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STILLNESS OF MORNING

Poets imagine people.
Can barely hear the waves
so soft the sea.
Dove hoot. Sparrow chirp.
Imagine people
then live among them
walk with them
careful over the rocks
alongside the shore
of some other imagining.

2.
Imagined footsteps—
not much sand
and what there is
dries soon and blows away,
no traces of their
imaginary passage.
The flags hang limp
like veiled women
in yet another country.

3.
Why do they do it?
What's wrong with empty roads
tube radios, dead

batteries and the old dog
next door they put
as they call it to sleep?
Why isn't what is
enough? Who keeps
calling on the telephone
demanding particulars
of what does not exist?

4.

We should be silent as *it* is,
like Wallace Stevens at his desk
imagining the sea an hour away—
it laps at his shore. He knows
we can only be silent when we speak.

5.

Fatigue built into the system maybe?
As you learned from cars and fountain pens
if you keep using it it never stops.
Cosmology whirls out from the touch of a hand.
Things need us. Or is that only me.

8 June 2014, Cuttyhunk

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Poetry has learned again what it knew in its beginnings: it can talk about everything, can tell the world's story or tell the world a story. It can while away an hour. It can lie. The machinery is simple: vocabulary meets metaphorism, gets linked by the silences of breath. It all makes sense. That's what's wrong with it, Aristocles, if anything is: whatever anybody sings makes sense.

**8 June 2014
Cuttyhunk**

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**The unity
 twist together
braid the words like hair
and weave them in your breath,
be the wind that lifts them,
lets them
 come to the ears
of your best friend
who could be anyone
 again.**

8 June 2014, Cuttyhunk

SUNDAY

**No wind no move
even the birds
hide out. Mum.
If there were people
they'd be in church
what good is that
just one prayer say
No More War.**

8.VI.14, Cuttyhunk

ARS SCRIBENDI

**You're allowed to fit together
things you discover in your speech.
A word you say to her tomorrow
answers last month by the waterfall.
Her hip is your hand. Leaves
come out last on the paulownia
after the purple flowers fall.
Nothing falls. It's all sustained.
Stick this into that and kiss it hello.**

**8 June 2014
Cuttyhunk**

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**I'm falling in love with your vocabulary
let's run away to the mountains together
lie in the daft meadow, I'll close my eyes
and all tumescent with attention I'll
listen to you telling everything you see
and everything you think and feel and saw
and can't quite remember so make it up.
When you fall silent we'll call it 'night'
then walk together to a place we'll call
'this place' and fall into what only most
ignorant passersby would call 'sleep',**

**8 June 2014
Cuttyhunk**

SLEEP DECIDED.

All the light was coming out of your lap
became the world — *meter* mother
measure — is a thinking machine

aren't you. Aren't you all
my soul and I all yours?
Aren't we tiger together?

2.

All the light and none imagined,
robins on the lawn
you know how it gets
sometimes when the wind
is a bar coaster you brought home,
soft, absorbent, no trace left
of what you were thinking.
Only the evidence of everything.

3.

Pictures show it, the delve
between tall grasses
that part the sky.

There are two kinds of life
on this planet: one we know,
the Levity: we all, man, bird,

grass, tree reach for the sky.
The other — light itself
falls on us — the Gravity
drags us down, life forms
there are that yearn for it,
seek out the center of the earth
and for those People of the crust
that is the center of everything.

Light tries to drive down into the dark
to be diamond and fire and its kin.
These two forces make me what I am
(all the light from her) alone on earth
as every is. My old tongue-tip on her lip.

4.
Clouds are the water of us
trying to rise up. Ease my eyes
of this new sun. Did you think
all this while that I was me?

I meant to be. This intermezzo
is the sermon part of the Mass,
no need to listen. The real stuff
is the images we see, each one
the meat of prayer When I woke
your hand was resting on my shoulder
I thought it was an orchid there.

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**Turned my feelings
body bone and blood
into coins — silver
some and others bronze
mind-minted — and
I gave each feeling
to a friend. And some
got two. When my body
held to more, my chest
empty, I felt a new
sensation, bird-like
effortful leap up.
a rage of emptiness.**

9 June 2014, Cuttyhunk

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**In the silence of the island
me and my true love met**

**the strip of land
between water and water**

**a life I think
where everything means**

**means something else
how long it takes us to learn that.**

**9 June 2014
Cuttyhunk**

TIGLATH-PILESER

**comes to mind
after all
I am an Anglican
after all
that Book
still belongs to me
by dint of hearing
so many
years, dear dear
sounds immune
to meaning.
Shadrach, Meshach.
Abednego.**

9 June 2014, Cuttyhunk

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**As if a number itself
could compel me,
transport me
to Santa Maria Formosa
again, when I was another,**

**or the splash of oars
around in front of the Salute
flows out from the few
tears at the corner of the eye—**

**ocean finds us everywhere.
But the *us* of marble,
us of the stucco cornice,
of the gold leaf on the angel's lips—
who knows all of this but us?**

**9 June 2014
Cuttyhunk**

[lines from dream]

**This Dew equipped with Healing
hie outward to deliver
homeward into needing hands.**

(as if by Paracelsus spoken)

9/10 June 2014

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As if it found us waiting
crawl Cleo out of Shaw's carpet
we bring ourselves a bird-song
we can't identify.
Later we drink soup
why did we ever start eating
another Nourishment
could have been ours
we could have lived on us.
Accounting for all this is difficult—
the waves are quiet,
people say the sea will lift up
do we hunger for that flood?
Boiled rice sand and liberty.
When we were walking by the food place
you said to me "Me too"
isn't that worth remembering?
Are the crowds at the airport so appealing
you can't stay where you are?
Where your thighs simply rest?
How far you make my hands travel!
Travel is neurosis he concluded.
An Amazon tribe with no name for themselves
o sense of being different from anybody else—
this is just where it is they explain
when anybody happens to be.

**And one time in Cinnabar Springs
a girl I met in the Mexican take-out
reviewed for me the geology of need
and how the strata of ordinary stone
are interleaved with thin layers of
consciousness itself and we woke up
bent low to drink those licit waters.
Today the generator roars out there
in moorland emergency. Mercury
retrograde. Stood in line behind you
to find out where you were flying
and fly there too. No shame in need,
deepest need. Can you hear the hurry?
Two nights now the Guide spoke
in my sleep wearing the face of Paracelsus
shown in old woodcuts, I mared his counsel:
switch from 20 mg to 10 mg, go out
early to lick dew from the purple irises
growing by her mother's doorway.
Slight atrial fibrillation. Light on the bay.
Daylight is beginning to now me
reciting a prayer never been written.**

**10 June 2014
Cuttyhunk**

JUNE AND NO FIREFLIES

**Rapt by mystery
the birds arrive**

**2.
I would be seed
offertory prayer
the organ ponders**

**soon on stone
flooring communicants
approach**

**meat of miracle
simple larder
of gathered wheat—**

**3.
and on the meadow dreams so deep
no waking mind can read them
or remember, Hill of Tara, by the Stone—**

**only those who remember their
dreams will rule this land.**

10 June 2014, Cuttyhunk

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**A word full of rain
opening the partitur
to the bar where the second theme begins
carries the piece down
past the paulownia tree
in the graveyard by the sea
where we gather in meek formality
to catechize the cormorants
and try ourselves to recite
our feeble lessons to the sea
our measure and our mother.**

**10 June 2014
Cuttyhunk**

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**Then the clock will open
up and smaller birds fly out
in the cottage on the hill behind us
and our living quarters fill
with a new kind of light!
built out of friction from
the sea licking forever at the shore.
When we go home will see
doors springing open everywhere
in what weren't even walls before**

**10 June 2014
Cuttyhunk**