RECIPROCALS

Every failure succeeds. Every success also goes to the ground. The good is enemy of the better they say. The bad incites the better to be. After a good reading yestreen I am undone. Everything yet to be done.

1 June 2014
Can’t see the house
my job is in.
Thanks, tree.
Summer has
its own ideas.
Turn inside the
weather a while
will leave you alone.

1 June 2014
Applause alarms.  
I don’t have enough self-doubt to need all that.

1 June 2014
Take nothing.

Divide it
one piece for each
of the three sons you don’t have.
Now there are four
of you. To do
nothing.

This
is called permission,
golden hair, it appears
only in sleep.
There is no sky
to hear us — don’t
mean heaven, heaven's
here a-plenty.
It means no sky.

We travel.
The horizon is a wife
to each of us,
distance never betrays you,
we will be home for supper.
The table will be bare
the stove cold. The glass
is full only of twilight.
And this is just how it
should always be,
a tale no one’s telling
that in the quiet
spaces still gets told.

2 June 2014
Die every night
and come back to life
sunwise. Everything
has to be learned
all over again—
water, moonlight,
gravity, identity.
get things wrong.
There are clues—
things laugh at
what is probably me.

1 June 2014
“NATURAL MEASURE”

(from a phrase by Paul Blackburn)

to lift a suitcase
onto a bed
in a foreign city
to see the world
honest witness

unstrap the contents
air full of confetti
from an inconceivable
celebration
there, out there,
down there
you will never understand

though you’ve spent
half your life
coming to this place,
this “imaginary” city “with real” subways.
Everything you care for is down below.

Darling, she said, a face
is just a footnote to a body—
the body counts.
And from far away
you understood
the park built on landfill
the park with steps winding up the little hill,
with ducks on the pond
by the gate near the town hall.

or the quiet leafy street along the canal—
what is water for?
Did we come here for that,
blue planet,
cool glass of Badoit?

And then they were together
walking past Saint-Sulpice
with a protest march noisy through the square,
who cares about their peace or war
justice lives only in the moment—

that is the actual
measure,
blink of an eye,

a man on the roof
taking pictures of the sky—
so on the cyanometer
developed by Humboldt and Saussure
turn the wheel to Tint 39 —

there,

that’s what I’m trying to say.

2 June 2014
We want a battery that lasts a year high tech all day long that doesn’t every night have to get shoved into a socket on the wall like a Philco in 1939 come on scientists or whoever you are get with the onward program forever the sun’s power harnessed in my hand to sing my permanent Device where’er I walk glowing in my pocket semper paratus my miracle.

3 June 2014
Chain saw empty
diner hash and eggs
a single sheep
in the field behind me
Charlotte says.

Can’t see it.
Chain saw. No
depth perception.
The human senses
form one harmonious
system—if one
is a little off the track
they all shift weird.

a little effort, Robert,
ok, now I see the sheep.

3 June 2014
Ghent
That we be here.
That be
    is here enough.
That is
    is coming towards us always—

like her maybe angels
dark consorts of puberty
who in the magical hour between two a.m. and three
quietly speaks
    so she knows
he’s inside her
and at last she can sleep.

Miraculous dream from which a day is born,
limitless vistas of sheer necessity,
mad and blind and every color of it all,
nanometers of now.

4 June 2014
New Bedford
SWEDENBORGV

Swedeborg was right. The Last Judgment has already happened. Took place in the year 1757, in the angelic realms. and now slowly comes down to earth, to us. On earth the Last Judgment takes the form of the Industrial Revolution passing into the era of ceaseless technological innovation. Its aim —its only aim— is to liberate us from the habitual bodily form that we have accepted since the Fall. roughly the past 200,000 years. Now they will make angels of us yet. No longer brood mares and rampant studs, we will live out the Millennium as transhumans, mindlings, of the New Earth.

4 June 2014
M/V Cuttyhunk
Buzzards Bay
That this also is June
the sea is its own month
always, but here
sun on sparse grass,
the sand of memory

4 June 2014, Cuttyhunk
The island continues us.
Walk up the hill in light rain
Scotch mist the open view
of wide weather, fog and sky
continuous, and in deep mist
Penikese the ghost island,
guards the spiritual north.

4 June 2014
Cuttyhunk
RETOUR

means how

to come home

Gide

from the U.R.S.S. digesting

digesting

slow the quiet protest

of his soul. We change

the letters around,

we spell

all things in different words

trying to come home.

2.

Now we are here.

Now if music

knew how to stop

once in a shapely

while

it would be new as language,

magisterial,

inconclusive,

music

a cute girl sitting on your other lap.
3. Recall
   is something like it.
   I would rather
   walk uphill than down,
   down
   is not meant for beasts with toes,
   toes
   are to climb, the ape of us,
   no wonder
   pointy toes from Guinevere to Loubatin.

4. This is about (music is about)
   changing the shape of things.
   At last
   the sea seems
   to have nothing to do with it.
   Later you listen,
   then the caravel comes,
   the sky calls,
   dense with a palimpsest of birds.
   The treasure chest
   where melody is stored
   unlock
   one note at a time.
   Note means ‘known.’
   There is no other way.

5 June 2014, Cuttyhunk
REGULATIONS

Sleep after waking.
Set a rose
on the subway bench.
Avoid the eyes.
Study the backs
of passersby.
The past will never hurt you.

5 June 2014,
Cuttyhunk
Set that to sing.
Rhymes remind
why you ran away.
In those hills
never trust them,
no girl without
some dumb man
lurking near
like a snake
beneath a rock.
Don’t move a thing.
There’s your music
and good night.

5 June 2014
Cuttyhunk
The rain is my house
you can’t blame me
for trying to live in your skin.

There is a natural weather
to be wet. A star
nibbling at your conscience

some clear night now
because of what you did
not even with me.

5 June 2014
Cuttyhunk
North wind sweeping fog away
dges of neighbor islands clear.

Repentance doesn’t really work
so far from the Equator.

Across the road the roof beam sags.
Say to the angel that you forgive me

maybe she will do the same. The cosmic
trick is to do and not do at the same time.

Clear sea, not a sail in sight. Only
at the dock a small boat named Regret.

5 June 2014
Cuttyhunk