

The Painted Man

(an indefinite article)



a . .

Elle m'a tres bien apprivoisé . .

The Painted Man

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The Painted Man

The painted man I paint by hand
Walks his life a speck of sand
And eats and drinks and speaks
What others hear.
His eyes have been my own eyes
I have known his ears
The life I have envisioned he calls years.
But Today I heard a new song
And my heart has danced -
I tell him he must shed his skin
And weep, or laugh.
His paint is wearing thin
I think his time is soon
And you will see and hear and feel
From my heart, too¹

¹ the painted man

what is:

a man is.

what we call a man is,

visions and dreams by and by.

thoughts that flash before his mind make epic

what may in the end be nothing more than fog,

yet unto him and true to him that epic

is the all-inspiring, haunting voice of God.

so that man sees what that man sees

and hears beyond his person but the same.

little more can that man do

than want would have him gain.

and in his heart is known that fear

that each must call his own,

and walks his days through life's charades

unknowing and unknown.

so that man breathes and that man drinks

and eats and hopes and sighs.

he needs and heaves and bleeds and cleaves

to worlds that pass him by.

for that man knows - too well he knows -

as time performs its rite,

how life and death eternal play

each moment of his life.

and out in the world toil and days
have rounded up his years
till half his life has left behind
a whisper in his ears.
and freedom to act - he fights for it,
or hides it in secret like sin;
yet longs for the day when no such secret
burdens hearts of men.

for that man knows how that man knows
that rare before thy God
art asked to give an answer
very strange to what you've got.
and then there is the journey
and then there is the song
and then are heard the thousand trumpets
urging you along.

and deep in the cavernous heart of man,
furthest down his cave,
a trickle gets its rumbling sound
as that man comes of age.
and seen in every step he takes
and every breath he breathes
will that man's very beating heart
be known to them that see.

and the heart of the artist - the heart of the artist is sane.
the heart and the soul - the life and the blood -
the coursing through our veins:
that - *humanity* - is token
to the richness every heart of ours could gain,
were men and women only left untamed.
were men and women only left untamed.²

² the shaken chain

we live free in worlds of make believe,
branded forever by notes of eternity,
princes, kings and princesses
gods, queens and goddesses
in places no one possesses.
come if you like to a palace
and to a temple;
keep if you want tokens
for your travels.
if i will have shown you a glimpse
i will have triumphed,
a moment and i will have already
made your mind up -
horizons stretched from centers disappear
in centers of horizons everywhere . . .³

³ voice of the wayfarer

I wander for a moment to distant shores,
Return fantastically absorbed
Remembering holy, fancied furies
Slowly burning, fallen, effaced . .

The glories today are gone of gods,
Of heroes and invention -
Surely every great man has his sin.

We live in the present still land, the quiet land
Where wasted waters, once primordial,
Make this land.

Those waters, once birthing wombs of gods,
Are now the memories of egos
Pleasant and painful.

Justified by Science and his shadow,
We walk wonder as deceiver to the gallows.

So welcome to our vast, untropic world;
Souls here slowly burn.

The doors of perception,
Unaltered by magic,
Have suddenly ceased to turn
And this uniform destiny
Has ended our tendency
To play in the ancient game.

The lies we believe in today are all our own.
And yet some wonder,
Staring off in distances grown still . .

“A cartographer has gone there,”

Voices say;

“Here I found the address,

Here the street name.”

Imaginations, with horizons, grow so small !

We meet in hollow buildings drinking,

Smoking cancer;

We make calls out from our lonely rooms online.

Busy . . Busy . .

We have every sort of therapy for our shamans,

Ritalin and Lithium for gods.

Behold the voice demanding,

“Stay our norms!”

But child, we’re not happy anymore.

This is the old-found world of order,

The headstone of modern man

Erected in honor of those gone before us.

But we are damned.

We have traded our dreams for the world of our fathers

And slovenly are content.

We eat ourselves alive as ancient cries come echoed in
the wind:

“Seek . . Find . . Change . .”

While faces we see in mirrors become strange.

We are haunted, they say,

By visions of distant pasts,

By murmurs latent deep in halls of blood.
In relics we see their faces and their mistakes;
We hear their voices in the painted walls of caves.
Our fathers and our mothers -
Would they be proud?
But this world of ours is very different now.

So welcome, child, to our unfantastic world,
To arid lands where silence is not stirred.
I pray to the vanished gods of our fathers
That you would hear their words:
Do not softly stir our static norms -
Seek! Find! Change!
Be bold.
Create your own way.
For some great One -
Some great child grown -
Will shatter this cold and old world made of stone.
Maybe you.
And others will live in an old world become new.⁴

⁴ world of our fathers

When a god stretches truth to proper length
And shoots it like an arrow from its bow,
How fast do universes go?
Who can see the whole?
And who can know?⁵

⁵ admission

At every chance the mind creates a whole:
Corporeal sensation is the platform
Where the crafted space within becomes the soul
(Pain and pleasure point it where to go).
In time we see its image in a metaphor -
A Path, perhaps, a River or a Door
(Picasso's little girl matador)
Created in a moment on the journey
Of some soul's Eternity.

No medicinal philosophy,
No science, no orthodoxy
Conjures some utopian escape -
That is an original Mistake.
Cast pennies - and your hapless soul as well,
Into an empty garden's well
If by some fancy superstition
You avoid the human mission
And you bury Hell there or here,
Ignoring what is ringing in your ear.

I wish I could make it clearer.

I wish I could shatter the vanity mirror,
Could show you in its schizophrenic pieces
Where identity begins and where it ceases,
How the artificial means of our relation
(Insufficient for a personal translation)
Might be overcome by isolated souls
Along the lonely human roads of thought and
sorrow.

For the holy, golden die have been cast high -
Live enraptured by them; marvel at their sight:
They are the essence of the wonder we call Life.
And when sparkling bits of auric light
Fall westward in your paradise,
Recall them to your conscience with a sigh -
You will not be the first of us to die.
And we will hear that old, familiar, solemn wind
Portend again.

And we have heard that voice a thousand times -
In injury to Mankind by his crimes,
In anxious search to keep us from ourselves,
In haunted thoughts of Heavens,
Of our Hells,
Of *wasted time* . .

And it is Time,
O peoples, friends,
Time to put the madness to its end -
For *Liberty* -
Time to venture freely, unafraid,
Undaunted by Leviathans we made -
*Finally.*⁶

⁶ all i know

if i say it three right ways and point it out -
if i shoot it with the perfect word
and conjure up a syntax out of doubt -
if i wipe my mouth and stomp my feet,
or cry out for the incomplete,
or worry at the image as it fades -
what will you say?
and what will you see
if all i mean is language is a mystery?⁷

⁷ on language

There is a man whose deep sadness,
Whose rare madness,
Makes him like the rest of us.
But we will seek
Where he will never seek,
And he will find
What we may never find.
We'll spin about his person like a spell
(Convinced of gods, perhaps, and hells),
While he in wise eyes
Ponders at the fine lines of Self
 And where they wander into other realms . . .
But our perplexities,
Our hang-ups,
Indecisions -
Our incredibly illusioned dispositions,
Herein capture deep and grinding lines
Confining unity to worlds that we hide inside.
But we are listening.
We hear echoes rattle through the cage -
We wander seeking shelter from a pain,
And find our paths.
By that we stumble onto happiness.
Can you hear me,
You there?
I'm a thousand worlds in between

Waving out in sounds desiring meaning.
For I perceive within me rising up
What all must drink, however pure the cup.
For we are weary here inside our shelters,
Shedding pain to drink it from the glass -
Our cups shall overfloweth in the aftermath.
Do you hear me now?

Do you hear
The distant echoes come from all the spheres
Where our corporeal rumblings have interfered
In our totalities?
In our realities?
In our own collected galleries
We wrestle with questions of being;
Hide me there from time to time so sure
That I would echo it to you
In what I've learned of words.
But you will answer back,
 "It's very different!"
And I will say again,
 "Oh no, it isn't!"
But if indeed we like each other
We'll both be pleased
About the pictures that we see
In our own galleries.
And you will be my equal energy.

And we will chase outside ourselves
The quests we seek,
And I will gather and regather
All your things.

They will be my things, your things,
And mine will be your things, mine,
And we will pick them from the floor
From time to time.

But they are only pictures,
And do not mean the meaning that we mean.
But they mean something.
Something.

Like a thing we call the thing
That we call 'Wanting.' 'Longing.'

But must we act?

I project myself amusement and amused,
Follow headlong into it gone after you.

I see a thing, then call it ___;

You say, "Fine."

And in an instant I am suddenly behind.

You meant pleasure, I meant pain,

But shaken at that silence in between,

We connect again -

"Ah," we say,

"That's . . . Ah! Ah ha!"

And we will smile, then embrace

(Perhaps a kiss upon the face)
Before our broken worlds -
Intact in us - are chiming,
“Everything is not quite what it seems . . .”
We say “we” with emptiness between.
And we are wakened once again from our sweet
dreams

To our realities.
And we return to shelters
To recontemplate
In sadness and in loneliness.
Enduring pain,
We wait to ever venture out again:
What vast world's out there?
Who can know and who can cure my cares?
Wasn't I once happy unaware?
I am a lonely voice on an island seeking friends . . .
I am a lonely voice with or without them . . .
Better, we learn (enduring pain), not to be alone -
Better, we learn (enduring pain), not to *feel* alone.
And we see light out there;
(Going forth)
Will this light make a Time for life?
May I have more?
We press about in orbits at its shores.
Many here have light's life in their own eyes -

We involve ourselves around them in our lifetimes.
They see Being being as they are
(Peering out, observing from their stars).
They are not different than we,
Except they got it for a moment:
They are seeing -
Light itself enlivened in their eyes
And dichotomic mystery has died.
They are the breathing, in and out;
They are Living Beings home with doubt,
The ones who give their lives for our contentment
And our Times,
The Times we are becoming,
What we have been.

And as our hours somehow stretch toward dawns
Evoking images and softly stirring songs
Inferring recompense beyond our great Beyonds . . .
Well, in the crumbling tome of retrospect,
We're dying.
So we become.
We become what we were meant to be
At twilight
When we hear in quiet music all those songs
Of others out in Universes long gone.
They whisper still, old voices, saying,
"Peace will overcome you like a sheet."

But we will not repeat;
We'll have our own songs.
And we will stare from lone rooms once for all.
We will see our own worlds once for all.

And the last thing I would want to know -
The last thing I would ever want to know is
Where -

Where when all these worlds are decayed,
And Where -

Where when every brightness has its end
Will our friends dwell, in what homes?⁸

⁸ (fragment)

Barriers, borders
 (Protection and hindrances both),
These walls we build -
 Artifices - Artificial
(The known to order out the unknown)
 With authorities (“seeing”)
Making others of us blind
 Behind their false walls,
Hard walls,
 Fearful, precautionary,
Till courageously visionaries
 Tear them down.⁹

⁹ borderline vision

Wisdom calls aloud,
 Entreats,
Confident in
 Brick streets
Laid in mortar,
 Set in law,
 Ignored
While old,
 Beguiling,
 Caustic things,
Fearful
 If deceptively,
Are lurking
 At the outskirts
 Of the world.
Opportunists
 Take a chance,
Better men
 A second glance,
Preparing for
 And hoping not
 For war.
"Stay along the old ways,"
 Elders say,
"They have seen us good now
 All these years."

"Be safe - come back!
My love, come here!"
Our worried wives
And lovers reappear.
(As we leave them,
They remind us
Why we're here).
We are brave men,
Good men,
Filling up our eyes here
In advance.
"Worry not,"
I whisper
As the deepest of her fears
Become embodied
In the sobbing
In the air.
It's not by chance
We risk our lives out there.
But tell us here,
Oh wives,
Lovers -
Tell us now
Who sacrifice our souls:
Will you,
In the aftermath,

On ruins of
 That battered path,
As life itself is rotted
 In your eyes;
Will you,
 Hearts of innocence;
Will you
 Who have held your princes;
Will you
 Who have worried for our lives
Face your own adventures,
 Recognize?
And will you see inside our depths
 The burden of your recklessness,
Wrought silent
 As you peer into our eyes?
Or wait another phoenix
 To arise?
For we will walk on ancient paths
 Where men must walk alone
Unburdened by the empty thought
 Of ever going home,
Where we will see before our eyes
 Ourselves in other men
Approaching at the light of dawn
 And truly murder them.

Those paths - *our* paths -
Peace and war paths,
Your path - my path,
Madness shored on bloodbaths,
Aftermath half ignored.

Take heart, Woman!
And if you will not face with me
The marriage of your innocence,
 Weep bitterly;
Understand if in the end
 Entire worlds lost,
Resurrected to your kin,
 Exact from them the cost.
And know a thousand times again
 As tears would stain your face
How ignorance is in the end
 Our final resting place.

Tat tvam asi
 anAhata
sabda
 sahasrAra
dayA¹⁰

¹⁰ (to) Sophia

But at the end of time's approach,
 With visions in your eyes,
When feeble arms are made to let
 Withdraw this wild life,
Fear not.
But hope without regret
As others place atop your grave
 A lover's epithet.¹¹

¹¹ the philosopher's epilogue

"Here we go round the prickly pear,"
The prickly pear, the prickly pear
Where old superstitions will suddenly be laid bare.
The world outside will fantastically disappear;
Understanding will alter as other ways come clear.
Thought (an artifice) officially was made king,
But never alone could Thought cure our suffering.
So sooner or later,
When Thought yields its crown to Will,
Mankind will vanquish his evils, if not his ills.¹²

¹² prickle

When men dream on worn beds of distant places
Peering into vast depths of old thought
Waiting at the crossroads of the soul;
And when they see from chariots truths like gold
And drag them to their ragged caves like wartime
spoils,

What then ?

Would legions formed about our beds
Reach out, salute and honor it
If in the end creators would create?
Would mankind change his memory to suit the cause,
In honored times of silence take a moment's pause
To set aside his jealousy and hate?

We have heard the crackling of our Thors and Zeuses
Laughing at the ruins of our lives,
But wise men with seeing eyes heard faint muses
Singing of a paradise . .

“PROMETHEUS, BE BOUND!”

But prophets bore a sacred flute's inspired sound
And spoke to men while Arguses slept spellbound.

What majesty, what horror or enlightenment
Awaits our action, pausing at the door?
If prophets saw from far seas our encouragement
Bound inside a mystery of time's intent,

Formed within horrific form a perfect monument
To would-be saviors bent upon their cause
Upholding Liberty for all time, once for all -
What then ?

Would demons drag our bodies to the water's edge,
Raked among the faces that inspired them,
While live words trumpeted in thunderous rolls
What angels trade to humbler men for gentler souls?
Would priests receive their golden crowns and high dress,
Shored against our wicked deeds as we, monstrous,
Strained to read the scroll?

No. Let every bell toll for the secrets princes kept
While valiant men were murdered as their lovers wept
And mothers bore our children to their wars -

The time has come.

And priests, and cowardice, shall fade
As we ourselves face angry gods *unafraid*;
And Mankind, come unshackled from his past,
Will understand his prophesies at last.¹³

¹³ as we lie

That dark word, "Enemy,"
Is that great world outside
Where paralytic tendencies
Encroach upon our destinies
On all sides.

Where we hide ourselves,
There we will remain.

Encroached upon by fear,
Our small rooms, lit solemnly by vice,
Are made appear.
Our small lives,
Limited by consequence,
Are shrines to fear.

So step outside
(The world holds a better room to view)
And the Universe itself will bow to you.¹⁴

¹⁴ enemy

a birth attends destruction in the depths;
terror yields, and will not write its epithet -
the soul rises; anthems of an age
compel the hand to put it to the page -

the end - the *end* - is coming soon,
but sons, daughters, saviors come in you.

so at the day, when rulers seek duress
as advisors raise the means of rulers past,
let mankind understand his bloody lessons
and let mankind break his shackles if at last.

the end - the *end* - is coming soon,
but sons, daughters, saviors come in you.

and when emblems of eternal truths are mentioned,
when apocalyptic dangers make their entrance
and diplomats and presidents pretend,
invoke their narcissistic gods again,

the end - the *end* - is coming soon,
but sons, daughters, saviors come in you.

and when chains are tightened, walls come closing in;
as fear becomes the public master, difference a sin;
when grey men toast and reunite,
set aside their differences a night -

the end - the *end* - is coming soon,
but sons, daughters, saviors come in you.

and as emblems of our freedom are replaced -
as terror teams with rulers in the race -
sons, daughters, all relies on you:
set precedence aside and find your truth.

for the end - the *end* - is coming soon,
and sons, daughters, saviors come in you.

may courage be the breastplate;
may compassion mark the power of your ways.
may ageless generations rise and bless you;
for freedom, sons and daughters, *seize the age.*

for the end - the *end* - is coming soon,
and sons, daughters, saviors come in you.¹⁵

¹⁵ anthem

I do not like the puppeteer,

The strange man,

The bad man.

He prowls the night to escape

What he might leave behind;

He mumbles,

“That is his,” and

“This is mine.”

Strange to me in every single way

(except, perhaps, that pain prefers a place),

Rob me not of the world I've come to love;

Keep your place and that will be enough.

I need no puppeteer, nor even seer.

Prophets have no place before I die.

So stand off - stand off,

Oh puppeteer;

I don't pretend that death has not drawn nigh.¹⁶

¹⁶ to puppet

Part II

Emerging, a wonder caught
 Flashing before my eyes
Enters the Body and makes
 Straightaway for the mind.
En route, the body adopts this song:
 “Love for the good, the pleasure;”
 Pain the wrong.”
The mind scrambles,
 Searching for truth at last:
 A reconciliation with the past.

We venture forth blindly seeking
Food for life and beds of rock
 (We have so little time then left for thought).
And if one has -
 If one finds bread
 And one finds rock,
We follow, picking up where he left off;
His god we praise, creating “Right”
 And making “Wrong.”
And we forget about the music in the song.

Then a moralist says,
 “Wrong question,”
Like I got in the way
 Of interrogation.

(I cannot make away).

Mind? Body?

Space and clay?

The mind wraps around the body

And its cares;

Morals, in the end, are unaware.

Blind man, groping for life,

Found song -

The pleasure between is the right

In the middle of the wrong.

And in the end,

We have martyred ourselves to pasts,

Accepting the notion,

“The first is a symptom of the last.”

For inside the body

A far truer notion stirs:

A wonder is truest

When its music is without words.¹⁷

¹⁷ wonder

Our bodies play us simple songs for pleasure,
Singing, "Life's too short to worry of the weather."

Some like bold notes,
Some more subtle.
Some prefer to live life in a bubble.

But time is short !
Run barefoot over glass -
Feel pleasure come from searing pain
And laugh.

Dance in public; Cut your hair;
Enjoy the rain; Love madly;
Once swim bare.

Have you lost a love immortal, kissed its chin?
Have you seen Death smile?
Did your mother call it sin?

Run naked down a public street at night -
Life and Death would grin and laugh alike!

See, safety is a bit like understanding -
The Universe is not quite that demanding.
So open your eyes, considering life for a while.
When you realize what you realize I hope you smile.¹⁸

¹⁸ realize

My body neither hungry, neither cold,
My mind learning, my heart unbroken,
I am happy, I am told.

But happy am I not
(Should happiness be more than but to be),
Yet discontent I'm not,
Or I believe.

Could it be that I am somewhere in between?

Content I am,
But happiness is more than that:
If contentment be a head,
Then what of happiness -
A hat?¹⁹

¹⁹ hat

So much for loneliness
In bottomless pits of azure;
So much for happiness
In endless bliss and rapture:
They found it in the brain -
Loving is akin to the insane !
But a little bit of this prescribed
With little bits of that,
In a few more generations
(With a feather in our hat),
Our children will read Shakespeare unashamed,
Innocent of all that he proclaimed.
And finally we will be
Rid of our humanity.²⁰

²⁰ lament

on reading in National Geographic about the
similarity in brain wave patterns of those in love
and those with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder

if ever in the tempests of this troubled life
beauty were as certain as a stone,
were happiness and sadness not as one,
then, perhaps, could hearts be free of storms,
harbored in a life devoid of sorrow.
but in these days when life's wrecked image
stares at you with visions of the past,
as futures peer uncertain through a shaded glass
and cast your thoughts in fears,
reflected in the moment that is near;
as every happy thought or peace or solace fades away,
as darkness veils the light of hope and shades the day,
keep it in your heart that you'll prevail,
that time alone, with patience, tells the tale.
but as these words in vain effort offer to console,
as angels with their hidden gods seem bitter in control;
as love itself would shudder at its own tattoo,
hope when it is darkest knowing this truth:
every heart that aches for having once loved
bears within resolve to overcome.²¹

²¹ consolation

What was that cold mistake in that iron grip,
The turmoil in your pencil?
Color shouting harmless at the page:
“Become!”
And all at once the world is come undone.
Arshile, who is that haunted person in your pen?
What hand shakes for what sin
As if it were the impulse in the skin?²²

²² Gorky

i toggle around on the one hand,
then the other,
chewing it up, swishing about for feel.
words come seemingly meaningless,
just for preening
before my mind's made up,
before i've laid it straight.
pardon me, do forgive;
i never would mean to confuse.
it's only that lately
i don't know what's over me -
madness or a muse.
and the garble that follows is vast,
the warbles and misunderstandings,
visions of last men standing
in worlds misconstrued -
i almost confused myself with you.
but now in hindsight i see
what prophets see,
the many before standing silent, watching.
they put themselves in others' eyes for vision
(intuitively by imagination)
before they realized their own eyes
were one set centered on their own lives,
seeing, as it were, one side
while others saw the same,
caught in the same game,
reasoning in fantasy,
thinking worlds one.²³

²³ same

Come - I am doubled over,
Fallen into trickling 'scapes of time.
If I am a madman dreaming,
Let me dream.
If I am a liar scheming,
Let me scheme.

At the phantom of impermanence
The raw pulse beats;
The Mother never sleeps
Become a man to man.
All about, magnificence parades;
Good men curse what blind men praise;
Awe becomes the ageless son of waiting.

So I tell now what angels dare not say
And speak beyond this cryptic world's ways:
Tell the blind that beauty never fades
Nor can you blame me.²⁴

²⁴ au mort de l'ange

Walk me, please, past ignorance,
Past iron gates of knowledge
To the darkened haunt of refuge,
Wisdom's home.

The sage lives there in silence
Gazing peacefully towards sea
Regarding time here and Eternity
The same sleep.²⁵

²⁵ sage

I will send you this weary song
Where broken words converge
And twilight rises into Dawn:
Hark! Hark! Hear thee, angels sing!
Ignore the incessant clatter
Of this dark world's chattering!
I - / am the deep voice ringing;
/ am the ear -
Hear, ye forlorn, far-off wanderers,
Wonderers, wanters,
Hear! Hear!
I am *the* -
I am *thee*
*Here.*²⁶

The dream I mean,
 That beautiful thing,
The eternal Fragment
 Awful and terrifying
Of horizons speaking
 In tortured colors
Untold wonders that
 Grip us and bind us whole -
That is the dream,
 The meaning of dreaming,
The seat of the soul stirred
 Where reality blurs
To a world of seeming
 Without words.²⁷

²⁷ the dream

at the touch of a cold night air
below my heart and toes,
deep where desire grows,
you.

from here in the dungeon of clocked hours,
staring out from high towers,
you.

here the heart goes
here the mind slows down
here the world marked out
bows to you

to you

to you

the one my mind would rise to
the one my heart ignites to

you

you

here where the world goes cold.²⁸

²⁸ you

you could have seen the night rain,
abandoned roads
i could have known a reason on this
ship of fools
why you would be with me

tomorrow a new day sings its song
as ages fade away
tomorrow fractured lives are gathered
in today

and age will be my keepsake,
if one distant hope my constant company;
each dream will yield its empty thought
of fabled mermaids singing.
and if i have offered sentiment
on stones reserved for sacrifice
and altered words for substance
as i blasphemed . .

great men will come for you.
great men will come.
and i will lay aside a time
and i will raise my fallen heart
i will beg the written to erase
and pray to be a blade of grass
on holy fields of heavens in your dreams
if i would be anything
anything at all
and sway to you beneath your feet
as night falls.²⁹

²⁹ the reed

the dogs have both been played with, walked and fed,
cats retired to solitude and bed,
when you have been invited.
and hollow halls are quiet,
books are read;
i smile at the perfect day you must have had
when telephones are silent.

and it is cold outside
and cold inside
there is no place where warmth resides;
prophets seek the other side
before it is decided.

but tell me, are you happily excited?
has the present moment captured what you wanted?
has your heart skipped a beat?
have you smiled cheek to cheek?
have you wondered and been pleasantly high hearted?

alas, i am no fool before a sorceress -
i knew before i wrote this how
you must have guessed
that you would be invited.
so the time has come.
and so the time to come has come to now -

good things in the day gone by,
but i'll leave some to mystery
and leave you at a *good night*,
till united.³⁰

³⁰ invitation

this is no life for you,
abandoned by incarcerated men,
beat in youth,
rescued to be stricken.

no, this is no life for you,
reclining on a sofa by a fire,
home all day
as day after day expires.

waiting out the days,
magnanimous to tolerate us,
your bound heart would race
for him you love.

but hearts rise and hearts fall;
the world is a journey for us all,
and much more,
even for a labrador.³¹

³¹ jasmine

Every once in a very rare while
A spell of melancholy comes over me;
Whether sitting in silence or asleep by the sea,
A sadness in spirit subsides over me.
And sitting in silence, subservient slave,
The silliest thing, I admit, I will say:
'Tis not for the laughter, 'tis not for the tears,
But for close ones and loved ones
That so many fears abide.³²

³² melancholy

A life like this should never adorn our lives
Except for to love and to brighten our very eyes.
Her smile is more than our need to relieve a frown;
Her laugh is enough to make high lowest ground.
But we spend our lives with the thrift of a glutton's tongue,
Relieving ourselves of our time with the ones we love.
These times are the times we'll recall right before we die,
Remembering youth, but with ever a tearful eye.
And tomorrow will come with the vengeance of Heaven's fire
When ever we weep for the depth of our heart's desire.³³

Let us find a way out of here,
 You and I together
Through the voice of the song
 Of a nightingale
Deep in the night.
We will say,
 “What is that on far horizons?
 Who is here?”
We will capture together the wonder of color
In the touch of each other in moonlight.
And we will venture into that night sky.³⁴

³⁴ night sky

thank you, ludwig,
attending the end of the world,
attenuating circumstance to one word.
and you must have faced the devil,
counting out our sins,
piecing up the images we gave them.
and you drew out our contexts like a madman
where fractured thoughts describe the hearts of men,
and circumscribed our measures to appearances.

and the heart of the artist is sane,
the undivided sum,
spitting out in blasphemous to be one.³⁵

³⁵ Wittgenstein

My mind is quick an enemy of thought.
My body (an affliction)
Wrought an awesome interaction;
By its faction I am wholly predisposed.

So leave me by my leery soul to contemplate
The difference in what we mean by love and hate;
Go far away and render me my calm repose
Where sorrow disappears when I am left alone -

Oh, wondrous state!
But I loved too late.³⁶

i am alone at a table,
 dumbla dee, dumbla da;
the people are not angry,
 not sad,
 pushing
about the days they had.

workers are solemn,
 friends are out at play;
my girlfriend stops by,
 says hey,
 silent
about the day she had.³⁷

³⁷ ah

Ever, ever finds that eye
That only keeps it open,
Does not seek to keep its thought,
Yet comes upon an ocean.

And in this eye the splay of light
That dances on those waters,
Changes form and yet is born
Unaltered as it alters.

Deep, that ocean never seems to cease;
Deep, that ocean soon becomes the eye;
Deep, that ocean softly, softly weeps,
For worlds it will never see go by.³⁸

³⁸ the eye

What does it mean when I close my eyes
And whisper, "Sorrow becomes me?"
That I fear in the end the world will begin
To be the world I dream about without me.
And what does it mean when I hear in the distance
Myriad hosts of angels sing,
"It won't be long?"
That the world we live in here
(The weak beneath the strong)
Will be fantastically undone
Fantastically redone
A very different world beneath the Sun?
And yet no angels are singing so,
And many of kind are sad.
But out of a sadness
The search for a happiness
Soon is underway;
Here - not when angels sing -
Worlds change.³⁹

³⁹ singing so

Torn between a body and a dream,
I love a figure, or perhaps a figurine;
But which is which I surely cannot know.
Until I drown I will not know which pool is shallow.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ figurine

Find,
 But do not find seeking.
Ponder,
 But ponder for thinking.
Ponder not, “What if *this*?”
And ponder not, “What if *that*?”
Ponder to ponder what *is*
 And you get all that.⁴¹

⁴¹ find

Three approached a sacred spring
In certain time of May
Encouraged by its present air
Of possibility.

And spoke a voice to each the three
As if it were a hymn
That each should wash in his own time
Which part seemed best to him.

The first was not to hesitate,
Nor had a thought to trace:
He knelt before the sacred spring
And washed it with his face.

The second, on a second-thought,
Would wait to see what came;
As beauty shone, he washed his feet,
Enamored by his name.

The third would wait a many year
'Fore he'd decide to gain
Not fortune for hypocrisy,
Nor Coward for a name;
But having known the homes of men
In many distant lands,
He thought of what would do no ill -
And knelt to washed his hands.⁴²

⁴² a moral

this vacant voice, this unremitting ennui,
the soul's sadness, the body's shaken nerves -
what love, what hope, what possibility
could persevere through such a shaking storm?
"be calm, but lessen all the stakes,"
the truth, unhappy, iterates.⁴³

⁴³ untitled

(hearts shaped, bleeding at their chests,
bodies burdened in troubled breaths)

father, forgive,

my mother caused me sin;

another within cast fortune

to the wind.

call to me -

i have waited, sought

and long to hear.

a thousand canny incidents were shared.

hear me hoping,

silent in my breast,

and bear that your son, too,

is innocent.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ christ at the altar

Enough of nouns and adjectives,
Of verbs and prepositions -
No melting shades of gray
Explain the light away.
Hearts beating slowly
In the soft escape of winter
Find me dying
Though they hardly know my name.
“Be brave,” they say,
Courageously escaping me
For supper
As another lonely day
Erodes away
As any other
And I sink into a trance
(Imagine soothing out a splinter),
Then I'll paint my holy picture,
While hope remains.
But on my pallet lie
A thousand shades of gray.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ untitled

Beautiful, broken woman,
I see you inside.
I am the high-born price of death,
Of love and pride.
Be patient, enduring -
Love deep is often lost.
But love and love again -
Life without the tragic is a sin.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ to tragic

We heard in the distance the fall of a heart,
Soft and silent.
The man lay mourning no life unlived here.
He is the son of this eternal city,
Burgeoned once with life to be a flame.
He bears no ill past here,
But a lonely home,
A recompense we offer forth in sorrow.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ recompense

You laid it east of Eden
 In my cold repose
And left for me in silence
 Far more worthy rose
Than should be left for me -
 And not by sympathy.
As if it weren't enough to dance,
 You left it up to hap and stance -
And opened up to me.
 Thank you. Eternally.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ to A__

I find you exploring me,
Happily blind trying;
But you cannot see the immensely
dark world behind me.
Yet not far beyond - not
Terribly too far beyond
Lies an entirely-your-world
Impressively left there without me.⁴⁹

i am the voiceless desiring inside you
piecing together tastes and smells,
ordering kindly unkind voices,
meaning well.

but i am not the perfect being
mustered into virtue out of vice,
nor have adequately told you
what is right.

so as this time, this space or world
slowly passes by,
as reason in an instant flashes
meanings into insights,
know the world 'round you is a vision,
and others also carry one within them.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ voice in the night

I am just another world spinning round
Sending off my satellites in sound . .

These are the phenomena:
a, b, c ad nausea;
Else emerging.
Open to front,
Abysmal at end,
Terminal only theoretically,
This is converging "Post Modern,"
A theory of theory destroyed.
Upended, we ourselves are ?
The valueless expectation
Of continual uncertainty.
So true.
We the uncertain
Certainly shall be known.
Known, we shall be unknown;
Undefined, defined.
So find us here
Brave,
Undaunted,
Unconfined.⁵¹

⁵¹ liberation's army

looking for answers in hearts held out on sleeves,
searching horizons taunting, teasing,
i beheld this image in your eyes:
a road stretched longingly behind.
whispers enter, twisted into facts,
and piece themselves together out of artifacts -
spurned lover, what do you expect?
a heavy heart consoled by him that banished it?
love, young, inters itself to bloom,
but old lovers dig it up too soon.⁵²

⁵² notes at crossroads

i have seen in long faces faint traces
peering through, reflected in your eyes -
sorrow at the edge of its disguise;
and found upon my beaches worn pages
sent to beckon solace out in distant places.
but what upon my island could i offer you?
what refuge? what truth?
i would make of all my branches shelter and a home,
of all that's left the luxury of tattered clothes
then wait until your healing found its day,
till other worlds beckoned you away.
yet i would have a vision, be with calm seas,
swept away toward other worlds, happily imagining. .⁵³

i am a reflection in a clay room,
caught between becoming and the tomb.
eternity, should such be like a home,
become in me the moment and be done;
and i will see in clouded glass beyond my form,
clothed about in wild wonder newly born.
become to me, o healer at its heart,
a vision beyond vision become Art.
and on that day, when heaven disappears,
as hell itself is swallowed up, and all its fears,
become in me the being *that i am*,
perfected in the essence of a man.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ epiphany

if you have learned the game of words,
to place them with their cousins unto ends,
but have not known the soul of what is in them;
come upon behavior from a sage,
but borrowed it from writing on a page,
smile not, but mourn -
sorrow is approaching at the door.
and you can never know whatever for.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ doctoring

Small worlds,
Concrete,
Ridiculous,
Surreal,
Tempestuous,
Absurd;
Loud words,
Indiscreet,
The more the less
But real,
Impetuous,
Unheard.⁵⁶

⁵⁶ impetuous

Life is a myriad of trials and struggles
Confounded by those who would play God;
For Night is a thief, and Day her company,
Stealing away our best thoughts.

The faces we see are mosaics of flesh and blood,
The people we meet souls painted
With passionate envy, hate and love.

Some say virtue is a fire dance,
Some that villains need a second chance.
But the truth of love and justice is a mix of souls
Buried deep in caverns, lost in catacombs.

Would we better rend the villain mercy's second chance
And burn inside that fire while that villain dance?⁵⁷

⁵⁷ question of mercy

Tat Tvam Asi

Anāhata

Śabda

Sahastrara

Daya

voilà, c'est ça, alors,

rien et tout

wenn ich gesehen werde,

und du.⁵⁸

⁵⁸ the sum