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When I was a little kid
my father always said
if you see the cows are lying down
you know it’s going to rain.
Cows know the future.
Fathers know everything.

3 June 2010
Taconic, nr. Austerlitz
Old gentlemen in safari outfits 
step across the asphalt 
pass the gas pumps 
and seek out the men’s room. 
This is summer, everything 
slow except the cars.

3 June 2010
Lee
ASSUMPTA MARIA

The white statue of the Mother of God
by the side of the Pike
in after-mist this cool June day
looked like a great white egret
in all our green. How quickly
both of them fly up.

3 June 2010
Mass Pike
A different time now
Olson is forty years dead
128 gets more crowded every day
the intermodal shipping
the metarsia
and nobody ever more stays home.

3 June 2010
Charlton
Adventure purple
depth shade of awning over

means Wisdom in old Greek
who knows what broken altar
the book torn in half you still can read
half a sutra in your blue hand
lady, the other half
is meat and means you

and you mean some eternal situation
inside outside but outside inside
abiding nowhere remorselessly here.

3 June 2010, Boston
GLOBAL

No kind of answer
just to break grains and wait

the shepherd is too old
to chase after his sheep

he makes a compact with the wolf

shipping container
they call it cube
53 feet long
from the inside of your country to the end of space

we belong to the sea.

3 June 2010, Boston
= = = = =

There are people closer to the dawn
a boundary is where the other begins

night never ends
but has a frontier in it

step across the line into the real dark?
No, where magic reigns

(you couldn’t tell dark from light)
all colors fumble in your eye.

What is the population to which I lend
the brief alertness of my muscled gaze

hardened from ravaging inscapes?
Who are those people down above?

He:
I know no way to end an epic
but with a flower,

gaudy hibiscus splayed on Turnus’s bleak chest
lily-white Hektor tossed on the fire,

malfire, how the city burns.

She:
No one asks you to end,
just find the right place in the beginning to begin,

the flower, any flower,
takes care of itself.

No image is waiting for you at the end of the world.

4 June 2010, Boston
NEW BEDFORD MEDITATION

1.
The shimmer harbor tells
but no one lingers
to listen.

    Hearing is hard,
hearing’s the hardest thing,

all the senses are harlots too
can’t believe their love,
their noisy love.

2.

    With all its roar
and scurry the sea
teaches silence.

Follow the dog’s tail.
Because there were people here before the people came.

3.
The sky tries in vain
to scrub the flags clean.
Harbor. What can we wash
off here. Time,
our sense of time
wash away, leave us clean,
naked to what we are:

    we are the talking part of space.
Time is neurosis,
we never change, the evidence
is all false, even the truth is false.
Time is the opposite of to be.

4 June 2010
Clearing the goat. Six horns has each
to blow for supper
top of La Chaux
strange how rare silence is
except in memory
memoria the only silent country
but sometimes I hear her voice
and there were deer in her backyard too—
bodies belong to bodies
souls own nothing
this place does not want me to be me
the city’s gates make sure no one stands
crescent moon its immaterial light
Mozart always playing somewhere *Schablone*
means template for it or a stencil
lets you write what nobody means.
Words a hard habit. And a gull feeding on it.

4 June 2010
Cuttyhunk
As far as anybody knows
Russia is a country
on the other side of ours
very like ours
most of the time but with
strange ideas about God

Poland is like that too
but the God is different
and the fields are thick with yellow wheat.

4 June 2010
Cuttyhunk
FOG CLOSES THE HARBOR

It is time to do something else
I hear the sea again at last
perspectiva naturalis

or is it the 440 A that brings me home
prisoners of perception
ride out Friday nights on black horses

raiding the taverns of middle earth
drink is impersonation
and I’m the man I meant to be

what has all this to do with the sea
you can’t talk big around an ocean
you muse at it it pisses on your ankles

the burden of the working man the week
or would we make men work all the time
without the Sabbath?

oh for a day when being chose us
and we chose the work we do
psycho-economics of everyday life

why is a thing not only the ace of itself
but all the court cards too
with all the sexual entendres

I wake up pretending to be you
the meat of time or imaginary door
sometimes you can hear the weather think.

5 June 2010
Cuttyhunk
Setting the materials in order
just don’t think.
Let the materials for thought do the thinking,
the brain has shelves enough to store them,
now let the cute assistants
roam freely in the stacks
let them tell you what you think—
for ‘think’ means loving and remembering
and the mind makes do with what they find
so leave the window open even on cold nights.

5 June 2010
Cuttyhunk
There is a rain tree by the house
a big elm on an island with not many big trees
all round the tree the ground is wet
and nowhere else—the dew
drenches the leaves then falls
so morning’s raining underneath the tree.

5 June 2010
Cuttyhunk
You let the storm keep you company,
you go on with whatever you’re doing
and let the windows fill with gorgeous rain.

But I, like a teenage amateur,
can’t stop looking at the dark,
looking at the wind, at all the nothing going on

and studying the rain, gazing,
gawping at his first love’s face.

5 June 2010
Cuttyhunk
People. Why does it all have to be about people. It’s as if we thought we were the only ones here. And why do we have to stay fascinated by the boy-and-girl of us, the quest for Other and its confused lusts, the sly alliterations of a kiss?

But writing about machines or writing about art is just babbling about our children. Products. No woman is boring till she talks about her child. But men are all boring to begin with. Dickheads: Drones In Command.

5.VI.10
Nothing is ever done. The slightest act ripples out forever.
The sages of Sichuan did nothing. The silence of their bodies though still reverberates through the western hills.

5 June 2010
Cuttyhunk
Standing on the sea rocks
in the decade of wars before the War

we are alone on the shore
the waves keep coming in.

5.VI.10
A hundred years ago
my father was ten years old
running from the tough Kraut kids
up Fort Greene. All the way home
to Williamsburg. He could run
for hours: once
he chased a trolley car
all the way to Sheepshead Bay.

5 June 2010
Cuttyhunk
SONGS BY HAHN

I wonder if Proust heard such songs
as he lay dying, yearning, tender,
at times exaltation, his lover
wrote them for some woman
to sing, who was not either of them,
but whose voice had for that
quiet teatime moment of the song
had to be both of them, if a song
is really good it needs no one
to sing it or hear it. And what
do dying men hear anyhow?
The senses on furlough at last.

5 June 2010
Cuttyhunk