

ADAM

Let's see. This morning — since you've been gone —
I've taken a walk on the beach, naming
And naming and naming, until I can name no more.
Comber, anemone, crab. Will these do?

I talk to myself now — so I've found —
As never before, when he'd leave me, often
Now, and now you. I guess I'll get used
To the feeling. But it's funny — the way I get thinking

I mean — like imagining things as more
Or less than they are, because when he's here I
Know him; but gone, he almost vanishes twice
Into all, or nothing — I have to urge

Myself back to that presence, that voice, or hassle
With a vacancy when I fail. And so with you.
Like today — I'm imagining you by turns as either a goddess
Or my servant, or as just another creature

To name, and everything in between, except
 What I feel you really must be when you're here,
And I'm worn out, before noon, when I used to be able
To name — name all day — with scarcely a pause.

But what shall I call it — both of you gone?
To name what I can't see is going to be harder.
When you're back I'll try to explain what I mean;
But with you here, in a way, it might be hard.

But at least you can come and sit beside me on the sand,
And listen to the waves — right now
They're small, making little exhausted crashes;
The animals romping or lolling, and the sky

Is a light — a difficult — blue, and no clouds.
I'm just trying to see things as they are, if I can.
My unicorn poking that surf, for example;
And with nothing at all to do with my hands

I've drawn you these words — on a slope of sand,
In those parallel lines you love so much
(I can hardly make them, God knows, when you're here) —
But I forgot (it looks like) to account for the tide.

If you're back in time, I'll teach you to read this.