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Waiting patiently for the outside

to be less sentimental—
a hen-pheasant crossing your path
shouldn't mean get your girlfriend pregnant
and thunder is on business of its own—
if lightning had you in mind
you'd be cinders now—
he waded into his morning
wary of omens.

 It means
nothing. Or alternatively
It only means me.

27 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

Recast the lines.

You made the time
now make it dance
to new measures—
you hear what the Greek
sailors sings and the girls
from Smyrna hum
when they're in your arms—
doesn't matter if
a few thousand years
went by, from such
instructions and waking
on a bare hillside
long after song is made.

27 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

I who am two thousand years old at least

I have discerned the secret of the sea
and what stone keeps hidden

I have learned how to sow
sunlight and reap the stars

my own bright wheat.

All the rest of me in time

might be just forgetting.

But this now

is what the mind is for.

27 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

I want to know how the mind works—
it's your mind so I touch your skin.

Touch is the clinamen, the shift
of properties from mind to mind

so then I know you and am known.

27 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

And I carry this ocean with me
this bay this splay of sun across it
and a cool wind—land birds chirping:
this is one world only, joyous prison,
heaven in the head and the waves keep talking.

27 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

=====

What virtues the strange air
to be so calling? The queen

will live again in her daughter.
Vengeance is dynasty.

We forget but never forgive.
Casement hangs. Blair blunders.

Baghdad gone. We can't forget
Ann Boleyn's last little smile.

27 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

Suppose the whole thing was in my hands
and the man across the street was OK too.

Suppose this supposition is the motor
started up and ran and made things run—

wouldn't that be free will in a godsome world?

I never read that poems where the man
who's lost his house wonders if it was ever there
but have heard the seals of women who swam near

seals asprawl last night across the channel
and it wasn't me listening just the way it fell
and always will, didn't have to do a thing,
just caught myself thinking, and desisted.

28 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

Being risible
or lamentable
which more pathetic?

Deleterious fumes of human thought
and what Pale Desire's wrought
pollute the seas and atmosphere.

The news blames cows for farting
while the icecap melts,
blames cars for driving

when all the while the frenzied
mediated resentments of humankind
heat the planet towards suffocation.

Anger and lust are chemicals
and ignorance the woeful catalyst.
No go out and cool the sea.

28 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

[Notations from the island]

=====

The truths keep changing
the products of imagination
though are permanent.
No one can disprove Lascaux.
Or face down Göbekli Tepe.

(13 June 2012)

=====

ΠΟΞΤΑ

The script I learned
has letters in it
no language does.

I use these exclusively
to write my hymns.
So no god anywhere
is embarrassed by

what people think
they're saying or
maybe praying for

my unmeaning
buzzes like a walled
garden full of bees.

(18 June 2012)

=====

By the sea sit
among the rugosas
wanting to be
part of the sea
without going in.

(18 June 2012)

= = = = =

Land

coming out of the cloud
solid deposited from
the alchemic dream—

coagulations of
our subtlest desires.

(19 June 2012)

Cuttyhunk

[gathered 29.VI.12]

= = = = =

in supreme lucidity
in cool wind

The Intensities

wanting always
a do thing say
parse your grievances
and abstain into felicity

warm soft whisper in your ear
then the bite of meaning
nibbling after

why can't we belong to each
other ever? Or ever?

28 June 2012

Buzzards Bay

= = = = =

On Nashawena
seals were seen
a herd or pod or herd
or convoy or a band
of them schooled out
along the channel beach
among the long-horned
shaggy reddish cattle—
a scene from the Iliad
sheer timelessness
of being there.

28 June 2012

Buzzards Bay

= = = = =

The carpenter is back in his shavings
each tree of his wood a different smell
almost blind he feels the grain
each tree of wood brailles a different alphabet

xylem and phloem come to a schoolboy's mind
it seems to be the other Germany the old sweet one
between the Treaty of Osnabrück and Bismarck
the land of differences and precise details

so clean you could eat off the floor his mother said
and so it should be. Close to the ladder
feet begin to dance. The tremble of desire,
the hayloft, antics by the lakeshore, twilight

the rain ascending stately the far hills.
Heat hurts and heals. Ask arthritis, ask
the the knob-fingered carpenter, matching
wood grain at the joinings, we live also

at the joinings he thinks but the schoolboy
has no inkling of that yet, for him we live
by evasion, undergrowth, by hiding, hayloft—
there should be another name for what we do.

Relationless ecstasy! Nymphs and satyrs
married only to the woods they play in.
Sing! The carpenter's plane skims the plank.
Nothing too smooth for the gods. We live by touch.

2.

Gods. Woden. Perkunas—in the vast hidden
forests of Lithuania where the thunder's stored.
The schoolboy listens for it in his little woods.
Don't know too much about who you are—

leave all that to the gossiping angels. Surprising
how much your neighbors know about you.
But a schoolboy does not have an other—
he wanders through a solitary world a happy solo

everything interesting, everything he meets
is a sign, every person he encounters
I also a sign. Only a sign. He lies down
on the lawn, kisses his shadow, falls asleep.

29 June 2012

Lindenwood

= = = = =

The outcries on the other side
mournful miracle of human speech
dig a purple-skinned potato out
of the still American dirt—this
is garden not agronomy, that
bastard word—our fields
stretch out, forests still on all sides, we
have barely gotten here, the land
is so big, a breeze and trying to remember.
Good food. Truckers on the interstate,
but all they can do with what they see is go.

29 June 2012

COCTEAU

never sat on park benches

("do you think I'm a pigeon")

never whistled the jewel song from Faust

never visited cemeteries anywhere

("am I not dead enough all by myself?")

never wore a red necktie

("isn't the sky red enough for you?")

never ate octopus, never listened to blues

seldom wore spats, never chewed gum

("my aunt keeps cows who do that for me")

what more do I need to know about this great man

who made some movies that challenged I mean changed my life?

29 June 2012

ARS POETICA

for Masha

Break them up into little bits
(the words are thoughted, are freighted)
so the little sparrows of the mind
our fluttering attentions
can pick them up in their small beaks.

Not many of us have eagle inward
can soar above the crowded text
and read the unknown message clear,
the one you didn't even know you sent—

there is no message, there is only love
a calling out or desperate scream
of one person for one other.

29 June 2012

COLOR OF MONEY

Just as *La Poste* is yellow
in France it used to be
the U.S. Post Office
was purple—a strange
purple of countertop
dip pen and inkwells,
of cancellation stamp,
of mailmen's uniforms
back when it was Office
not Postal Service. Now
it has no color of its own.
Then it was ours, not Theirs.

29 June 2012

Red Hook

= = = = =

The time before time
touches me
bones of the old ones
stir in our mudflats
tarpits gorges
sly strata of metamorphic
rock. The time
after time calls out to us
in dream, between
the lines of new poetry,
loudest of all
when the music stops.

29 June 2012

Annandale

= = = = =

