

5-2002

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Determined to be colorless he reads the kite  
over the hill out loud to his nephews  
who adore him because he brings doughnuts  
every time plus what he calls crullers  
no holes twisty otherwise the same  
sticky hand in hand through the galleria  
but none for him he's too old to eat  
anyhow they think since the first loss  
of adulthood is appetite. So what *is*  
adultery they wonder that they heard he did  
and never would they do such a thing  
just not their kind of sin. Adults make  
such subtle distinctions they lose all  
taste for substance color speed and touch  
they live their lives on a blackboard  
lost in a muddle of bored words.  
Fidelity. Responsibility. Square root of minus 1.  
It is ridiculous to be older than nine.

24 May 2002

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My driver is always waiting.  
Sometimes a golf cart    sometimes an old Lada  
sometimes she's in the new Lexus --  
I like L's. Thirty years she's been with me  
and she's still nineteen. Remarkable  
how time    not even time    is reliable.  
It just doesn't work on some people  
even their skin. She tells anyone who asks  
she's from a different planet    slower  
where she's not even twelve yet --  
no wonder she never wants to get married.  
Sometimes I wonder what I want  
but want's another unreliable animal  
desire    pig's snout weary from the trough.

25 May 2002

I know where you're coming from.

I know why you're here.

Sometimes I get frightened at your persistence,  
other times you're a great rhythm I can drowse in

till my own animal wakes up.

You have no animal.

I have to do everything for you  
so sometimes you let me come inside you a little while

and understand the strange story you're always telling yourself  
and any fool, me, who listens.

To be inside you. What then.

What comes after pleasure, what comes after pain.

...

<25 May 2002>

## TYPOGRAPHICUM

Nearness recency space space

begin a new skyline.

The terror is nowhere

to move the biomass.

Penis

erect shoved into the sky

coming out of what had been

deleted obelisk hole in the ground.

What does a city dream of

space space the terrorist

answers the dreamer

stone shoulders dead stars

26 May 2002

## CAPRICCIO

In Strauss's opera music means  
a woman chooses   relaxes  
in unchoosing. A city is  
whatever fits under the sky.

In the new skyline does your body fit?  
Can you wait till I give you the answer ...  
all the dirty delis shout for joy

because his own dream was stained  
he built the repressed shapely  
homosexual effrontery of the twin towers  
and on the 11<sup>th</sup> that λ day  
the scandalized patriarchal heteros rebuked --

two men of the same size standing side by side  
when will we ever see the same anew?

26 May 2002

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the man in the street  
remains in the street

we go inside the fane  
the nave of art

where all things are true

and the fringes of thought dissolve  
the delicate cinctures of sad women.

26 May 2002

=====

they don't put seals on letters any more  
where do they put them  
in the Bible on the heart or on the lips  
but who reads that any more  
~~bends forward over the receiving desk~~  
~~and someone comes from behind~~  
~~with hurt in hand to press in~~  
~~welcome savagery embed in meat~~  
~~this is the seal~~ this is the seal  
darling this is the bible in your bone  
you know this you need this ~~hand in you~~  
there is a festival of doing right  
that starts up when a touches b  
this is the soul sealed by a single touch

26 May 2002

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Your belt frazzles  
like a squirrel leaping  
or something else

broken shadow  
a bus on strike

Your English lessons do you no good here.  
Nothing is spoken so nothing helps you  
and you're all right you've always  
relied on nothing

but sometimes someone  
waits for you after the show and goes home with you  
whose place doesn't matter  
holds you while you cry all night  
and both of you get some comfort from the transaction  
(half rainforest half Viennese)

which is also a precious transmission  
body to body from the beginning.  
It is our inheritance but we get it from strangers.

27 May 2002 Boston

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To know something or to be something  
an animal knows better neither  
too busy turning away

there was a raft

we rode exclusively on  
guilty poet speculation  
blue sky daisy forget-me-not  
and then we did

and she remembered  
everything I worship the curve of her remembering  
the slopes of sapience the river of remark  
fluent from the shoulder season  
before we actually woke up  
acute in a midwestern morning  
speaking a kind of Latin

from Poland gooseberries  
smeared on your white plate.

28 May 2002

Boston

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To be eternally part  
of history and the number system  
as a date is the unique  
operator 28.5.2002

28 May 2002 Boston

## NOMINALISTS

One feels a certain superiority towards those who bear as first names one's own unemployed middle name but pure even arrogant superiority towards those who bear one's own last name as their first.

28 May 2002

Boston

## FORGET-ME-NOT

1.

So small look down. But when you fall into the yellow-pale heart of the sky blue flower  
small as it is small small all size turns into scale size vanishes all of you falls  
into the littlest and you pass into color. Color's scale is distance and sound. Sound varies  
with the square of the distance. Distance is color. Color is the square root of time. Forget  
me not.

Save some for me I said meaning you. Ruler of road work sole of a moccasin  
Maori lips contagious hips Marx's grave in Highgate moonset over Ponck Hockie  
home at last. My Punjab to your Nahatala my Luxembourg to your Smokies. Havergal  
Brian's symphonies a violin sonata by Ruud Långgard. Answer me for once limitless  
lady. Binocular sandwich my golf cart you left on the moon when you were too bottled in  
May Wine to drive down the sky woodmistress cancel my subscription to sunshine  
I'm on your side wet on the gravel and lost in the birches

I smell the white bark like an enemy's aftershave soap of the temple harlot plenty of  
those when I was a kid bird no fooling bird in my pocket my hands are full of sky  
I rub all over you say thank you to the nice man love is a pinball machine all lights  
and no action steel balls otter pelts you grew under ground ivy seeing is a disease  
of the eyes transport union a man who works for himself has the whole world for a  
boss save some for me save me from statues I fell in love with a Venus a billboard a  
poster a movie a website a candystripe nurse in trouble. And there on the steps of the train  
platform a little boy without a balloon outrageously empty his little hand held onto the air.

2.

Over the hill over the hill and then under the hill under that the aspens aren't fully leafing  
yet o darling the poor dead snakes the two of them as slain by some bad Tiresias probably a  
cat or a fisherman at dawn o darling the aspens. And the paulownia is still in flower who  
brought it back from Japan there's a story a princess there a bridesmaid here tell me  
again a flowering tree inn the graveyard purple flowers simultaneously with pecan-

shaped seed capsules always empty when I touch them always empty each like a glans  
penis meatus agape I really love you in a strange little way the way you love me  
there's nobody like us and we're not even us

A packet comes from Franck André Jamme to tell me more a poet named for the James  
gang Jesse's brother o get it right this time Clio it all comes out of you the thin  
glairy ooze of history all that clatter in the attic that hissing scratching in the cellar no  
wonder we can't sleep in our houses we need to travel can't sleep at night  
Evander snooze all afternoon

Evader the despoiler close at hand did O consent to her ravishment ring in her  
gluteus tug her home o war? It is so many years since I read a book a book was a  
bounded thing a bonded thing had borders and covers had The End you knew  
where you were when you were in it and when not not. Now there is no end of  
weaving the never-ending text suits me just fine rose of Sharon blood in the moon  
are you home yet are you ever?

In ferny pastures dew drops down into the sly heart of the forget-me-not flower blue as a  
dream clap of sunshine smoothing along the wall painted white the one house on the  
island that is not shingled.

How do you come to give me such permissions? I mean you're not even a railroad or a  
mockingbird something with a big name and Wobblies on strike around the plant you  
can't get in I can't get out and yet someone is someone's mistress how? Is it energy or  
sassafras or that same old history book yes book god damn it the one that flaunts  
beginning and flashes the end and says the whole thing middle by middle makes sense I  
don't believe a word of it a book is mostly paper anyhow you can take it on your  
tongue I often have a miracle that anything at all comes through signals on paper  
o my poor sweet lost sailor in the deepest woods horns on your head hearts at your feet  
night is coming now and not just the island only only you still can see the curve of  
rump a bear is it or an angel or your shadow ransacking the fog christ is that how  
lilacs smell?

28 May 2002, Cuttyhunk

## DE BENIGNITATE PHILOSOPHORUM

Mist liberty  
Sea transience  
Sand presence  
Shell dwelling  
Stone identity

The whole of Heidegger's philosophy arises in an attempt to describe a week on the Baltic he promised himself as a young man but never spent.

I am absence.

You are the best seven nights there are. If I could live on the coast of your Friday forever, for example.

But what if there's a place, Val, where the words are always going? And another place they don't want me to know of, let alone reach, what then? What shall I do about those secret places hidden in the very prospects the words shift to reveal? How shall the words' faithful follower learn to herd them instead, towards a pasture I don't know at all and they seek to keep me from knowing? Early in the morning I think of this, then I think of you lying in bed asleep deep asleep and think: maybe you're there already. Show me your wound again. Let me touch it.

I can see something now. I must be me.

Tricycles. Skinny handles in fat hands. What can it mean?

Wait, I'm getting there now. The radio, the mirror, the steps up to the attic, wait, the garage, the car passing at midnight on no road, wait, the two buses jammed together, Punjab, personal memories aren't worth the paper they're printed on, saltimbanques, an Arab singing

to his girlfriend on the crumbling steps of the old Roman arena, closer, not personal, I have no clue to what he sang or who she was, his arm around her, her face hidden in his chest, friend or wife, what did he croon, not personal, closer, a memory that intersects the nowish mind. I hear him still.

I never saw her face. Shawl, his shoulders, his arms. He crooned to her but we could hear. Maybe Berber, not Arabic at all. Nothing is clear but what I don't know and can't go.

Would *a robin on a lawn* be a sufficiently anonymous image? No. Too many robins, too many lawns, too many countries -- yet the image says America or Euroland, it does not say India, Japan, Brazil. How about *the moon, three days past full*? No, gibbous, haunted, only in Germany, only in Japan. The moon by itself lives in China, and sometimes spends a day or two in Spain. The moon belongs to Andalusia, I'm trying to tell you, nothing belongs to everything, there is no universal integer, not even the sun.

There is no common image.

What about Lucy, you ask, that girl in Venice? She carries the moon in her hands, and the sun, and our means of knowing them, you say. True and not true. She carries more than the light. And you didn't even ask her last name, content with her strange gifts, long sleep, silver mask. Dumb as you were, she helped you see.

But what did I see? Can I say what I saw and have it be something seen, seen by you and you, not a poetic image freighted with will and festering with personal identity, me? I see a house. I know it's white. My language makes these things appear to be so. I don't have a clue who lives in it, and neither do you. We're finally even.

We can thus together *imagine reciprocal irrealities* -- this IRI is a technique for being happy with whoever you happen to be stuck with for a night, a weekend, a few years.

The other is the only thing of any use.

When I was a kid I liked older women; when I got older, younger. This seems rational, healthy, if socially problematic. (Society is bad for your health.)

But the other isn't a thing, see?

The other is a man or in your case a woman, sitting over there, by the velvet curtains in the doorway, just out of reach. Talk to the nice lady, Bobby.

Grass under mist, that's all. That's all I've got. That's all I've got to tell you. At least that much.

Self-absorbed pomposities are my specialty. Just like everybody who is anybody, a name stuffed with cheap ideas.

29 May 2002

Cuttyhunk



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among the rocks  
on a fallen eight-by-eight  
he watches the tide  
turn slow and creep back in

birdless the stripped shore  
the moving hands of fog  
slow too, as if he  
could finally see the air.

29 May 2002

Cuttyhunk

## MAYBE IT MEANS SOMETHING NEW

A beginning maybe or maybe not.  
A star with a tee shirt hanging from one ray  
A basket full of dandelion greens and all  
Little balsawood airplane wrecked in a yew tree  
Sun snagged in fog. A man sweating.  
Everybody else is cold. A coffin full of rice.  
This day used to be a memory, now it's now.  
There was an old stovepipe a bird lived in it  
Who knows what kind, you just hear fluttering.  
He thinks of all the things he can put in you  
A lens from sunglasses lying on the beach.  
Everything sees everything remembers.  
Whose parade is it with my fingers  
Marching up your thigh, cookies get soft  
On damp plates, was that a story or  
Do people really go naked in Tierra del Fuego  
Warmed by nothing but the grease  
From sooty seabirds, who knows what kind.  
Obsessions are so inconvenient. Kiss  
The nape of the neck, that's all, a green  
Ball tossing on the sea, that's all, suppose  
The sea is playing tennis with you, skeptic  
Would you still go on reading your newspaper  
Hoping a clue to the market's direction  
Down there where your feet in sandals stir  
Annoyed by small sand flies who own this land.  
Bitter morons waiting for the evening bus.  
Stop thinking about what you did to yourself  
Suppose every word you hear is really  
Meant for you and every speech is part

Of the selfsame text forever. What then  
Is that hibiscus you had in dream  
How long does a thought last he wanted  
Beer drinkers in a city graveyard  
It was just yesterday why is it gone  
Why are they all finished with us already  
We all have tattoos only yours are on the skin  
Little tree by neighbor's door how small  
A child wants to know if the moon's  
In Canada then where does the bird  
Come from to be here and what is the sun  
He finds its footprints on the beach  
Wants to be in her condo moving  
Subtly with the sea now that he has  
Sacked her again deleting street by street  
The avenues by which others might  
Come to know her. Montague Terrace  
In rain lost paradise of conversation  
Lost for the sake of so-called radical  
Opinion walk conversation freedom  
Stymied by the rigidity of politics little  
Boy don't ever grow up you were right  
You really were right back then disdain  
Anything less than a kiss despise opinions  
Study the sidewalk is for kissing  
The heights are for looking at the sea.

30 May 2002

Cuttyhunk

*Ak'abal*

Let me at least say the name of the day  
the day is Darkness in the Cup of Dawn  
brighter than any day of the week  
in terms of sun not my best friend  
or maybe she is we're always quarreling

31 May 2002

Cuttyhunk

TO THE LATTER DAY SAINT WHO PICKS ME UP

What do you care, reader ten thousand years from now,  
about my love affairs or my desperations?

You care about the weather, the permanent  
the stuff around me that's also around you,  
you just want to be startled with a long neighborly  
homecoming sort of surprise and think that he,  
that boring old senator in the Second Middle Ages,  
he knew about this too! That priest  
watched lovers on the beach! That dead man  
had roses on bushes and a whole moon in the sky!

31 May 2002

Cuttyhunk

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I know you are daytime but I also know  
your secret name is night, I'm sorry  
but I always want to treat you that way,  
coming in backwards, ruby tail lights,  
your lips smeared with rain, *tu sais?*

31 May 2002

POSTCARD 1

Watching a thunderstorm at night.  
I wish you were the lightning  
And I was the sea. Wishing you  
Were the ground and I was the rain.  
Stormy weather keeps us together.

31 May 2002

POSTCARD 2

Quiet dabbling rain then harder.  
Darkness breaks suddenly  
As if there were someone there.  
The whole sea. Then just alone  
This handful of light I'm in.  
Light on and off. The reef.

31 May 2002

Cuttythunk

POSTCARD 3

Out of the dark a beach leaps when lightning lets it.

Wave curl white mustache.

It is doing what it always is.

This means ontology. This means you. I wish you were me.

31 May 2002

Cuttyhunk