WANTED TO TYPE

something for all the pebbles on the beach
who loves stones as much as I do
do I have enough words though
stone's lemma the mystery of sitting still

would the waves let me? isn't the sea
what it's all supposed to be about
and these hundreds of d of
brown blue grey black wet and dry

pebbles on the beach are just accidents
in the sea's essentialist theology?
I am the most credulous unbeliever
you ever saw, there is no myth you can recite

I don't hold for gospel truth. The gods
love me but men have their doubts.

24 July 2012

= = = = =

she lit the roses on fire in the giant

—E.C.

Because there was nowhere that was not him
and she needed so much red, needed
red to be growing out of the dark
and there's nothing anywhere darker than the giant
the inside of him and no light comes
but roses her roses have light of their own
pulses outward red red until the dark
throbs with redness and her body's torment
for once meets its match, two pains wipe each other out.

24 July 2012

= = = = =

Meeting at the gate
of the wasted kingdom
I woke. What trash
got left behind me
landscape of my fault.
Maybe junk turns gold
if I can learn from it.
Or maybe this moral
is just more trash.
What does a man know
of where he sleeps.
A dream is just a dream
and so is this.

25 July 2012

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A kiss is enough
we breed backwards
into glory.

Before birds flew,
we.

25.VII.12

= = = = =

This whole planet could be Oddyana
if we forgive resentment away—
our anthem: the other.
Sing!

25.VII.12

= = = = =

Nervous sleep and foxes in near woods
the mind is full of underbrush
rustles in sleep—sunlight
like a healing scalpel sometimes
wounding the images of dark.
In there. In there a single leaf
with sun on it in all the shade.
Daytime captures us.
Is it rescue or abduction
maybe we'll never know.
We are so busy going.

25 July 2012

PREQUEL

Up Route 9
past Germantown
becomes Amiens
without cathedral
the green fields
rising east
bounded for a mile
or two only by
sky. And then
Claverack
where stood an Indian
trading post
when I first knew it.
What's an Indian
anyhow, and who was I
to know one or
ask it anyhow
turn east
to the Taconic
the classic beauty
of highway the first
imagined all green
signless,
but itself

a sign
liberty to move
anywhere we fancy
in fast cars
deer watch out
and hawks hover
so switchback
local roads
to Massachusetts
and the Pike
a workaday road
all trucks and big Mac
and so to Boston
130 miles of
inland commentary
Mount Tom and Emily
the only poet so
close to us we
call by her first name
I summon her
thou summonest me
before we get there
already are.
The mind such
a strange car.

25 July 2012

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The surrogate
of sunshine
where what we mean
is what we mean

not what some other
interloping maybe conscious-
ness hops in the window
we sweat to answer.

25 July 2012, Boston

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The wrong things leaping to conclusions
magic is a mind lying in state
catafalqued on fears
and blossomed over with wreaths of hope
nec spe nec metu
nothing to hope for in the mind
nothing to fear

magic is the opposite of mind
moves all mind's passings by
into permanent obsession,
besieging emptiness
with tools of false who's
magic makes things happen
and that's the wrong of it
because nothing happens

it thinks and thinks again—
fearing demons
he becomes what he fears.

25 July 2012, Boston