

Artists, in the initial stages of their draftsmanship training, are taught to reverse the usual relationship between figure and ground, in effect, seeing the space that encloses an object, and drawing that, instead of the object itself. This perceptual shift strips the vision of its preconceptions about form. They discover that faces are not ovals with dots for eyes or slashes for mouths, that houses are not square boxes surmounted by pyramids, that trees are not columns balancing balls. They discover that nature contains few cones, cubes or spheres.

No, but it contains the fourteen immutable patterns . . .

This shift is a profound one, in so far as it reveals to the perceiver a panoply of polymorphous forms, constantly reconfiguring themselves to birth ever-new realities. The first time the artist accomplishes this shift, there is a moment of vertigo, a crevice in the habitual frame of reference, in which both figure and ground float, as it were, in a kind of blankness, and for an instant recede into a shapeless plenum or void. That blankness, that cleft between different modes of perception, both of which seem equally false and true, was, if I dare call it so, my third visitation. I became, for a certain timeless period before dusk and dawn, a hoard of observations without an observer. It was as if the mind, not my mind, but one that included mine, was crawling with the motions of innumerable insects — not the insects themselves, you understand, but their motions, an incalculable busyness of intention and movement in which no single entity moved or had its being. Later, my teachers informed me that these “movements,” or tendencies to movement, were the “ghostly sequences of words, arranging themselves ahead of me in time.” Blake somewhere claims that the poet’s work is accomplished between a pulse and a pulse, so that we pluck our inspiration, indeed, our very existences, from a river of possibilities unfettered by the necessity of being. That may be so. But to say that it is so, flies in the face of commonsense, and makes an abomination of our usual attempts to shape the world to our liking by the levers of effort or manipulation. For my own part, what I sensed that night about the future and also about the past, both only tangentially my own, was as inconceivable as it was dreadful, as crystalline as it was blissful. When I awoke from my trance (my sleep? my clarity?), it was muggy dawn, and then I heard with my all too subjective, physical ears, the sound of Mary Ann, weeping for certain, this time, from the other room.

And now, Oh God, it’s happening, we are pulled, not into understanding, but into experience. We are what we were again.

I experienced the next few weeks as a kind of slow-motion plunge into an abyss. Following my second black-out while facilitating the ethics seminar, and speaking about King Lear (“Hadst thou been ought but gossamer, feathers, air/ So many fathoms down precipitating,/ Thou’dst shivered like an egg; but thou dost breathe./Hast heavy substance, bleeds’t not, speak’st, art sound”), I experienced my final — or was it my initial — break with consensus reality. I awakened with a circle of faces surrounding me, the faces of doctors in an emergency room. It

appeared as if I had died, clinically speaking at least, but that was not the worst news. The worst news was that the state of death was impermanent, perhaps even cyclical, since after a few days of testing and observation, they also informed me that I was *about* to die. This was the start of the brain tumor episode, a minor revelation, as it turned out, and one, that even at the time, seemed less important to me than the loss of my cat, the loss of my income, the looming loss of my wife. I made no emotional displays, and my placidity was interpreted by others as stoicism, and even, quite laughably, as courage. I wish that I could boast of those two attributes and tell some heartrending story here of my noble internal struggle with the demon of my own mortality. The truth is I did not take the news of my death very seriously. I was given medication for my asthma, which in a few days managed to swell my prostate and usher me into the humiliating world of incontinence. But I refused treatment for my cancer — the recommended surgery followed by a methodical regimen of chemo and radiation tortures, a.k.a., the barbarous, but typical “slash and burn medicine” of that benighted era — which in any case only promised to prolong my suffering, not to end it, and I went about calmly settling the pitiful remnants of my affairs. I read. I watched TV. I went for walks, choosing a leisurely path to the undiscovered country from whose borne I had so recently and ignorantly returned.

I might have ended my days like this, but for the fact that the country was embroiled in the midst of a heated presidential election, between our then Texas governor, George W. Bush, a.k.a., “the Shrub,” and Vice President Al Gore. I belabor the specificities here, because, although they are well known to those in particular time-vectors, they are as mysterious as the ways of heaven to listeners and readers in other futures. As election day rolled towards me — that’s how I experienced it — like a dark and massive boulder compacted with evil possibilities — my lassitude regarding death receded, leaving a raw nerve. My suffering, my individual suffering, like an old potato left too long in a dark space, began to sprout hair, the roots of torments that came out of me, and yet, were not mine. The weeks leading up to that fateful last (first?) day, Friday, October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2000 were torrents and maelstroms of aberrant experiences. The days and nights, with their supposedly separated waking and dreaming realities, flowed together in a multivalent rush. Doctors prodded me. My wife alternately fretted and raved at me. Creditors plagued me. Friends pitied, but dreaded and avoided me. But these people and events were inundated with visionary ones, to me, equally valid, perhaps even more so. My dead (missing?) cat, Diva, reappeared (somewhat like a blinking light whose “on” cycle was only apparent to me, and whose “off” cycle was experienced by everyone else). She led me into rooms of my house that I did not know existed. These rooms contained objects, ordinary objects, that one might find in an attic: old tensor lamps, obsolete globes, defunct small appliances. But there were other things there, too, things that were not mine, nor anybody’s who might have been alive in the previous half-century, an old pair of spats missing a button, something that looked like an ancient toga, false beards, an old padlock, without a key, a sheep’s bell, some kind of necklace whose amulet was a lambskin pouch containing something that smelled like old cheese or a lucky

rabbit's foot, a little foxfur armband, the statue of a dog with three front legs, and perhaps, most curious of them all, a tiny quartz crystal skull, no bigger than a walnut, which seemed yet to be the infamous domain of the king of infinite space. Each of these artifacts seemed to bulge and glow with what I can only call "non-human" personalities. They did not speak exactly, but they communicated to me in ways that I later began to habituate myself to and to accept as "normal". Sometimes these objects would disgorge small scraps of writing, instructions, as it turned out, that I was to follow, towards what end, I could not then guess. Sometimes the objects would suddenly dissolve their energies and begin rotating, like miniature galaxies, in space. These wheels of suspended stars spun out visions of events that I later understood to be disgorged chunks of the past or future, hurtling towards me from all directions through some unnamable vector, which was neither space nor time.

What with the brain tumor and all, I might have easily interpreted these oddities as hallucinations — except for the fact that the artifacts I retrieved from them, the scraps of writing for example, or Diva's sheddings, clinging to my ratty old bathrobe, were all too real. This detritus of physical evidence was discovered by my wife, who suspiciously and fruitlessly questioned me about it. She would see me going into small closets, and searching for me in them, find that I had disappeared. She called in friends to observe me, and they also reported the distressing lacunae in ordinary reality, which precipitated my "disappearances". Watches stopped or ran backwards, old wounds healed or scars reopened, long-lost objects were found, and familiar objects were lost. Call it a contact high, but whoever I came near, would also experience these anomalies in time and perception, so that after a short while, my presence became so creepy that I was avoided by all and sundry. I, of course, insisted that everything was fine, that my deviations had nothing to do with my tumor, and that the fuss and turmoil surrounding me had more to do with the mental stress of my keepers and observers than with me. By this time, my long-suffering wife strongly suspected that I was mad, that I had discovered Diva's body, and that I was performing some kind of perverted ritual with it — a surmise not very far from the truth. Finally, in exasperation and grief, and believing, like the ancient Greeks, that ill-luck was infectious, she announced that she wanted to visit her sister in California, and arranging for a homecare nurse to check in on me, Mary Ann flew away.

Now my schooling began in earnest, for the homecare nurse was a multitasker. To the denizens of this world, she was only Esclarmonde Acevedo, Argentinean, of Indian descent, I believe, from somewhere up the Platt, middle-aged, pudgy, and absent minded. To me, she looked like the living embodiment of those massive Olmec or Mayan stone heads that still haunt the jungles of Mexico and Central America. Otherwise, she seemed completely nondescript. But in the domains of the psychode, as I was to learn to my amazement, she was a powerful sorceress, whether a saint or an apostate, I could never tell. But, she initiated the Awareness Exercises. Naturally (unnaturally?) at the time, I suspected none of

this. To me, Esclarmonde was the same nearly non-entity that she was to everyone else, everyone that is in the mayonnaise-on-white bread voracious world of our dying Western Korporate Kulture. If she had been hired to watch me, to care for me, I could not tell how she was doing it. For during her intermittent visits, I only observed her sitting on the couch and watching TV. From time to time, *I* would fix *her* a sandwich, but other than that, this was the extent of our surface, our conscious interaction. Introvert that I was, I would have been annoyed by her presence, were it not for her utter innocuousness. She spoke English only brokenly, and would watch the TV with the volume muted, her expression completely impassive. She was as non-intrusive as a piece of furniture, and I began to admire her immensely for her object-like placidity. I never even saw her use the bathroom. The only decidedly overt act that I ever noticed her taking, was to place a small quartz crystal in the pot of a long since dead and desiccated houseplant, a little memento to neglect that I kept on my writing desk. She looked at me hard when she did this, and I figured at the time that it was an important enough event, however inscrutable, for me to accept — I can't say quite "without question or reservations," and to mark for future reference. Incredibly, the plant perked up, but the caretaker remained inert, and even in her most animated moments, was about as expressive as a stone. Nevertheless, there developed, although she was only with me a few days (or was it a few weeks?), a curiously catalytic connection between us. She was like a miniature replica of the planet Earth, completely enigmatic, impersonal, accepting of everything, and wondrously, albeit, mysteriously nurturing. I felt that having once been in her presence, I could never again feel completely isolated. How little did I realize then how many others were involved in this affair. Ah, but once again I race ahead. The listener, the reader will want to hear about the Awareness Exercises, how they came to me, and how they culminated in the one Exercise that bent the course of history from holocaust and back again to bliss. But, oh, oh, how tangled the words become when I rehearse this, how light-born and ephemeral and strange.

Now, about those Awareness Exercises — my teachers have always insisted that the plural is superfluous, and that there is only one Awareness Exercise. I must confess that I have always found their insistence on this point to be more than a bit bizarre. Every minute, as I have since so painfully and joyfully learned, bifurcates into infinity, and even my own body has been shown to be ubiquitous. Of all things, how can this one thing alone be singular? And yet, they say that it is. In my initial forays into these neurological hiatuses, I would often wonder about this dazzling multiplicity connecting each to all. Once, I even made what I believed to be the clever assertion that the Awareness Exercise must be a synonym for life or even for the cosmos. But this wanton remark brought a rare laugh from my teachers. "If that were true," they derided, "then even politicians, the most wayward of human viruses, who are certainly alive and a part of the cosmos, would also have to be categorized as aware." Even I could see that this was absurd, and so I never again ventured a pronouncement (to my teachers at least) concerning the one thing that would occupy my days and nights from that

time on. The Awareness Exercise (Exercises) was (were) I kind of practice, a *praxis*, if you will, which eventually allowed me the flexibility to choose, or rather to be chosen by, from the immense theater of probabilities, those things that were possible, those multiple instances of the fantastic that assume the temporary mantle of the real.

The newspaper in the frame has changed as I write from the *Houston Chronicle* of September 11th, 2001 to the *Phoenix Sun* of July 5th, 2008. The headline reads: “Independence Day Mushroom Cloud: Bush Authorizes Nuclear Attack on Iran.” The story that follows, of course, is too well-known to those in most Earth vectors to warrant the spillage of more ink now. But for those who have followed other tributaries of time, I include it here as a reminder that the present is as all-inclusive as chronology as it is as geography. No matter what the reader/listener’s present circumstances, be they wondrous or hideous, a neurological shift can rub the wall of reality to a state of transparency, and through that diaphanous film one may, not only see, but actually merge with, a dazzling plenitude of other events and entities. This statement, I realize, will have no justification for those who have not yet discovered, or rather, have not yet fallen victim to, their own entry point into Awareness. My own portal had five precedents. How can I describe it (them?)? Imagine a man jiggling a combination lock until just the right jimmying makes the tumblers fall. It is difficult for me now to reconstruct those earlier abortions. They seem like scratchings in the sand that subsequent incursions of the tide or wind have effaced. But I have evidence that they existed — scraps of paper that tell me what I once was, and what I still am, in certain helices of time’s great hive. Once, while Esclarmode was watching the mute TV — “Fair and Balanced” Fox — if I remember correctly — talking heads that only moved their ineffectual anger-twisted mouths as banner headlines streamed by ominously at the base of the screen — I saw, or thought that I saw, Diva, from the corner of my eye, tail-up, a characteristic one-fang sneer on her crooked mouth, stealing down the hall, and slipping through the crack of a closet door. I followed, and after rambling down a series of passageways, I came upon some kind of old storage room, filled with dust, amber light, and antique debris. There were old furnace grates, escutcheon plates, chair armatures, ancient plumbing fixtures and cans of paint, dented and bleeding from their tin lips, their pigments as hard as lead. Diva wound her way through this mélange with the alacrity of a freed spirit, but I, in fruitless pursuit, banged toes, shins, elbows, and forehead against protuberances that were crusty with age and futility. After having hit my temple on a wrought-iron castor from some kind of table leg that no longer bore a table, I plopped down in the midst of this jumble of oddities, cursing, and stung by frustration. I think that that was when I received the first of the written instructions. It was stuck to a device which I later learned was a mechanism for buttoning ladies high-topped shoes (circa 1914), and was written in an uncertain hand (or perhaps the hand of one whose native tongue was not English). It said:

### **Praxis: Awareness Exercise #1**

Identify your three most important challenges, {I am pretty sure, even after all that has happened since, that I immediately thought: my health, my lack of money, my failing marriage.}. Write them down on a piece of paper, and set the paper aside.

Take the first three letters of your first name. {In my case “R,” “O,” “Y.”} and the last three letters of your last name {For me “H,” “T,” “Y.”} and open the dictionary to those letter indices, thumbing through the pages at random, until one word in particular grabs and holds your attention. Choose three words in this manner for each letter. {What did I write for “R” — “repent?” “recrimination?” “route?”} Proceed until you have a list of three words for each of the six letters.

Go back and quickly prioritize the words, choosing, if possible without conscious thought, your first, second and third preferences.

Set an egg timer (preferably one that ticks) for three minutes, and write a paragraph about your most important challenge(s) before the timer’s bell rings, making sure that you use all of the words in the order of your preferences. You may use any form of the word {repent, repenting, repentant, etc.}, but the first word must appear somewhere in the first sentence and the last word must end the paragraph, and the other words must be put to use between them.

Mercifully, whatever grotesqueries of prose were birthed from my attempting this process, have since been erased, if not by time, at least by subsequent insights. I do not remember what I wrote, but I remember reading it to the imperturbable Esclarmonde. Her reaction was inscrutably undemonstrative. But that night (or was it the next?), I awakened to find under the couch cushion (after Mary Ann left, I did not sleep in the bedroom, but always on the couch in front of the mirrored armoire.) the strangest of artifacts. It was a 9 X 12 manila envelope, which contained, surprisingly and comically enough, two identical, full-color, 8 X 10 glossies of myself — in the nude no less (at that time, not a pretty sight). But here I am, standing, not so boldly, with a most quizzical expression, among big slippery rocks, on a sunny, pebbly, and most mercifully, otherwise humanly deserted ocean beach. With the photographs, appeared this nonsensical poem:

### **Hard Visitation**

Seven round smooth stones have fallen from on high.  
Evidently, they have been up there a long time,  
Deleting their jagged edges, curing themselves  
Of the malady of fire. Curiously, but in a way  
That is not altogether unexpected, they have arranged  
Themselves in a circle, and, in the sun, which is very bright  
On this day of late summer or early autumn or

Midwinter or any time but spring, they express  
Themselves diabolically through sigils  
Of white glares and black shadows. The stones  
Are gray. The day is blare-blue and cheer-iridian  
And bridalgown-white with eager  
Buds showing between sere-orange leaves,  
Some branches green, some icy bare. The entire  
Phenomenon of these stones, this day, these trees  
And glares and shadows is a violation  
Of the mind's unnatural suppositions  
About natural order. So, we have come, certain  
Of nothing, but this: Here is a circle of stones,  
Small, round, heavenly. And here we stand,  
In their midst, overly bloated with our obscene needs,  
Our bodies the crudest gestures of oblation,  
Ringed round by these subtle collops of obdurate seed.

And with this nonsensical poem, these even more nonsensical instructions:

### **Praxis: Awareness Exercise #2**

Take two copies of a full-length color portrait of yourself. Preserve one copy intact, but each day perforate the other copy with a hole punch, making no more than 5, but no less than three holes in yourself each day. Keep a diary of your self-destruction, noting any emotions, remembrances, exaltations and so forth that you have as you render yourself void. Save the punched-out holes in the envelope with the intact copy of your image. When the image is entirely destroyed (except for a kind of netting of empty circles), open the envelope with the preserved photograph and the punched-out holes, and try to reconstruct yourself. Record any physiological changes that occur in your body during the days (weeks?) of the exercise: weight changes, sleep variations, modifications of eating habits, of exercise, and so forth.

When the exercise is complete, burn both images, and all attendant documentation.

The effect of this exercise was devastating. I wept. I laughed. I vomited. I loss weight. Then gained it back. My jowls swelled and then collapsed into spectral hollowness. I even cut a long-dormant wisdom tooth. There may have been a day or two when I forgot how to walk and how to speak. I shudder to think how I performed my excretory functions. I believe Esclarmonde took care of me during this disturbing (exhilarating?) episode. There were strange incidents with animals. One of the Blue Jays, which were always chattering in the big hackberry tree in the front yard, came and perched on the crown of my head one morning as I scurried out to pick up the newspaper. A squirrel somehow stole into the

laundry room and leapt out of the washer one morning as I opened it to do a load of whites. Odder still were the mosquitoes. They clustered on the windowpanes, making patterns with their bodies that seemed almost like glyphs, Ur-letters from some proto-language that only the dead or the innocent could speak. When I pounded on the glass, they would swirl through the air for a moment and then resettle in some equally quasi-intelligible pattern. I kept thinking at the time: ‘what gigantic entity, for whom even the lower orders of creation act as messengers, is trying to communicate with me?’

In the end, I know there were other Awareness Exercises, three others, I think, but I do not exactly remember. In retrospect, I may have merely surmised that there were five previous Exercises, because the final Exercise was labeled by my teachers “Awareness Exercise #6.” But knowing now, as I do, that numbers for them have other significances, far beyond the mere sequential, I cannot say for certain that this was the case. All of the Exercise(s) were delivered to me in some equally surreal and disjointed fashion. But the particularities do not matter. The other Exercise(s) were but a preparation, apparent false-starts, jiggings of the lock to find the one exercise that has led to the discoveries recorded in this, by now, infamous monument of words.

Did I return to the nursery and retrieve those stones that seemed to speak to me when I lost my breath? Or were the stones somehow delivered to me by some agency of the Collective’s vast wisdom that I am still unable to fathom? My speculations arise, and are washed away, one wave of thought destroying its predecessor, one pulse of time, annihilating all previous sequences. The days from August 6<sup>th</sup> to October 27<sup>th</sup> in that fateful year 2000 lost for me all of their sequentially. They swirled, danced, bobbed up and down, took on bizarre and seemingly indescribable shapes. In brief, the days ceased to become days, and instead reverted to those progenitors of the chimera we call time, namely, words. I was lost in a deluge of words, words that refused, paradoxically, to speak, because they refused the connecting tissue of the conjunction. No ifs, ands or buts. No sentences. No metaphors. Only the enormous implicate order of memes spiraling about in every direction, looking for some utter cipher of an author to write them down. Did I mention, that as with many failed lives, I had always harbored a secret fantasy that I was the great undiscovered writer of my generation, and that I kept a secret stash of poems hidden in drawers under clothes that I had long since become too fat to wear? Considering my subsequent literary notoriety, often I long for those days of anonymity, writing my little unread, and, therefore, unexploded verses, imagining for them ardent readers in some future more enlightened epoch. But I digress. In that strange interregnum from Hiroshima Day to October 27<sup>th</sup>, my poor brain continued to disperse in the final incoherence of the nattering, yet seemingly infinite cosmos of my personal troubles. Consequently, I found myself, more and more, sitting beside Esclarmode, watching the mute TV. What need was there of any more sound? My nurse and I communicated with one another through a time-field, a time-body actually, that included our two inert physical bodies, plus a hovering magnitude of

unexpressed words. We sat in that cocoon, as happy as larvae metamorphosing. We watched the coverage of the presidential race. We watched the candidates. We felt, but did not care to listen to, the vast formation of a fiction that was, for some unwitting unfortunates, becoming the bludgeoning shape of the future. We sat for days, for nights, silent and serene. I think Diva was sitting on my lap. But perhaps not. I don't even remember having to go to the bathroom. I have since realized that I became, in that trance, the ideal candidate for the task I was destined to fulfill. I became an utter zero — a perfection — a human being devoid of desire and hope.

Has the manuscript that follows supplied for me those two, oh-so-human, oh-so-feckless attributes? Although I still live the life of a recluse, albeit now a fabulously rich, famously espoused, and blissfully happy one, I cannot say that desire and hope have returned to me. If one has everything, what is there left to hope for? What I can say is that the Awareness Exercise has deepened in me the enormous possibilities of desireless hopelessness. Pirated Internet editions of this manuscript have now forced its “authorized” official release, perhaps fittingly, as light beams in cyberspace and not as print on paper. Of course, the strange circumstances in which people claim to have discovered the manuscript continue to insanely proliferate. Copies or bits of copies have been discovered by farmers plowing, by plumbers plumbing, in attic trunks, in disinterred coffins, among the medical files of those who have died astonishing deaths, woven into the cylinders of birds' nests, matted in the midden heaps of archeological digs, scattered amidst the bones in wolf dens, vomited from the skies during frog or fish falls, even comically interpolated into law books and in the tedious annals of The Congressional Record. But wherever and by whomever these pages are found, they reliably, like the exotic birds that they are, seem to migrate back to me. But I laugh to think of myself as the author, no matter whose name accompanies the copyright. I followed a process. Words imposed themselves on me. I copied them down. I take credit for honestly executing my teachers' instructions and dictations to the best of my meager abilities. Undoubtedly mistakes have been made, intromissions from my own limited consciousness, fabrications and inconsistencies that make little or no sense in certain space/time vectors, but appear as profound insights in others. I am sure that pedagogues will be appalled to find that quotes have sometimes been altered, or their sources misappropriated. I am equally sure that these misappropriations have a purpose in this design my teachers have woven, and that our conception of perfection mutilates our ability to see how certain juxtapositions of text expand the possibilities, not only of our own lives, but of the cosmos itself. For weeks as I wrote, I wondered at the collage-like nature of the text. But as the work evolved, I saw how the snippets of metaphor began to elongate into narratives, and how the narratives themselves were eventually woven, like some mighty baroque organ fugue, into a wondrous aural monument, which dwarfed whatever ideas I previously harbored regarding that specious concept we refer to as “meaning.” But for all the audacities of form exhibited by the text, I dare not even hazard the claim of coherence, let alone that of mastery. It would be more accurate to call me the first victim or benefactor of

these words, rather than their author. They leapt upon me unawares as I was struggling to exist, and I became, I must admit, their not unwilling prey. I find it both amusing and appalling that I figure as a small, not very significant, character, in my own autobiography, and that my “I” so often disappears in these pages behind the masks of so many others. Like the Tarot, or the I-Ching, or the Cabbala, what follows in this diary, although midwived by human agency, cannot really be said to have been derived from the human realm. That is perhaps the secret of the manuscript’s mysterious effects. Reports of miraculous events dog this odd proliferation of words, and their benefactors and/or victims fill my e-mail and snail-mail boxes with hyperbolic praise and vitriolic condemnation. The manuscript has become, not much to my surprise actually, a kind of sanctified relic, as ubiquitous and as inauthentic as splinters of the true cross. I take neither credit nor blame for this heresy of heresies. For those fundamentalists who attribute to these pages the toxic stench of irrefutable truth, I offer both my pity and contempt, in equally, I trust, virulent doses. For those relativists who say that these pages comprise only another fiction — even a kind of epistolary form of that degraded literary genre, the novel, or worse, that renaissance monument to intellectual arrogance and folly, the anatomy, to these, I offer my heart-felt, but paltry gratitude. To those that interpret this work as a kind of self-help guide to extra-dimensional existence, I can only say: “Buona fortuna. Beware, you may get what you seek, but not what you wish.” The listeners, the readers that I seek, or rather those that seek me, are free from any such fetters of interpretation. As I did, while looking night after night at the always mutating, but ever-immutable stones, they take words seriously, that is to say, with the same levity and gravity with which one approaches any divine or semi-divine entity. They perform the ritual. They listen. They read. What happens as a result of this kind of perception — if we are still so audacious or naïve to speak of causes and effects — is the deceptively natural, yet utterly miraculous unfolding of consciousness. To say that the siddhis — the healings, the ascensions into paradise, the discovery of treasures, the paroxysms of love — that these listeners/readers experience is precipitated by this mishmash of words is to stretch the limits of credulity past any semblance of propriety. The listeners listen. The readers read. Things happen to them. What more is there to say? Therefore, oh my co-conspirators, my listeners, my readers, be forewarned. This monument may annoy you, its inanities may offend you, its excesses may disgust you, but to enter its morphogenetic field is to enter the cosmic flux. You may attempt to hold yourself aloof, as I certainly did in the beginning, but you can no more do so than you can objectify your own circulating blood. If you choose to listen, to read, then that choice is your destiny, and each destiny is nothing less than a perpetual onslaught of wonder.

The newspaper in the frame has changed again. Now, it is the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, its dateline is 2011, coincidentally, or ironically, September 11<sup>th</sup>. The tagline is from the Hague, and the headline reads “Bush, Cheney *et al* Found Guilty of Crimes Against Humanity.” I look out of the window, not really knowing, or expecting to know, what it is that I am going to see. Reality has so

many possibilities for me now. On the desk before me are the only things that I know in this world that remain unchanging and solid, although they have paradoxically become the seeds of all that is changing, all that is wondrous, all that is tragic or blissful. These are the famous seven rounded beach pebbles from the one, (the only?) Awareness Exercise, the exercise that has since become known as “Rock Gazing”.