

II

Under the window marked "General Delivery"...

This should be a letter  
Throwing you a minute to one side,  
Of how this tossing looks harmonious from a distance,  
Like sea or the tops of trees, and how  
Only when one gets closer is its sadness small and appreciable.  
It can be held in the hand.

All this must go into a letter.  
Also the feeling of being lived, looking for people,  
And gradual peace and relaxation.

But there's no personal involvement:  
These sudden bursts of hot and cold  
Are wreathed in shadowless intensity  
Whose moment saps them of all characteristics.  
Thus beginning to rest you at once know.

Once there was a point in these islands,  
Coming to see where the rock had rotted away,  
And turning into a tiny speck in the distance.

But war's savagery... Even the most patient scholar, now  
Could hardly reconstruct the old fort exactly as it was.  
That trees continue to wave over it. That there is also a small museum somewhere  
inside.  
That the history of costume is no less fascinating than the history of great  
migrations.  
I'd like to bugger you all up,  
Deliberately falsify all your old suck-ass notions  
Of how chivalry is being lived. What goes on in beehives.  
But the whole filthy mess, misunderstandings included,  
Problems about the tunic button etc. How much of any one person is there.

Still, after bananas and spoonbread in the shadow of the old walls  
It is cooling to return under the eaves in the shower  
That probably fell while we were inside, examining bowknots,  
Old light-bulb sockets, places where the whitewash had begun to flake  
With here and there an old map or illustration. Here's one for instance—  
Looks like a weather map... or a coiled bit of wallpaper with a design  
Of faded hollyhocks, or abstract fruit and gaudrops in chains.