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Sometimes all by itself
language comes close.
Sometimes it’s almost afraid
and comes to me for comfort.

Speak, it seems to say,
say it clearly and it will not happen.
The terrible animal will not come,
the one on whose bones I am made.

11 June 2007
Cuttyhunk
Partita No. 6
Section 6

You overwhelm me honey
in an elevator so close
we are trapped together
in mere ascension.
There has to be a godly
mezzanine to which we come,
a palm tree in the sky.

11 June 2007
Partita No. 6
Section 7

The druid fruit falls here
pattern of material arrival

you led me? or I followed?
something to do with your
contours and my eyes

and what the beach was saying
mild water, cold wind

my feet like this sand
as if a conversation
they could finally understand

feet walking in sand
are like the whole body in an easy chair

why am I telling you this,
why is so much permitted
without even thinking?

It isn’t what we did
in other words
it was what we let
our own words do in our name.

11 June 1007
Praeludium, C Major

No wonder, run away.
No army, no battle,
just me running from me,
since they first marked me on the brow
with a sign and said Thy name is [name]
thou shalt make thing after thing until things break thee.

11 June 2007
Cuttyhunk
Nothing has to belong to its begetting.
The source is always hidden,
the girl crouching among ferns
where the spring speaks from the mountain.

11 June 2007
Cuttyhunk
SHADOW

Shadow. It is neither the self nor the other. This is important. A man who sells his shadow sees only self and other – he has lost the road between them, the beautiful road that the ancients wrote into the sky as Arianrhod, the Silver Street, our Milky Way, that walks with day’s brightness through the weight of night.

Shadow. This is important. Buddhism is sometimes called the Middle Way but that makes it seem like a lukewarm clever compromise, a Via Media. In fact it is really The Central Way, or, even better, the Between Way.

Tselal, I seem to remember that as the Hebrew word for shadow. It is something that goes at my side, with me but not me, it is shaped by me but is not my likeness. It has no eyes.

Shadow, shadow at my side.

The most important thing to remember is remembering.

It is mind aware of mind.

Because memory is not of or about the past – memory has nothing to do with time.

‘Memory’ is the mind being aware of its own contents.

‘Contents’—these are not stored items or traces, but dynamisms of moving, closer and further away, they are habits of apprehension, sometimes fettered with or clinging to the original apprehensive act from which they grew by repetition. Habits. Velleities.

Someone who knows his mind knows all his lives.

Nothing to remember. Everything to know.

And to know the mind we have the technology of bar.do, the ‘between two.’

Not light affirmed and dark denied, yes to both and no to both, but study in between. Between thought and thought, no matter the thought. Between feeling and feeling, no matter what is felt. Just between, the freshness rises. A clear place, no expectation and no dread, just aware.
And you are sort of your own shadow that moves between, unattached to what it passes in the way of conceptual or emotional landscapes, just as a shadow passes over rock or water, momentarily reshaped by what it touches but unchanged by it.

The shadow is the music goes along with you, lets you hear the voice between sound and silence.

From *bar.do* arises *so.ma*, the eternal freshness. How dream renews the day.

(And, speaking of shadows, shouldn’t we say that the shadow of words is what is called thinking?)

*

I know where you’ve been and what you did there.

There is a place with big windows. I am there too, some of the wish it was all of the time. The shape of a body that causes the shadow. The curve that makes another curve, never the same twice. Where is the light? Half a mile of seashore covered with wild roses white and red.

I know where you’ve been. The dagger pointed the way. The circumciser’s knife – Jesus chose (Zinzendorf tells in a Moravian hymn) his penis as the first part of his body to bear the wounds, the wounds in flesh that would come to save us.

Circumcision is like a seventeenth century violin sonata. Scordatura, the tone that comes from being wrong, the sweet salvation of steel against flesh, flesh against flesh.

A knife is a science that does its work by going between.

A knife, like the suit of Swords in the Tarot, knows by going between.

Knowing between.

Between you and me a knowing rises. Gnosis.

Entering someone’s wound –or womb— is entering someone’s knowledge of themselves.

On this island it sometimes is frightening in bright mid-morning: all that light and no one for it to illuminate.
11 June 2007
Cuttyhunk
TIMING

Roses and rabbits
come out together.
Nature is a Polish joke
a miracle of malaprop—
our teenage sun
adorable blunder.
June too soon.

12 June 2007
Cuttyhunk
Keep the spyglass
focused on the spot
you want the bird
to settle on.
Call it the scar
on the texture of the world
the oriole must come
to soothe. The tanager.
The confusing autumn warbler.

12 June 2007
Praeludium in c minor

Over the hill in a hurry
and leave me here to keep
the little blue smoke rising
from our toy chimney so
you can find your way back
always to me I am fire.

12 June 2007
Praeludium in d minor

Or did I mean you should stay
come back I am the door
come back I am your broken shadow
I reel in your footsteps
I am a spider a fisherman
a host of unlikely amateurs
who specialize in you.

12 June 2007
Praeludium in D major

Calm sea or steely mirror
but this light knows how to talk
tell me more than I want to know
about how far far is, and how high
is up, and my father’s ghost wavers
through the wind-swept elm tree
behind which one storm cloud stays.

12 June 2007
TEMPUS EST LEGENDUM

Reading, reading is to absorb the essences other. One does this entirely in and on one’s own time. Some writer tries to shape my time, my time fights back. They fred and ginger one another the whole book through. So when some parents frown at the child reading and say Stop wasting time, they speak truer than they know. Ruskin smiled to hear this in heaven, knowing as he said all beauty begins in idle spending, making be what does not have to be.

13 June 2007,
Cuttyhunk
Praeludium in E major

If it were a leaf or I were
and if it were a breeze or you
the yellow irises on island June
would start remembering the message
their creator gave them for me and I
even if I were me would begin
to piece the signs together and hear.

13 June 2007
Ah who would believe a flower
anyhow? The signatures of things,
as if there were no people in the world,
none for me, and each of us alive,
each man a solitary messenger
who has lost his message, searches
everywhere for this one single thing
he has to say or thousands perish
unillumined by the news that tricky
flower meant him to announce.
Now do you believe me? I am
God’s only voice, Bach said.

13 June 2007
Cuttyhunk
Hurry up and hear me
disconsolate north wind
northeast wind the birds
are whirled by and the sun
schedules the blank day of the sea
with its own unbearable information
I am made of glass
I confess it in this hour
frangible transparent true—
a mirror cracks from what it sees.

13 June 2007
Cuttyhunk
The sickle shape of time is most evident in long afternoons. In old drawing rooms, low fires smolder. One naps and dreams of Whistler, maybe, or somebody more modern, moderne even, like Hartley. Like Leger. I dreamt of the latter, his oafish abstractions always on the verge of being people in a place, colors turn into men, women, in a place you might walk into if you dare, not far from here. There is a factory by the river owned by Germans, full of luminous machinery idle at the moment, all the laborers laid off. Kuningas is the Lithuanian word for king, or something like it. Sometimes when you wake from a twilight nap you remember such matters but have forgotten where you set the coffee down that failed to keep you alert and involved in what conversation. The room is empty, but even so. This is how the flower grows, every flower, not just this pale blossomer you see right through only feeling a little botany as you go by from the course you almost failed in college, a whiff of attar. Expensive. Otto of rose they used to call it, a fat bald bud you think, monocle, dueling scar carved by his own thorn. You still are childish when it comes to names. Words themselves are nothing but prejudices when you come to think about it, some easy attitude you stick on some percept like a label: ‘flower,’ ‘scent of roses,’ ‘this transparent rose.’

13 June 2007
Cuttyhunk
Do for sun sake
not a thought but sky
in my wake head
fear of worse but soft
it is the one
thing OK not to know
the necessary wrong.

14 June 2007
Cuttyhunk
Tooling my contemporaries by magic
to make them better
fit inside the bigger world
money keeps them from knowing

Current novelists like kids at a zoo
fascinated by passionate animals
they can watch but never touch
and can see only the daylight obvious

of those strange lives. Novelists
are terrified of knowing too much.
What it is really like to be a man.
A particular man, immense as he is.

14 June 2007
Cuttyhunk
Prelude & Fughetta in d minor

1.
I recall you now
you are the one
in the elevator,
the smile on the sixteenth floor
wondering our way up

and later, hours
into the party to came
over to me and said
we should have stayed
where we were
and never come down
I don’t know
these people either.

2.
Scattered pigeons, nuns,
newspapers, it’s all
a long time back, Madison
Square, my father
coming out of his bank,
a statue. All of them now
statues in the mind,
rubble tunes.

14 June 2007
Cuttyhunk