

Poetry, Charity

*'Two diamonds in the hand one Poetry one Charity
proves we have dreamed...'*

Allen Ginsburg: Ignu

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Sweetly in the Silence

All Nature in a leaf a cloud
a perfect pine
the green deep
of a copse
a broken wall
its stone litter
needled, twigged, lichened.

This is anywhere
in any time,
in empty fields
down lanes,
mind loose
and blowing free
with the lines of hills.

The right trail
is the spirit
unconstrained
making its peace
with transience,
continuity,
all other passers-by

who walked here
thought here,
with less science
but more beauty,
that resonance
we try to recreate
sweetly in the silence.

For –

What meaning in elegy?
Death is your echoing void,
and to speak of your beauty
of your kindness,
cannot return you here
mind betrayed by body.
The tribute we bring
is the token of us all,
mourning our transience,
in grieving for your loss
of half a true lifetime,
for our lost moments
in our selfishness of love
our tears' libation.

Things not to be said,
memories sacrosanct,
silences to be kept,
the glare of the world
to be drowned, the heart
to be free to make you
anonymous once more,
like a child in the womb,
like a breath through the air,
gone past, so lovely
thought stops the eye
opens, the earth
itself vanishes into dark,
no wave you departing.

Death's discretion is absolute,
your next word, cry
next turn of life
was not is not in this universe,
except as the mind
makes memory
now of your presence,
and you will be ash
of the starlight,
a comer in dreams,
the nothingness waiting
behind each door,
an absence of greeting,
your slight ringing void.

March Wind

Pale warm sunset, and the air suffused
with a belated beauty of being, Earth,
will we give you away all for nothing,
all for grasping, March breeze like dim
soft flame and heat of knowing, the fire
in the mind that comes before the end?

New leaf on stone, bird-song in the trees,
dry lichen, misted paths becoming solid
as soil exhales the moisture, soaks the air,
white light from the blossom, naked pear
and plum-boughs, pink Japanese cherry,
all tiny double-clusters of petal, trembles.

Pale warm haze over the woods and fields,
shows a belated beauty of being, Earth,
will we hurt you, all for selfishness, all
for nothing, for a meaningless progress
toward those things that must disappear,
and, in vanishing, take us with them?

Grey-green lichen on oak-bark, pigeons call,
in the calming ritual, Spring, its inflow
pouring like woman's wetness into dawn
and evening, stirring a root-deep humus,
I savour the moment of quiet, Earth I know
is it your passing, ours, pale orb of the year?

Cascades

Heart-tremor of mountain beauty,
the way the peaks stretch out each
smaller with distance, sweeter in
shape, misted from brighter, white
in the furthest with snow, here stone
grey beautiful, and cold dark water,
soft the deep green of layered pines
resting the eye, now, cooling the vision,
suspending the dream, all fears over,
and we, returned where we started,
to the falls and clouds of beginning.

Eye-scans, hard to look, I find it hard
to halt the gaze on anything for long,
the fixed field made of our flickering,
the same perception never made twice,
but the heart in its tremor accepting
the inflow of matter its music the line,
the range, fold after fold, and crammed
scree-fans of fractured ancient winters
white burning suns, all transient hazed
wavering summits, time-worn ridges
flowing in total silence through the heart.

Life

Nothing more than energy in the void,
nothing less than form, formal process,
endless complexity of interaction,
energy mediating energy, singing.

Nothing purposed, purposive in the void,
nothing less than immaculate repetition,
endless variation of locked-in function,
energy spawning energy, singing.

Nothing directed, filled with direction,
nothing less than its intricate relations,
endless solitudes, endless communion,
energy meeting energy, singing.

The Being Part

What stops the screaming in despair:
an inner voice denying this reality,
the love of others, love of self, all
the self-delusion of normality,
coupling intellect to the mundane,
accepting, placing one foot after
the other, to eat, sleep, work, live,
be fooled by lies, not dare to make
a fuss, conform, be scared of being
wrong, wish to be good and wish
to compromise, be part of the race,
what stops the creatures screaming
in despair, the ones we torment, deny:
their need too to be part of the group,
to answer in the way the genes play,
sifted through matter, by the sieve
that shaped, fitted, being to the world.
What stops us now screaming in despair.

Discipline

Hardest of all to go beyond the anger,
be kind to self without harming others,
become the Taoist on the far mountain,
drift with the breezes, fly with the birds
along the sweetest levels of atmosphere,
simply to go with the purest being here.

Because world is filled with wrath, anger
that fills the loving heart with its pain, all
the hurt of the harm of all the nations,
the sadness of delusion, these religions,
the pity that blasts the mind and forces
pity in moments now with none forthcoming.

Hardest of all to pass beyond the anger,
to go beyond, where the diamond pattern
sings purposeless galaxies, where the lotus
grips the mind's deep silence, stills its roar.
Evening mist. Where I lose my vision now,
seek to evade self, feel, these gestures of evasion.

Barely

Two legs, a beak, a tail
for balance,
no arms,
hedge-sparrow,
dunnock,
simple truth.

Not one of the great,
but one of
the small,
brown, pale,
feathered,
so discreet.

Quick flight but barely,
skimming
the grass,
bushes, trees
and gone
into green home.

Respite

Have me forget you a while,
relax the strain of distance,
allow your being to settle
deeper, deep in the loving spirit.
Have me forget you a while.

Out West

This hazy sea
so clean we foul.
Breeze on green dunes,
tide-flow, white gulls
their chain of tracks,
the dark sweet cliffs,
western headlands,
seal-heads bob, gaze,
shoals, surface-changes
blue-dark shades of green.

Shell litter at wave-ebb
bleached wood, wrack,
pebbles all glitter, whirr
down retreat of waters,
quiet sun shimmers,
cormorant low shoots by,
sand-flies on stones, life
where it once began:
soft hazy seething
of a strange becoming.

One Mind Making

Self is this process,
not a thing,
identity this continual
grasping
of world, this casting
inner through outer
to make the real,
sometimes deceived,
sometimes illusion.

Self is this night
blue, frosted, fine glow
of moon white circle
formed in the eye,
this thought, emotion
hard to define,
self is this process
no-thing inside,
one mind making.

Small-Scale

Round sun through bare crab-apple,
territorial robin in cool air sings,
first grass springs, land flows,
mind lives its orchard beauty.

Where creeks lip folded rocks,
eye sees sky heart-clear, here
blue hangs over in leafless net
of intricate twigs' fine renewal,

the heart enclosed, tamed, sweet
as pure bird-notes quickly trilled.
This small-scale world we are too
that sings in us, in light, in wind.

Communion

The communion of silent forces in this world,
what they kept secret at Eleusis, the inner
voices, thoughts, imaginings, what moves
the crowd, fires art, stirs eroticism, flows
sweetly through hidden places of the mind.

Like lovers glancing at the same shining moon,
or in the same moment thinking of each other,
a precious moment, silent, secret and unknown
that nonetheless has power in the flesh, echoes
down corridors of mirrors in multiple gleaming.

Not what we say but what, having said, we know,
the mutual implicit understanding, this earned gift,
so that with no words needed, in speechless distance
each performs their movement towards the other,
the communion of silent forces in this world.

Covenant

Look out on this gleaming world,
and see how we must change,
find harmony and balance,
make science serve our values,

and art and politics, find new
ways to live on this planet
without destroying, creating
now, sustaining and renewing.

Look out on this shining Earth,
and tell me why we cannot,
because if we truly cannot,
then our myth too will die,

and we'll go to join the others,
the failed civilisations, or those
that left a shining value flung
from the sea of all their errors,

freedom, or kindness, truth,
sensitivity or love of beauty,
all those values inside us.
Look out at this sweet old orb,

and find how we must change,
take all the depth within us
and liberate our being,
in a new and sacred union,

a communion with this world,
beyond religions, nations,
new innocence, new beginning,
a new covenant made of minds.

Nothing but Love

Love heals, and nothing but love
will heal now, the sweetness
of nature inside, the beauty,
as far from violence as sea from star.

Love is a creation, out of the mind,
out of the body, out of the grace
of life and the light within us,
into the godless, the intention-less,

love is our creation, and the creatures'
who came before us, nurtured,
healed every hurt the planet dealt,
went on living, enduring, silent.

Love heals and not power, the love
that will heal us now, the bright
flicker of resilient generation,
the strength of gentle creation.

The temples are dead, the only
shrines of life now are inside,
at the burning core of the creature,
in the human tremor of knowing,

and if there is any destiny for us,
it will be a destiny self-created,
to carry our love into the universe,
since love heals, nothing but love.

Encounter

Two green eyes
in the sharp lights
at midnight
in the African bush,
the jeep stopped,
the night sky
upside down for northern sight
glittering million-fold,
and the smell of sage-brush
deep earth smell
of ages, two green eyes

of the watching creature
glowing from dark
and crying
the endless past horizon,
that place where
against the white
or blue of the infinite sky
silhouetted there
we took our place among them,
once harmonised
now electric in their darkness.

Poetry, Charity

An act of faith: but in the reality.
Believing, yes, in the unseen earth
that surrounds hearts minds
with word, and feeling, so empathy
key, as Hume said, touching
on every other spirit in inward
resonance, in mirrors of being.

Its secret spirit all one, this human
species, otherwise all alone all dead,
one void one echo of eternity
and all permitted and all in vain,
not this strange communion, this
echo in hearts ecstatic meaning
these clasped hands: Poetry, Charity.

White Mare

White mare bends her head,
to drink at the stream,
I lean on the broken gate
I watch the peace,
as I hear the quietness
between movements
when instruments pause,
we cough and shift.

White mare trembles, sighs,
and drinks at the stream.
I think Lorca's stallion,
watch flow of light
between dark green weeds
the tangled threads, arms
of the ancient naiads, torn
filaments of the aching heart.

White mare shakes her mane,
like a restless woman.
I watch flowers under oaks,
dream in the quiet
over all this sacred place,
because they are all holy,
these sites of imagination,
blessed by mind's silence.

Too Many People

Too many people: but peace to the creatures.
Walking delicately through world, see them,
not as some slightness on the human scene,
but as they are inner luminosity, shining.

It's not about naming, knowing their ways,
you can place them in sacred space unknowing,
as stars in beauty are fine when nameless,
simply feel their elegant uncomplaining,

the stature of presence, the anonymous self
glowing in wordless depths singing there,
with the world's reality, no gods or demons.
There are no temples where creatures worship.

Forget our lost wisdom. Sweetness among them,
love, sex, beauty, tenderness, suffering, pure joy
all there among the creatures. Do you see them,
in their fine integrity, in their life beyond us?

Age of Images

No one sees true, no one sees true,
no one sees me, no one sees you,
by vision denied, bodies, we hide,
minds not on view, spirits inside.

No one sees clear, no one sees here,
no pain or beauty, pleasure or fear
seen in its purity, seen in the light,
no one sees true, no one sees right,

lover or teacher, poet or child,
no one sees them, silence reviled,
no one sees true, no one sees true,
no one sees me, no one sees you.

Climbing in Spirit on Endless Hills

Climbing in spirit on endless hills,
dusty stone-scrree, iced grass, cliffs,
land-sick, on waves of rock
on millennial breakers,
riding the crest
of all the centuries,
Nature's orgasm,
spillage of mountains.

Mind in the stream chasing downhill
unnamed brightness, white silence,
delicate beauty chiselled light
on impossible oceans
surfing the tips
of pine and cedar,
climbing in spirit
on endless hills.

Thoughts of Genji

Dark screens, moonlight silence
Heian ladies, butterfly quilted,
skilled in separation, poetry,
coloured scented paper folded
answer lovers cant be called
silent men by carved verandahs
brush through fragrant tangled gardens,
play the five-stringed lute by night,
slipping through the gates of grass.

Golden lamps shine soft at morning,
Heian ladies, watching flowers,
trained in all discrimination,
make the heart small, wild inside,
meet cold dew, minds neglectful
silent men in bright-robed dancing,
decorative swords, power idling,
scouring plains in dawn-wet grasses,
chasing suns, their shining arrows.

Entanglement

Zen says leave possessions behind,
be mind, and then not-mind,
don't be poet
lost in describing things,
when you're process,
don't be body
brushstroke of light,
cut free
with intellect's blade,
and vanish,
like Han Shan
on the mountain,
up there in the mist,
of snowy summits.

But we're entangled inextricably,
Tao says so, world-show
all energies
configuring as processes
just as they are as things,
got to be body
the fires of flesh
bound in
with transient net,
like pine tree
on the mountain,
up there in the snow
of glittering summits.

Dream

Whatever was real is dream,
memory, is past
events, things, places, processes,
people, spirits, thoughts.
I though some continuous
flicker, potential
for being the net
and skein of self,
complex web
that keeps running
this one I'm dreaming,

When I die I'll be dream,
memory, the past
for some other perhaps, idea
of all I don't know,
no longer an inner light
creeps gradual
over the surface
through substance of self,
delicate web
keeps finding
itself in the slender poem.

Little Words for Tao Ch'ien

Foolish to get caught in the world,
only loving hills and mountains,
Tao Ch'ien told me so,
the dust-filled trap,
net and cage,
don't fuel others' expectations,
shun the market, scorn the image,
simple things, quiet places,
keep the mind floating there,
then forget the mind, use it,
foolish to get caught in the world.

Sleeping Nowhere

Shut your eyes and mind is nowhere,
everywhere,
when mind stops
so does universe,
we think of it persisting,
because we are persisting,
here in the silence
by the stream
I dream the stream runs on
when I am gone,
the states of sleep,
death, unconsciousness
cannot be imagined,
process
cannot be non-process,
I close my eyes to sleep
and be nowhere,
leave the body
to this universe,
or dream.

Wavering

Mind projects itself on world
(consciousness),
World projects itself on mind
(we are aware)
no wonder that they meet,
most of the time,
except occasionally
I fail to fall downstairs.

It's simple to disorient the brain,
(in sensory illusion),
and lose the self in the world again
(beyond confusion)
no wonder we seem to see
a wavering reality,
missing the blow,
feeling the contusion.

The Only One

The chances lost
were never for the taking,
the self we play
has only this one part
and cannot wander
from the script it's writing,
what we become –
not destiny but art.

We take the other path
it seemed the fairer,
the path we did not take
existed never,
Hamlet repeats
the same eternal gesture,
the path once chosen
is the only journey.

Viewing Burne-Jones' Perseus Series

Strange landscape, filled with subtle longing,
Perseus' winged feet,
like the birds' wings in the sketches,
hovering delicately close,
all the imagined figures,
those girls,
the lovely line.

Pale hills in low cloud
down which mist flows,
domed strange city,
decorative formal blue-green sea,
rocks and cliffs against
soft flesh, the presence
of the severed snaky head.

Perseus lost in the coils,
drowned in the virgin silence,
in the untouchable Ideal,
in the Western moment,
ready for monsters,
finding the princess,
chained in his own heart.

Now, at midnight, constellations,
the jewelled dripping fall
of Perseus, from Cassiopeia's folds,
Andromeda's
long trail over the sky,
white resonance,
gleaming myth.

No More

This fundamental life,
from that we came,
the creature here inside
the clothes
and expectations,
same that squats in the dust
or shoots its arrows
in what remains of rain-forest,
that painted walls
in inner wombs of caves,
those handprints,
horses, bison.

This life of soft dirt slopes,
grasses, bush, outcrops,
insects, mice and occasional birds,
lake-shore sand,
and bleached savannah,
same that echoes in hand and foot
or draws the mind
to what remains of passion,
that carved and ochred,
made the subtle mounds,
those song-paths,
dogs and sheep.

This fundamental life
to which there's no return.

Keep It Fluid

Old white bone skull
a fragile scattering,
the broken shattered
outer shell of tree,
its red dust core,
powdery rock dissolving,
leaves dragged down
by red worms into earth
smashed fish flung
to the shallows by bears,
rotting salmon,
this delicate bird wing
printed on the slope
a mass of dried feathers,
the soak and sweat of sap
the dead dry grass,
all things
Nature re-uses.

My Taoist mind
delights in transience,
loves flickering water,
admires blue cloud
on cold evenings,
is in love with grasses, leaves,
tastes snow-melt, rain,
breathes the night-borne breeze,
imagines body
mica dust of stars
given back to time
undifferentiated space,
the point where mind ceases,
and this life fades away
to be replaced by no other,
has no desire
for all that permanence,
granite halls, institutions, domes.

Scale

Insect of a day,
mind of a century,
old half-millennial oak,
million year mountain stream,
this planet passing by
this fragile star
balanced in complex time,
this jewelled galaxy,
this universe
all energy.

Scrap-Yard Diatribe

Great heap of smashed trucks and broken cars,
the stilled steel of the world
gathers here to rot, be crushed,
make stationary silt,
a sift of our consumption,
its ugliness sublime
like graffiti, litter, crime,
the cry of mindlessness
or wail of identity,
here both, blind mad excess
expressing what we are,
the agitated species
chasing its long-lost tail.

Metal, plastic, glass glittering in the sun,
the twisted detritus of the maker
cascades beside the track, corrodes,
forms futuristic art,
reflections of our minds,
its cold sterility
as office-blocks, sheds, and yards,
the matter of our motion,
or sign of fate,
white lightning on the left, the owl screech,
foretelling what will come,
the transformed species,
or soft silence of its dust.

In the Gallery

Cold marble and the silent gleam
of falling light,
that urn,
our life turned inside-out
and frozen there
making us no longer mortal,
contingent, pitiful,
mask of lion, helmet of Hellene,
a Shiva, Buddha, Pharaoh,
Rodin's youth
a neurasthenic Michelangelo,
a piece of fourteenth century vital alabaster,
my mind,
this place,
all time.

No men and maidens,
long past Keats,
but still the same,
a Proustian reminder,
in this beauty
I forget my life,
to find my life,
through so many echoes.
enter the green deeps of memory,
to recoil,
from all the pain and joy,
enjoy this line
this sweep of sculptured robes
or whirl of bronze,
eternal, pure.

Dimensionless

Mind lives in the fourth dimension, Time.
Objects are visual time,
the eye's flickering.
Or the notes I cannot hold
only follow, again,
slipping from thought,
driving feeling, a cry
of instruments in the heart's depths,
fluid anxious Time.

Mind cannot touch the world, inner
Process: surrounds it with spirit,
makes memory of its tremor,
creates life of my feelings,
the life lived, sense of self,
that, strange, persists
through Time,
and fluid others,
all worlds I do not see.

Mind loves purposeless beauty,
that wild ringing
of form felt through Time,
like wild flowers on a mountain,
emotion, what endures,
across whole centuries,
the core of being
human, where
we must believe.

Mind happens in me,
while outside me,
things take place,
some not for me,
in their pure timeless beauty.
The sphere I try to reach,
from prosaic day,
Mind beyond all this Time,
all this distraction.

A High Singing

The wild bird-trill is delight,
if that's not delight what is,
despite its causes,
territorial urge, mating,
sign and signal, cry,
the wren, seldom heard,
on a slope of bark,
blackbird in twilight sun,
soft flicker of robin,
piercing the air, cold,
thrilling the ear.

Purity greater than ours,
greater than our calls,
cleverer than our intellect,
Nature's performance,
as if forever a fresh
a first invention,
out of a subtle gilded culture,
one we have forgotten,
but once had,
in old cities,
our high singing.

East-West, All Over Earth

They lock bears in cages, milk their bile.
Twenty-five years barred, crushed,
no place to turn, imagine.

We hurt species in cages for new science,
so 'higher' creatures may suffer less
we torment these. How dare we, can we?

And find no analogy. Are cruelties
of greed worse than those of reason?
I think they are just the same.

At midnight lying awake I feel,
(mind in pain) I feel the creatures,
feel their terrible hurt all over Earth.

Murasaki

Delicate secret, blinds, morning dew,
in scented robes gone glowing lover.

All of our sufferings in this life:
separation like an earthly dream.

Heart strung to heart, mind to mind,
tuned, it seems, by some other life.

No way to make this one stay,
white ghosts meeting in the moon.

Small Hours

What to say about our silence,
our refusal to change the world?

The saddest nature of the good,
the decent, is this passive compromise.

Do I feel proud of our mute
acceptance, in the small hours, waking?

I feel ashamed, I tremble, universe
around me, small we are, and foolish.

What to say about our stillness,
our denial, our failure to change the world?

Mysterious Minds

All these millions, this one silence.
Half-moon rises, night on concrete,
small-spires, black-glass, high-steel
masted ocean of communication.

You too live by cities' dark,
see white jade climb on great river,
sun creak, smoke sigh, clouds cover
clear crystal azure, curl and whiten.

All these millions, and the one life,
where they come from, where they
go to, all the symbols, mirrors, signs,
all these mysterious minds.

Of Light

Easing the pains of living
making the object
that holds emotion,
written by feeling's process,
read by a process of feeling,
until mind speaks to mind,
making the thing that endures.

Easing the troubles of being,
describing the heart,
out of the inner silence
caring nothing for world
caring only for form,
and feeling that informs it.

Making pure poetry,
and a sanity of seeing,
the empty out of fullness,
the fullness from the empty,
easing the pains of living
ephemeral creatures of light.

But Your Reality

These words arranged, this
pattern, breeze, cloud, sky
now curiously immortal,

but nothing real in this except
in you, who strangely resurrect me,
this world's ghost but your reality.

Star-Flower

Great breath of Earth-sigh, all leaf energy, all blade,
vast tract of forest, branch, twig, bud innumerable,
heaves energy, seethes infinite intricacies, inscape
instress endless locked in the clay, quartz, slope, peak,
fluid moist air, shifting transforming, mutable swaying,
this to be nature not mere mind bubbles to being, all
the breadth, height, deeps of Earth, making its language,
all quivers in me, all waves, backflow, undertow's time
in the air, roars of this ocean, mindless, lovely, this force,
strength, ownerless, unowning, mighty, intentionless
place and motion through slightest tendon and tendril
in smallest droplet, blade, stem, corolla, scale, braid, wisp,
seed, grain of black earth, brown grass, tender, harmless,
gentle life-giving, moist eternal tremor of rain-filled
mountainside from nearest arm of luminous flower
to the tallest slate granite-scarred head of land bathing
in fire and flow past pain or recall demand or desire
in the freedom, mortal, immortal, immense of things.

No roads ways trails flows only teeming sweetness,
humble powers, wild symmetries, flowering higher
as eye rises from simple nearness to measured distance
to vanishing fogs and shadows of blue, from wall-nook,
root-form, hedge, ditch, field to hill, range, summit
through the spine of the land, through outflowing sighing
ridges undulations centuries buried new now exposed
embedded freed its balance fall gentle unyielding softness
giving way springing again resilience of line and shape
slow extended momentum peace and stir swollen lift
of space-time over the mind into stillness gaze into blue
or green hill crest in the single spirit till self pours out
soft sigh breath of being over all levels and slopes
of landscape form without plan, being free of intent
great eternal present whose past future (unreal) exist
beyond within, only here in us and there, also eternal.

So small this, tormentil's star-flower pressed down,
un-bowing, sweet to taste eternity, pure its unknowing,
immense its energies, deeply purposeless its beauty,
moving in me like love, our gift to the universe,
a way of seeing, a way of being, no path, swiftly across
and gone through the long grass into the hills and trees.
So uniquely one this repeated bud-blow yellow glint
of light, of our star, enduring, indomitable, patient,
so deep in memory, fallen, risen, under my feet,
dewed, glowing, beaded, brave, part of me, universe.

White pure cloud on the great wind bows the oak,
stirs the bitten-down grass, the close-cropped turf,
eye-studded all vast energies one caress all giant's
strength as humble delicate as the giant movement
of love in the mind all (all those aeons of being,
creatures, we) all love all lovers all we created.

Once on the Earth, on the hill where the may white
may gathered, flared, over the furrow where hare
passed, heart in mouth, feeling the tremor, pulsing
with trembling heart, once I lay down, touched heart
head here to the core and length of England sighed
the great sigh knew with knowledge enough to have
feet pass through me over me all the far flow all
the deep fields, all the last love-long breath of Time.

Self-Admonition

Write the poetry of the spirit,
don't perform.

Be inaccessible except
to humility, love, night.

Wary of insidious feeling,
test each tremor of meaning,

as all irrational visions, old
beliefs, superstitions are akin,

but beauties, fires, lights are equal,
all mind potentially sweet

grave, deep resonant, if first
empowered and then expanded.

Cherish the new, naïve,
marvellous unknowing,

the unsullied endless generations
all over Earth.

Subterranean Rivers

I always found it hard to resist
imaginative creations,

worlds of others, made of other mind,
the alien substance,

and therefore endlessly
seductive, challenging, deep.

They teach the malleability of mind,
the fragile nature

of the real, that truth, love, beauty
are constructs, that we

project ourselves on being,
create each universe,

always finding a magic
in the silence, mist, darkness,

fearful, but desirous of paying
our dues to the ferryman.

Out Over

Sailing free over world, kestrel's wing-beat,
that heart-beat stillness, flicker,
the brown lit shoulders
flaring subtlest energy.

Over fields, roads, lake-shore
up to infinite azure, and beyond,
infinite darkness, starlight, earthlight,
then swoop down emerald mountain
over granite by still waters,
ground, home for the humans.

The flight of the thing (windhover)
its play, work, dream,
glitter of need, rest, being,
arc of possible realms,
circle of steadiness, glide, fall,
resumption, benediction.

Strangest Flower

Mind in the universe, my stranger than fiction, wiser than darkness and the realms of the dead or old errors of incantation, curious because suggestive though wishful thinking, which is not true of mind in its proper place performing without thought or rather deep down in the spontaneous exertion of skill and being, termed creation, as nature 'creates' out of purposeless purpose leaves it can, birds it can, not all known but all within scope of the flowering mind the strangest flower.

Fecit

The poet's work darkens on my table.
Drunk on his influence long ago,
now the black distillation settles
congeals, no flask of pure azure.

There's no substitute for living,
being, loving, dying of hurt, joy,
truth, shame, no substitute
for being young, or being over again.

Deep in the Long Grass

Crossing the road, once off the wheel
watching the straining faces, spinning eyes,
wondering why no one heads for stillness,
mercy, the lovely world without progress
we could create, not merely by sitting still.

Power sucks us dry, the building, the using,
how we allow the things to use us too.
Even old texts went wrong, lost in power
over world, self. I cherish those off the wheel,
gone in an instant, deep in the long grass.

Lullaby

You must sing the Earth
and sing it right
what follows on
is long goodnight.

You must love the Earth
to leave it too
a fraction deeper
after you.

You must kiss the world
a sweet goodbye:
it's nothing strange
if time must die.

You must ease the world
out of your skin
then end where
others must begin.

The Joy-Givers

Doing simple things together,
no outlay but love and effort,
the joy-givers bind us tighter.

Thinking only of time, care,
the eternal now, exchanging
intimations of mortality,

making simplest things together,
food, music, laughter, requiring
only love and effort, sets us free.

How Wholly How Little

The naked self is fine, how foolish
all the ways are of society,
how lovely the great world
nature flowing in deep still air.

The moment of the self's beyond
all history, all cultures, all belief
our infinite inherited pure sense

of how naked all existence is,
how vibrant, how precarious,
how wholly, how little, about us.

Time Is

Time is the creature in the wood,
the half-seen emblem of our good,
like the child among the trees,
explorer of the mysteries.

Time is the serpent in the mind,
that clearer vision of the blind,
the walker in the blowing grass,
the moment, Here, that cannot pass.

Time is the heart, beloved, you
the deeper symbol of the true,
our meeting pool of flesh and sense,
the fulcrum of our rare intense.

Time is the creature, naked, dark
moon-white, night-black, clothed, stark,
the shadow-substance of the dream,
the world's complicit silent stream.

Plants and Stone

Stones and plants caress my mind,
dark wrinkled mossed solidity,
and green mystery.

Water on black soil, light,
the furrows of feeling,
cool seeing.

Mind clear of the world
deep and sweet
as the rain.

Walls of rock, pure green
clinging
to the gaps between.

Places where eye can rest,
rinse ears and heart
in the fall.

A universe of plants
and stone
easing the flesh and bone.

Altitude

Looking down on
the silence of Earth
from the plane
is salutary. Peace.

The dark continents
brown and green,
hatred invisible
through cloudy air.

Love too, but I bring
that with me,
a small victory
though late.

Beauty and truth
slip through too,
reason to celebrate.

Simple Fires

Forget-me-nots, countless blue
five-petalled eyes with gold irises
each one a small sun,
a white butterfly swirls by.

Columns of lemon balm,
citrus scent of rubbed
leaf lovely on fingers,
lingers a little, gone.

A single yellow Welsh poppy
luminous-belled facing
south-west filled with light,
fringed edges, slim stalk.

Red fibrous rough-leaved
thrust of foxglove,
heading north,
crown of unruly green.

Marjoram and a host
of wild flowers trapped
in a half-moon of sun,
warm days, simple fires.

Coitu

Coitu is beauty as form
of mind, release of mind,

free of leverage, coercion
sprung from love.

Neither mystery nor order
but harmony, life.

In the gentle heart, peace,
body of the gentle heart.

How we reconcile ourselves
to our beginnings.

How we break through
the net that binds us to

the madness of society,
and make flesh sing.

True Notes

Founded on feeling, we are
deep-founded on feeling.

The rest the machines
will do, not yet emotion.

My Turing test would be
subtleties of feeling not reason,

and language, true poetry
and its translation,

where one false note jars
like a broken string.

Beauty and love are ours
as yet, truth's another thing.

Deer Trails

Deer trails soft in the wood,
gone magic and myth,
they smell bark, earth, breeze,
avoid us, and our killing.

Deer trails deep in the wood,
the trail we follow,
they dance through fern, birch
oak, elusive, subtle.

White Bamboo I

Under the white bamboo,
beyond anxiety,
dark pebbles
in the pure creek.

No more washing
ears with sand,
no more chasing
phantom purpose.

All this flow's the Way,
all this beauty Process.
Don't think, don't think,
don't do, don't do.

Close the mind in
perfect awareness.

White Bamboo II

All this process is the Way,
what you cannot find, cannot lose.
Here it is, all around,
under the white bamboo.

Looking at it, cannot see it,
going, cannot leave it behind.
Dark pebble in the stream,
tries to be not-stone, not-water.

Silent, existence speaks.
Being, is what you are.
When you move it is mute,
voice of the inner process.

Not For Sale

The sacred is not for sale.
Mind and Truth are not for sale.
Emptiness brightens the silence,
all our structures turn beyond us.
From the void, from the creature
to prisons of imagination.
Yet children dance in the night.
The sacred is not for sale.

Against every form of power,
for all energy, forms of sharing.
I see the sunflower in the yard,
I know intellect against time.
Beauty a function of the mind.
No art or love without delight.
The sacred is not for sale,
Everything given increases.

Celebrate

(With acknowledgement to Gerard Manley Hopkins)

All that is counter, original, spare,
whatever does not consent,
all creatures
of the separate trail,
all lovely deep blind alleys.

All that is secret, shadowed, small,
hides in interstices of place,
builds from flotsam,
jetsam, burrows clear,
all twigs of evolution.

All that is individual, silent, still,
all intricate motion at
the edge of being,
all that by-passed progress and survived,
all subtle self-containment.

Considering

An impossible purity of
belief in the one sweet
ringing echo of the word.

Intellect against all
exploiters. Emotion
against eternity's pain.

Your image in absence
hides all others. The heart
of morality is delight.

Theft of a way of life
is theft of love in the mind,
the deep carved traces.

Our task to make peace
with the creatures, find
our joy in transience.

Tao for Beginners

The living creature
possessed by love
cannot depart
from the process.

The mind, the tongue,
the heart, the rest
cannot depart
from the process.

Each move away
is just one more
swift flicker
of the process.

Whatever you think
you leave
behind, that is
not the process.

The bright eye, click
of vision gleams
and glares,
behold the process.

Delta

The slow roar
of the lion in the dark
shakes the heart.

One old bull
cut from the herd
sways the long grass.

Blue metal water
wells each day
over the hot earth.

White egret lonely,
black eagle circling,
colours of birds.

Eyes, through the dark.
O, fellow travellers,
share this clutter of stars.

Only One

There is only one sin,
violence in all
its manifestations.

From the abuser
to the killer,
from body to mind.

Violence against
freedom, against
integrity of being.

From the individual
to the State,
left, right, or backward.

There is only one virtue
love – in all
its manifestations,

delight in the shared,
un-violated meaning,
free truth – is love.

The Task of Art

Is to connect us
to what knows
nothing of us
our purposes.

Everything out
there open, unzipped
waiting, space-time
empty full of form.

Wind in leaves
pine sky is the music
with no meaning –
we need to hear that,

till mind forgets
learns transience
bird-cry, dust-stir
leaf-click, light

connects us through
to whatever is,
the question being
not what it is

but why we can't accept.

Mountain Sighing

All this civilisation,
mountain sighing.
Get no nearer the stars
the closer we come,
not those in the mind.

Hawk floats over lake
on a thousand feet of air,
deep blue in rock cradle.
Swifts pass over grass,
cry, flicker and beat.

Mind floats inside-out
though architects mostly
unknown, every language
is outer, shared, as much
as Mozart, or Dante.

All this civilisation,
barely speaking,
mountain sighing,
its voice louder,
the stars to come.

Sign for the Human Race

Keep out. Keep away.
Don't conserve
the rattlesnake,
pass by.

No one here liable
to cull or
prosecution.
Natural laws apply.

Wire rusts here,
posts fall, trees
grow, things adapt.
Keep out, or die.

Without this, science
still works, arts
flourish, easily.
Keep out. Get by.

A Toast to Monsieur Mallarmé

No Nothingness, all is Form,
the Void mere imagination.
Transient patterns in space-time,
must learn to accept their station.

Truth is contingent, true, but
contingency our second nature.
Only what we can manipulate
in Mind is true for the creature.

Language is frail, the skein of dark
across the light, as on porcelain
the Master elaborates the flower,
delight concealing effort, pain.

Nothing is frozen, no sterility.
Intellect on featherless wings
rides the Moment, our eternity.
The flow of energy makes things.

Musicians of the Void, in dream,
our Being floats on all Existence.
We, the strange insistent gleam,
Beauty out of pure persistence.

Solitude, My Beauty

Solitude, my beauty,
sweet as light,
in the rain, on the window-pane,
or the soft night's
quiet descent towards dawn,
my inner life, world-dream
no-one shares,
the ultimate freedom,
that green place
where I was made,
careless of all allegiance,
my depth of being,
my powerless power
over the universe that dies with me.

Solitude, my beauty,
where fear, anxiety, hurt, shame,
bitterness, anger, memory
all that the others generate
vanish, in your calm,
and like that presence, poetry,
life gains form, truth, sincerity,
connects to all the ages,
every landscape,
enters the space
beyond authority,
possession, oh the free
movement of mind
in the hour of eternity.

Naked and transformed,
potent in mystery,
your eyes my eyes,
silence your witchery,
as the trees are silent, the grass,
the night-creatures, the gaze,
stone, cloud, star, horizon, silent,
as the word is silent, waiting there,
to speak internally, silently read;
yet unspoken, is not language.
Quiet at the flame's heart,
truth in water, in light,
this world I give love to, I love
Solitude, my beauty.

Dark Main

Night, in the mirror, of Eternity I fall,
far as the constellation, inward glimmer,
as light falls, not falls, spreads outward
through what? Space-time ever thinner,

cold with void, all emotion mine alone,
flower white foam, lace of the universe,
silence of fire bright tremor bare place
of now patterned matter without memory,

the void where I drown starve silk of star
Earth a hole in the sky, banner of blue,
feeling, thought all within, us, no echoing
motion of air, light, resonance of the true,

trembles in this glass, the sphere goes on
ringing with absence only in living mind,
flame flows through infinity, not intellect,
none there of all we imprint here, azure

silver, black, ancient transparency, pane
of energy, matter, shining towards us
absorbing whatever of this is mine, ours,
pure fountain, immortal garden, dark main.

'In the interstices of your spirit'

In the interstices of your spirit
I place my spirit,
stone in the white fall,
root in the stillness.

No matter what echoes
of other streams play
down the slopes
of your swift meaning,

if I too share your sunset
and your dawn
light on a thousand ridges
gold, crimson, cloud-shot,

or your soft evening, closing
in grey and silver,
trumpet of star-lit metal
calling the abyss,

in a trail of sighing trees,
shepherdess of the void,
your glittering eyes
sparkling with absolutes.

Intimacies

Foam of the sea, flow, restless desire
always to be more, always to exceed,
madly stirs beneath lights pinned higher
through us the tremor of fantastic need,

so that on panels of antique walls their
curious silk brushed now by curtained swirls,
breezes of evening catch your midnight hair,
cool your skin's nacre, fingers' slivered pearls,

until in the mirror lace and music fuse
their ecstatic dance of impossible seas,
slow waves of time, murmurings of the Muse,

bitter gone recollections, mysteries,
impassioned lance that challenges the night,
chalice of depths reflecting endless light.

Lake

Great bird settled to rest,
head bowed on the breast,
eye fixed on the wave,
whiteness beyond the grave,

emblem against the black
of wind-threshed trees,
o question-mark at ease
on the glassy track

ask what of the void,
the un-echoing night?
bring here unalloyed
the silence of light,

o intentionless sail
set for deeps without waves
soft plumage dark laves,
snow glacier icy grail

ready to plunge or beat
water air on your back
nailed to the perfect rack
Earth there under your feet

the mirror of a star
that moves through the galaxy
expressing what we are
chance form of eternity.

Whatever Creates

Oh no, no dark visions,
everything bright,
learn the Tao, float
on endless light,
beauty and truth and love
in mind alone
world makes, make world
the real is
deep in the bone.

Oh no, no wingless voids,
everything sweet,
perfect the intercourse
where spirits meet,
what we create creates us
the shared is free
affection multiplies
the given
brings liberty.

Oh no, no violence
only tenderness,
the sensitive the gentle
are not less,
see there what echoes
in the depths of night
the universe beckons
whatever
creates is right.

From the Rock

Grain after grain trembles in the whorl
of water in the basin, at the source,
so in my silence tremors pain on pain
whatever of you stirs with memory's force.

In that same bath of silver and of gold
slowly your invisible meaning turns,
looking-glass absence where your beauty burns
flames in the child's eye, becomes the rose,

its corolla like this flow, pure stream
envelope of tenderness, floats in space
carrying your sweet dance of spirit's grace

chalybeate particles of mind and sense
orbiting deep inside the watery dream
time's maelstrom, thought's perfect tense.

Gnomic Couplets

The endless manifestations of Power are all alike:

Responsible, mature, and insane.

Blessed be the Individual:

Over-turner of all religions.

The Individual is the Universe echoing:

It is undirected, perfect, alien Self.

Only the Process brought us to this place:

Which if we don't like, we should change.

Everything is immortalised, everything:

Because everything is adrift in Eternity.

The starving, crawling, dying World,

Is not our fault: it is our disconnect.

There is nothing more beautiful than the Given,

And Shared: Beauty only has to be.

Being and Feeling have no obligations:

There is simply nothing to achieve.

Spontaneous Thought draws on experience:

By your first thought I see what you are.

An Ideal is the transient's permanent dream:

Compromise the art of failing our ideals.

The contents of the private Mind would shock the world:

All clear Minds are screaming inwardly.

Prophecy the Past:

It is re-created in every generation.

The Objective is Subjective:

The Subjective is Projective.

If I thought the human species was important,

I would weep.

Deep in Perception, the Other that we are:

The Other is only a heart-beat away.

What we share, Being, Feeling, Beauty, Truth, Affection:

Nature, Time, Light, the Flesh, exceeds Matter.

In Paradise all things are shared:

That is what we mean by Paradise.

The conjunction of the Subjective and the Objective,

Is paradox: Each exists wholly inside the other.

What you are in your heart is what you should be:

What you think you should be is an error of Perception.

We don't get beneath the surface of World by seeing:

It's by Feeling that we get beneath the surface of the World.

The Truth is always irresponsible:

The Beautiful is always True.

Fault Lines

Thoughts shaped in beauty
like the hewn stones
climbing the hill,
feel solid after a while,
but that's illusory.
Rain guts them,
feet wear them.
time abrades, grain on grain
of stony dust and gritty air,
the tracks are shifting,
the mountain shifts,
is grass,
and light, and creature's refuse,
and leaves, and detritus, and charred
remains of acres after fire.
Stars shift,
the galaxies wind, unwind,
the universe moves itself,
time is always this, the Moment,
always a vertiginous Becoming.
Stream fall from the precipice,
The water here, not-here.

Thoughts carved with care,
are transient, as I am,
like the gateposts
of these fields,
outwearing their creators;
and the hand-made dry-stone walls
running up precipices like lines
of the ideal, grey, hard to break,
and doubly hard to cross;
or cobbled slopes
on rain-slicked places;
are washed away by streams
and falls and snow-melt,
undermined by root and tremor,
fall through our dimension
as we fall through theirs,
million-year old rocks
tongued and grooved by passage,
even insects gnaw
along the fault lines of our world.

Oh Gold Autumn

Oh gold autumn
see
the unnoticed tree
suddenly there
the individual
free,
free in the crowd.

Visible wings
in cloud skies
wild
subtle song
so much,
colours in grass,
so many

islands afloat,
where pure
sound of
the lone flute
is still
audible,
just,

fern, deep of trees,
white of stream,
last days
of the world,
I cherish,
asking nothing,
giving all.

Over the Lip

We go over the lip
of the valley
behind the sea,
down the long slope
of dark earth, nettle, fern,
scrub birch, broken branches,
into the narrow funnel
of meadow under the trees,
and there
beyond the gate
is a fragment
of old magical England.

That path along wood's edge,
each lie of stone
and fallen trunk,
the ivies, mosses,
and a far vista
of thrown leaves
incommunicable;
buzzards haunt here
over the field,
great oaks, heavy
leaden boughs,
sweet as silence.

A walk through paradise
and then
at the wood's end
left up the incised field-foot
and right under over wire
into disused woods
old quarry junk
lost gardens, overgrown
and out,
legal again, onto
deep untouched turf.

Climbing again
by creature tracks,
weed-cloud, hedge-rose,
pale yards then,
stone backs of farm,
old fruit trees, road,
by fields of grass,
walled path, four foot wide,
we go out of the valley
over the lip
down to the sea.

What Space?

Grey-green evening.
The grey-blue sky
my soul,
being that part of mind
that is universe
and knows the process,
not that which
engages
with deathliness,
this world,
O city, O image,
concrete desert,
electron whisper,
mouths of dust.

Walking among
the darkened buildings
heard the lion roar
down the centuries,
sounding, agony,
now, hear it,
breaking our order,
ruining our dreams,
scorning our statues,
roar of the universe,
grey-blue evening,
O my soul,
what have we done,
what space is this?

Who Know Who I Mean

Blessed the true spirits
still singing
hail the companions!

Who know holiness
has nothing at all
to do with any religion.

Who make it in beauty,
kindness, nature,
healing, seeing.

Who are immune
to power, bullshit,
moloch and plutus.

Yes, that moloch.
Though unconnected
The angels share

Who know that angels
have nothing at all
to do with any religion.

Blessed the stringers
of words, of sounds
which are thoughts not sounds.

And the realisation,
after the years,
the young are eternally right,

And the vale of tears
an unnecessary foolishness
committed by the rapacious

all down the centuries.
Which are smoke,
and the laws mirrors

made for the uncreative,
the creative long ago having lost
the desire to do what they forbid.

My hands on your waist tremble,
send me a leaf of the tree,
a mouthful of water,

and the fire, and the earth,
and the sky full of universes,
mask me from darkness.

Dissolve the Aeons.

Voiceless Banners Waving

This is the true beauty now,
to create.

Words are like
the fragments
under trees
or on the path,
leaves, feathers,
weathered fruit-shells,
moss, lichen, pebbles,
soil, ash, dust,
twigs,
dung,
signs of the source,

deep, in that when
studied
they reveal patterns
of intentionless
non-human, silent
form, which the right
words echo,
demolishing our
pretensions,
there beyond us,
signals,
signs,
voiceless banners waving.

Through Which We See

Between the World as we wish
And the World as it is,
Lies the dream.
The art that is.

Autumn, the golden groves,
Birch pointillist,
Impressionist,
Woods on fire burn bright leaves.

Un-leaving.
Birds through
bare yellow and red,
Nature going on.

All this, in the mind,
delusion, not the things,
the space of energies
indifferent to us.

Charity of her hands,
or his, Maya, the Self,
illusion and the dream
greater with age.

Our ash sinks deep,
we layer this planet,
litter these stars,
the dream is beauty,

what minimises self,
increases the space
between the wish
and what is.

Deep colours,
flickering as
ancient peoples passed,
puce, umber, bronze,

grey bones of the beech trees,
lost smoke,
all this appearance,
and our spirit,

all this spirit
and our
appearance,
waning.

Elegy for an age
in every moment,
gold Maya,
the secret, Light.

This world
roaring emptiness.
through which
we see.

Nothing Is What We Thought It

There is the loneliness, sadness,
down silent lanes, cold lights,
or at four a.m. sleepless
in the august luminous dark,
or on hostile streets,
in public spaces
of lost architecture
where the human is reduced
to a baroque grotesque
in a world of clean lines,
or in the soul
even at happiest times,
even at wild moments,
the eternal sadness
and loneliness
of existence, that Being,
that opens us tender
to fear, like a wound,
and beauty like a spear
and time like a madness
of meaningless change
in which our mirror
is the glass that distorts
and our room
the one without doors.
There is the loneliness,

of unfulfilled women
of unfulfilled men
in solitary houses,
in joyless office,
of children forced,
of creatures culled,
of untouchable truth
of reality hidden,
of cages and chains,
of what there's no need to sing,
of what died in us in the twentieth
century, what lives on now,
of the tears on our faces,
the scream on our lips,
the love, the tenderness, the pain,
the beauty, the innocence still,
the purity, the dream in our hearts.
There is the sadness,
of a long fall,
from a harsh paradise,
we cannot recover,
no longer we,
no longer
those creatures,
that place, that knowing
or those unknowns.

Eternity, existence, are lonely
are sad, and beautiful,
emptiness
filled with the flare of our hopes,
and the ash of our lips,
far from the phantoms,
from plutus and moloch,
in the wild graves of space-time,
which does not exist,
(think about it)
are we gentle
in thoughts of each other,
are we kind tonight,
to the fragile
shallow ephemeral
touch of each other
to the words ever more foolish,
and the images ever more
strange, and the building,
the process, the science,
the arts for which we
have less and less feeling,
less and less reason,
are our hands tender on faces,
and really so?
Are we lonely, sad tonight?

So dangerous
to see through the world
to the love
on the other side,
which is, is,
only in us,
as the beauty
is only in us,
and the perception
of truth, inner
reality, only
in us,
who are spirit,
mind-forms,
matter electrical,
chemical, soul
this reflection
projection on things
that we carry
this weight of a universe
heavier than steel, glass,
concrete, all only in us,
lonely minds,
sad minds,
singing the universe,
sadly in joy.

Who gave us love as torture,
beauty as torment,
truth as an ocean
forcing us down
to the volcanoes under the depths
and the glow of fire in the green?
No one. It made itself
this creature of sadness.
Because transience cries
in us as it shines in the rose,
blazes in us
as it stares in the creature,
roars in us
as it sighs in the leaves,
and sings in us
for our ancient union.
There is sadness, loneliness,
those eyes whose dark
I shall not bridge,
whose silence
I shall not enter,
and a resonance,
and a mystery,
and somewhere,
there, a spirit naked,
in all its integrity.

What For?

Nature. Towns and cities
gone, this earth and grass,
running its old silence.
Humans all gone missing,
The passes bleak, and hills
pale, rivers bright, and cloud
covering the grey-green reaches.
Mind no place to settle,
like dust, like hordes,
the whorls of pure existence.

Stumbling and clinging
to the steep slope
under black crag
admire the pine, green fir
down below,
the deer places,
where they drift,
salt-licks where they
taste, consider.

This granite beauty
softened
by ages,
smoothed by glaciers:
dark indifference
meets fractured mind.
Oh those old sages,
by creeks and cliffs,
cleansing spirits
in mountain water,
eyes smiling sane,
and this century
all its works
what are they for?

Be Careful

Be careful with death,
darkness
consumes,
not all minds can ride
the threat of silence,
the tremor of transience,
be careful with death,

and with fantasy too,
don't play with other-worlds,
words can deceive,
longings erode,
ancient delusions
lead to confusion,
being is not understood.

Be careful with truth,
which we create,
what is in the world
is intentionless,
neither for or against us,
beyond
serenity.

Human suffering, o dark earth
where the fractured
haunted spirit sings.
There are places you
should not see,
spaces you should not
enter,

sweet, sad flesh, and kind
gentle mind, yearning,
non-action
even in mind,
is best,
in spirit, not matter,
holiness, compassion,

but not religion,
none of that foolishness,
be careful with death,
and emptiness,
go for love, laughter
of the heart,
be careful of beauty.

Not Hostile, Perplexed

Uncomfortable,
the creature's eye,
the way it gazes,
stares through
our presented face,
the mask,
as if to see beyond
to some real
understanding
of this human.

They interrogate us,
even in blind
indifference,
clearly mind,
clearly self,
eyes on face,
on eyes, to see
how we do it,
what we are,
the puzzle.

Uncomfortable
I gaze in alien eyes
and see a self
not-self reflected,
only wonder
how humans
can treat as things
such percipient
questioners
of our fate.

Please Re-Build

I disturbed your nest,
I apologise.
Power –
in this case
simply being bigger –
is always interfering.

I was trying to tidy
the hedge,
I'm sorry.
We gave ourselves this task,
it seems, of regulating,
what never asked to be
regulated,
and you
were in the way.

Society needs order.
The individual
needs peace.
I regret my presence.
Please re-build,
though I doubt you will
now.

The True Immortals

The true immortals
are not conspicuous,
not useful types
for literary music,
as hobos, convicts,
natives, artists,
wild eccentrics,
forceful tongues,
curious glittering-eyed
sages,
brought up
on paradise-milk,
sorry to disappoint you.

The true immortals
don't disturb the grass
as they vanish
into the hills,
respect all life,
believe in non-action,
don't engage,
don't believe
themselves unique
in any way,
don't tell tedious tales,
advertise strangeness,
are not characters.

The true immortals
are not such
as those in legend
without whom
the world would end
tomorrow,
planted, alien, elect:
how unlikely
that is:
no, they are the ones
who've disengaged,
the powerless,
free of power.

The Meaning of Emptiness

The world without purpose
is empty,
without intention
is empty,
without mind
is empty.
The meaning of emptiness.

All one energy
holy in many spaces.
Spirit for us
not matter,
and the beauty
of endless detail,
going nowhere.

Form without purpose
is empty,
without permanence
is empty,
without mind
is empty.
The meaning of emptiness.

Craving ends to no purpose,
but human in many spaces,
compassion is our path
and not destruction,
creation of endless
detail,
all gone beauty.

Endless mind,
go fill the empty world.

No Gods, No Saints

the roar,
the vibration,
in silent coming,
silent vanishing,
with who
to prove,
in ocean stillness,
how such a one came
shone
vanished,
ah life question-less answer:

all is right with us
as we stand,
not as we think;
despair
unworthy of mind;
hope in kindness,
joy in compassion,
truth in love,
love in beauty,
and all created
things delight:

no gods, no saints,
no buddhas, christis,
no way
unless no way,
float free
on a thousand foot
cliff of empathy,
so sensitive to
the dark
cannot view it:

Your gentleness
lovely,
the void energy,
so do not act,
speak the truth,
be loss
and past it,
avoid the phantom,
cry the moment,
disbelieve.

Been There

Neon lights,
the empty store,
expressionless faces,
midnight rain,
think of Florence,
the warm square,
the venture of mind,
all the Renaissance,
all the Enlightenment,
got us here.

Turn, and depart.

Small Birds and Children

Small birds and children
quietly squawking,
grass and leaves
are the secret of life,
no lobby no power,
no scriptures ideal
no fantasies real
the beauty the hour.

Small birds and children
and never a skeleton,
sunlight and shade,
no media hype,
no weapons no claims
no status no wealth
no action by stealth
the absence of names.

Small birds and children,
that we be forgiven
possession and harm
division and hate
the left and the right
the science we abuse
the creatures we hurt,
our pain and our dirt,
the madness we choose.

The Best We Can

Don't go writing poems to me
about killing things,
to show how in tune you are
with native peoples,
ways of being,
ancient lives and ages,
keeping your tone morally neutral,
describing not analysing,
dodging the issue,
you don't convince me.

Every human is culture,
not nature,
and beauty in holiness,
life's sacredness,
respect not slaughter.
Don't cull on my behalf,
everything we touch
we have corrupted,
somehow, every single thing.
Wu wei, sure, best we can.

Ancient Tower

Six turns of the rail,
dark metal, then midnight silence,
moon like that smooth white jade,
this landscape water
time gone misted
all sense of the heart,
a word for mind's
emotional intellect,
sheaves of green reeds,
shadows at far lake's end,
heron grey, wing-flaps,
silence.

All better if you were here.

The Deepest Love

Now and then a voice,
to be treasured,
speaking truth
nakedly without desire,
such friends of the spirit
better not known,
we meet distort,
we know we miss
essential being
striking through.

Now and then a voice
of compassion,
undeceived,
never a follower,
immune to those
who try to steal
our moral clothes,
one of the driven
searching for light
in the mental night.

Now and then a mind
somewhat less
alien to ours than usual,
sends us the lightning
better in silence,
the one to one
best that language
can do,
the deepest love,
the never un-true.

Microscopic

Beautiful lichen on stones and bark,
green-orange, curls of light,
the tiny details
the fractal world
mind's coastlines
miniature universe
infinite.

Seeing is sometimes all enough
those who study insects
leaves, mosses, worts
what do they see,
deeper than I,
another universe
hidden in this one.

Great cliffs repeated in stones,
trees in weeds, the child's eye;
and galaxies, clouds, in foam,
Coleridge's galloping hordes,
a great seer,
a great neglected eye,
outlasting them all.

Such marvellous detail,
bowing under the tree
to the wood's floor,
time's carpet,
all these centuries
of foolish mind,
a few clear eyes.

The Tree Collection

Acres of light,
the heavy presence
of soporific
scented Cedar,
eastern trees
with names
I don't know,
silvery Latin.

Giant Redwood, out of
place in this space,
but beautiful
against English blue,
and almost
Chinese green.
White fir,
Golden Juniper (*Chinensis*).

Poplar, Alder, Oak,
familiar beauty,
Wellingtonia,
Sawara Cypress,
that's from Japan,
gold, acrid, resinous.
Trees are individuals,
Chilean Firebush, Dombey's Southern Beech.

Good to chant at night
leafing through the field-guide,
like Homer's ships
the long line, cranes flying,
Himalayan fir,
Mountain Hemlock,
Aspen and Tulip-tree
Oriental Plane.

Natural profusion,
sweet collection,
gentler than us,
poor tender flesh,
oh and a leaf here
brown between pages,
Red Horse Chestnut,
silent time.

We Make Tracks

Rock-caves in Lesotho,
those drawings ochred
on Botswana stone
or Northern Territories'
bush-now reaches,
deep in the limestone Dales
or some ridge in Arizona,
scare me, all these traces,
all this spirit
all these thoughts gone centuries,
all this waste,
that is a dance
and so no meaning,
nothing wasted,
clear the mind,
and dance eternal
trickling truth

lightning and rain clouds
on distant desert
our trail goes through,
and out of dark,
towards the stone, the tree,
the root we know,
the cleft, the throat, the canyon,
we make tracks,
we sing the lover,
sometimes close our noise,
and hear silence,
deeper than all
these words,
knowing streams and cliffs,
bark and bead,
pollen, grass ear,
ash and soil.

Pave, tar, lay
the concrete down,
all over what we knew,
and can't get back.
Eat polar ice,
loose rain
on English fells,
criss-cross Russia
with roads as Pushkin said
in a few hundred years,
and compromise,
our being.
You don't think so?
Your prerogative.
I think so.
All compromised
we dream our ancestors.

No Time

There is no Time.
There is this state
of Universe
unknowable
and change.

The Past, these traces
left 'behind' in mind
or in reality,
but either
simply present.

The Future, these projections
conceived in mind,
extrapolated
from reality,
and so present.

The equations of Time
are regularities
of change,
this single moment
Now, becoming present.

The now of a thousand
years ago
was this now,
this Past
once existed.

The now of a thousand
years hence
will be this now,
its Future
still existing.

Everything is now,
though un-nowable
everything is change
and is changeable,
the world exists.

There is no Time
except the scalar,
not a vector
(there are no
co-existing
points in time),

that measures
regularities of change.
Every 'direction'
in Time
is forward (the way we face)

no going back
only going on,
with this universe
that bears us
that we bear.

The Sweet Echo

The sweet echo
of your voice
makes all
the difference.

Oh that's the human,
all compassion,
who wants justice
more than peace?

The loving
whisper
makes all
the difference,

not tenderness sad
and weeping
buildings
of mortal time,

but the wild heart
of non-violence,
and the true heart
of all recall,

and the sweet voice
of shared given
and no lists
and no babble

but love's babble,
of crazed light,
and the laughter
communed.

We understand.
Foolish too
but understand.
Transient Eternity!

Man, woman
and the night fallen
over immense river
your eyes in the mirror

your flesh,
the secret book,
the thronging bodies,
time's mysteries.

I publish this
in free space,
for free eyes,
and free minds,

On the hill of waters,
In the well of hearts,
In the garden
of the rose.

Gone Masters

Drifting over the mountains
like clouds,
silent under the trees
like fallen needles,
golden,
green,
slipping over the rocks
like white water,
whispering through the grass,
like breeze sigh,
cleaving, opening like rock
on the silver cliffs,
singing without one
mouth opening,
mist on the hill,
snow on the pine,
dust in the light,
gone Masters,
brushstrokes
frozen in the air,
words like pebbles
scattered
in the stream,
ah glittering eyes,
who bow
to all eternity....

You think they lack
the moral stance,
and what is that
precisely, the moral stance,
they create,
they do no harm,
they show delight
at all existence,
free of human interference,
they laugh
at all this irony
of being,
they float free,
no they don't lie down
with the beggar and the sick,
they don't alleviate
(who does for long?)
the sufferings of the world,
and there are sensitive hearts
who would die
of the darkness too near,
and is that their fault?
Will they absolve
your world, no.
Will light, or dark,
or snow, or tree?

Somewhere around the mountain,
bodies like floating clouds,
nothing in the great nothing,
sweet joy, no fuss,
frost on the radio,
this year no year,
scurry and shimmer
of light on stones,
all human nothing human.
In the deep pool
old fish under the bridge, gulp,
sink into cold green darkness,
bright silent buzzard beat up the sky,
then soar with upturned wingtips,
glide these woods, and vanish,
fox head turn to gaze,
red flash in the fern, then gone,
ah, the Masters,
pavilions on the mountain,
tents at dawn,
soft fires,
serenity is no terror,
and beyond the abject world,
be true,
all life is spirit,
speak for the things we love.

A Lot of Yourself

You're a guru, yes?
you think a lot of yourself,
old and famous
old and stupid
sitting behind the mask of days,
and getting
the job well done.

Ah the great oracle,
but realise the leaders can't lead
any more than we
can be followers,
they're just like
you and me
only with power.

Which is not knowledge
or wisdom
or joy
or grace
or love
or beauty
or even true ability, to create.

Guru, I bring you flowers
for your better
understanding of nature,
and human nature,
and with failings
bring you your failings,
this great heap

which we share
with the foolish species,
glad to have
only our own,
and I absolve you
of arrogance
in the name of no religion.

Soft Metaphor

It was Lorca's hummingbird
glittering in a scene
you depicted for me,
hovering against the flower
and sipping the deep
honeyed silence,
the strange
nurturing beauty
of the world.

It was his metaphor
soft or hard in the hand:
not the little long-tailed birds
high-peeping in the edge
of the birch trees,
that flew through space
inside the mind,
but the weight of love,
and its enormity.

The way the body
is inserted
into mind
and minds merge
in our merging bodies,
and time confuses us
with flesh and dream,
and waits for us
in the shadows of the field.

Love like some old Aztec god
ripping out hearts,
without which
the sun stops.
Huitzilopochtli,
war-god,
love as a duel
where we turn
to gaze at our opponent?

But here in your words,
simply a bird, winged,
fluttering of the spirit,
obsessed holding of self
in the air, before the other,
to imbibe life,
a flash of rainbow light,
into the mind's whiteness.

Scene by Moonlight

Pierrot stands motionless
in the light of the moon,
held on its huge white disc
like a mute sacrifice.
His head on one side,
his Clown's features lit
by the quiet Universe
deep above his head.

Not the Hanged Man,
here, but the sad man,
in the frame of being,
with a whole lifetime
in his Jester's clothes,
on the terrace of earth,
and in the core of life,
eyes open, lips sealed.

And Columbine, ragged,
dancing the white dance
of the body, always naked,
Preciosa with her tambourine,
or dark-eyed over the well,
the gypsy of silver daggers,
and the hiss of the serpent
whirling over the leaves.

Now, she will leave him,
for Harlequin, for the wild
lunge of time, the tremor
of the womb. Oh, fragile
beauty, angel in the night,
radiant torment, pain of
Love, flighty sweet mind
in the unattainable flesh.

Pierrot waits unmoving
cold, sad, ephemeral,
aimless on the moon disc,
gazes out, at you and I,
his dark mirror-echoes.
Ah, nothing is directed.
Over the wide green lawn
Come the shrieking throng.

Dusk

Over the smoky trees
the crows go home at twilight,
tiny in blue-black distance,
pale sky, deep green pines;

fly through the transient heart,
here still, over my existence,
as T'ao Ch'ien said, no way
to express, no mind, no words,

that flicker of little birds, too,
dark, under the maple-trees,
this white cold land, tonight,
and higher, the space of stars.

Track-Cutting

Cutting the path through old holly,
over wet leaves, brown and caked,
up above the lake, to bring us out,
under gold birches and amber oak.

This the forgotten way, grown over,
a world half carried away and lost,
that foxes run through, rabbits pass,
an autumn space, thorn, mountain ash.

Can't feel the pain of the world, here,
except in eternal echoes of the mind.
The twenty-eight stations of the moon
rule this space, the level sun, no humans.

On Reading Philip Hoare's *Leviathan*

More than two-hundred
year old whales still glide
through the Arctic waters.

Melville was still writing
America's, the world's
killing, as they plunged

through the deep well
of the creature, fleeing
the strange species' lust.

Tribes, animal nations,
forests, lands and seas,
we've plundered them all,

and left the polar bear pup
sadly gazing at the camera
head lodged on its dead mother

on the deck of that ship,
in another century, and still
we in our madness kill,

whatever is left of the portion
of beauty and mystery
in the world outside us,

not just the great and glorious
but the mice, rats, birds, cats,
dogs, apes, chicken, cows, all

we can get our hands on, breed,
all we can wipe away, or think
we can, all the crimes of man.

Oh No, Not Neutral

Technology will kill us all,
Technology will save the world,
Technology on you we call,
Technology that's starwards hurled.

Technology for conservation,
Technology for masturbation,
Technology to rein us in,
Or facilitate original sin.

Technology to which we bow,
Technology absolve us now,
In you our ethics sadly graven:
Not-doing signifies we're craven.

Even to meddle is to state
Our morality, now, too late,
The ancient world is done and dusted,
The new world gleams, as yet un-rusted,

Or not yet rotted in the cell,
this new world we know so well,
from Goethe's odd homunculus,
to Mary Shelley's dream of us,

products of artifice, design,
neither human nor divine,
form in which we'll meet at last,
assuming we avoid the blast

of destruction we've created,
razing whatever's germinated.
Technology, you're ethical,
Only your ethics may appal.

Keep Abolishing Space and Time in Your Heart

Slow gained liberties soon lost.
Values hard to come by hard.
Sweetness that goes
down deep to the heart,
still delicate desire.

No delight, no art.
Pines float in the fog.
Universe so dark, so solid,
so light,
so intentionless.

Soft fog in larch,
white morning glare
dries bright ground.
Downed logs ease the spirit,
but less than living trees.

Our hearts flutter in long grasses,
our minds sway
on high hills.
This the sensitivity, splendour,
mysterious intricacy.

In your hand the hearts fragments
no one else's.
Moth's mind strung on the stars.
If living creatures are not
claimed by fire, they're nothing.

On the mountain my vision:
imagination still supreme
over all illusory powers;
love of the individual
unmoved by time.

Oh, keep abolishing
time and space
in your heart.

Word-List

Loving, kind, truthful, sincere,
sensitive, free, eternal, real,
sexual, secular, spirit, free,
nomadic, natural, flexible, process,
moral, generous, future, creature,
planet, spontaneous,
create, self, mind.

Rampant, power, imprisoned, transient,
phantom, tormentor,
religious, mammon,
city, matter, artifice, rigid,
codified, history, authoritarian, thing,
exploiter, universe,
world, conformist.

desecrator, defender,
know, make? Heal.

Why Be Silent?

At the end of mad wars
the dark eternity,
stars over battlefields,
bomb-lit streets,
on the rubble of
religions, races, nations.

Why should poetry be silent?
The young aren't.
Empty world, transient
shines over generations,
in mindless sanity,
beautiful amity,

Possession ten tenths of it,
dispossession, sterile loves
in unnatural spaces,
blowing the Human into the void,
for the sake of the names,
the gods without meaning,

oh, every kind of god, all
Maya's delusions and foolish
agendas, manifestos of death
of the body or heart,
and big buildings to house
their gods, corruption to bless them.

For god you may read idea, ideal
unilateral atomic enforcer.
At the end of mad wars
the cloud-filled or deep sky,
dark as the pine's crown
scraping the stars,

beyond us, thank Nature, all time.

And Tell Me...

And tell me why your heart
tears out my heart,
the long thread of connection
hangs through eternal space
jerking the soul to a stop
or feeding it beauty.

A great well of tenderness
where aching we go
to forget this world
and its voice of departure,
singing the centuries,
great well, of green dark water,

Friendship in eternity,
what else is there? Love,
the amity, speech of minds, fire
of unreal inner world
burning away the unreal outer
down to the flesh of desire.

Don't say a word, no need,
you being perfect sweet mind
in eternity, now, and nothing else
necessary, spirit
not matter, since matter
just fools us.

Why poetry is supreme:
the irrational singing,
and rebellious mind
against laws not made by the heart:
which preserves it
when bombs fall, or silence.

Tell me why we are one, and two,
quietness of light, souls of the
Great Year, circling the galaxy,
talking land to far country
in tiniest human signals,
as birds go touching the seas,

where whales rise,
in other eternity,
and mountains
where lions still roar
for a while, tell me
why we are more than eternal,

transient too. And no matter
that no one listens to poets,
our words, yours too,
being poetry roar through eternal
night, glow in eternal time,
destroying all phantoms.

Tell me why I tremble at every
thought of you, why the Human
beats through my flesh and yours,
why we are of the Resistance,
of the non-action that seeks
peace throughout eternity.

And our only sin not to have
lived, cried, shouted,
screamed enough light:
though there is no sin.
All of us either create
or destroy, there is no
other morality.

No Politics for Poets!

Scratching dust through the centuries
starving,
dazed by violence, superstition,
ruled by power-seekers,
seduced by opiates and fictions,
saved by the private world alone
of intimacy and endurance,
that's no way to live.

Serving time through the centuries
eating
dazed by effort, self-delusion,
ruled by power-seekers,
seduced by opiates and fictions,
saved by the private world alone
of intimacy and endurance,
that's no way to live.

Chasing the future through the centuries
dangling,
dazed by technologies, confusion,
ruled by power-seekers
seduced by opiates and fictions,
saved by the private world alone
of intimacy and endurance,
that's no way to live.

Share give love truth and beauty,
respect the creatures, respect the planet,
reject all power,
the power-seekers,
reject the opiates and fictions,
celebrate the private world
of intimacy and endurance,
this way we live.

I Sing To You Of Peace

I sing to you of peace

I sing to you of the simple and human
My mind on yours my hand in yours

In the space of centuries I speak of peace

The womb of the day is green with the silence
And the river of suns goes quietening the heart

I sing to you of beauty and love

I sing to you of the world without violence
My voice in your ear is the voice of planets

In the empty cities I tell you of peace

The womb of the night is blue with the silence
And the river of stars goes soothing the heart

O body of our desires

O colour of absence!

Nothing Is Owned

Nothing is owned
In the silence of life in the burning of death
Nothing is owned
All of the centuries nursing what's theirs
Calling it order
Calling it progress
Nothing is owned

The forest of Russia the Arctic forest
Tundra and desert
Nothing is owned
Though you rape my surface
My core is beyond you
This Earth
Nothing is owned

Not the ease of the night
Not the blue of the day
Not the flower
Or the child
Not the creature or cloud
Neither spirit nor time
Nothing is owned.

I Follow Where

I follow where true poetry leads
Through all these incarnations of spirit,
The conscience of flesh in the mind of man
The landscapes of fire beyond the phantom
Where we meet and laugh inside our bodies
And walk in the groves of singing time
In the freedom past our atrophied senses
In the peace we long for always denied us

I follow where true poetry leads
Into the naked rain and the leaf-fall,
Into the suns and mirrors and moments
Crying the cool air and the flames of longing
Erasing buildings and roadways and steeples
Refusing the domes and the doors of silence
Till I find you imperfect in day's completeness
There is verse more perfect where being lingers

I follow where true poetry leads
Where the scream of despair is turned to joy
Where the self is built from infinite feeling
Where the birthright is life and the dream of life
And none of us need to look for forgiveness
Where all stands free and facing the universe
And the great breath the great bird wings outwards
And I am in you and you weeping in me.

In My Mind Hearing the Songs of the Few

And what came out of old Europe
was the sensibility you carried
into the forests and deserts and mountains of America
the empathy with life-forms,
the sense of landscape
the sense of freedom and possible dawns
and not the killing
the exercise of stupid power
the delusion of owning an immense land
between two Oceans

You made a new meaning
a liberation of the individual
beyond the revolutions the Revolution
and returned it to us
sensitive East-Coast, sensitive West-Coast,
denying your own perversions the might
of the military machine of all machines misused
denying the violence
the exercise of mindless matter
the delusions of prejudice and religion
from shore to shore

Young sweet minds playing with futures
assumptions of human expectation
eyes on the galaxies and the star-ways
everything beyond
blind matter, nations, superstitions,
power-distorted
screech of the species,
the music of mind and the beauties of heart
the song of rights and liberations
the enlightened few singing to serve
all the poems to come all the times beyond

The Flowers of the World

Cloud veils the Earth
Moon fills the bowl of water
Between two hours
Cries of the bamboo flute

Things are our calm
We are spirit there
Contemplating all
The flowers of the World

Even when we sleep
This weight of others
This void of Time
This dream of being

The silver of the grass
Covers my thoughts
Mysterious energy
Aimless beauty

A Day

A Mind in the shadows of beauty's silence
Your stillness so pale in many disguises
All the blue clouds of the evening moving
All the soft hands of the grey leaves lifted
The rain and the sun in a shower of mirrors
The lightning gone in a blaze of gold gazes
Over and over the green branch of tenderness
A stone in the fall and a tree on the mountain
Every long process cried out from infancy
The past and the future in silent procession
Madness at dawn light and faces of crystal
Desire and decision circling like planets
The ghostly phantoms of miraculous being
Every sound of the spirit all measures of time
The infatuations of heartbeats and of cornices
The place where we are and where we become
The nameless imaginary beacons of meaning

The Mercies of Truth

The beauty of chance
That nothing need be
No theory conceived
Predicting the flower

The strangeness of all
The way up and down
Mathematics' delights
Now leading us deeper

The dance of the fields
Every energy's charm
With no non-existence
For all to emerge from

The freedom we find
Enthralled to eternity
Intentionless spaces
The mercies of truth

Kin

I have looked in the eyes
of the creature
and seen
myself reflected.

Under the tree of being
I have seen
my counterpart
in spirit.

I have seen the heart's
reflection,
the animal
companion.

I have seen the eyes
that share
a part of the
human soul.

Have felt
the creature's gaze
silent
in its prison.

How can I touch you, brother?
How can I reach you, sister?

Seal

(The Maya Tomb at Palenque, Temple XVIII A: She speaks:)

I have sealed the door with plaster
from the bowl at my feet,
I have left my handprint
there, for all the centuries.

I have sealed our silence,
softly burning in the darkness,
I have left the flame to gutter,
I have clasped your bone to me.

Cinnabar night, Jade stillness,
I have entered in the only
Time, where love remains,
the Moment of the given heart.

The Voiceless Flute

What is worth our grief?
Sweet emptiness
beyond the road,
our silence in the wind.

Where is the sound
of our unhappiness?
Empty universe
filled with energy.

Uncreated light
directionless,
all beauty in a star
or in a leaf.

The back and forth
of pain, the emptiness,
Earth's tremors.
What is worth our grief?

Swaying

Trying to love all life
and even the non-living,
in truth, to wait, endure,
sincerity a man's good nature,
bowing down, the bamboo,
to the grass.

Trying to love all life
being kind, being clear,
trying to unlock
the compassion, born of emptiness,
rustling, the pale bamboo
above the grass.

Trying to love all life
cultivating beauty,
cultivating joy, and delight,
beyond the pain of living, sweet
swaying, the white bamboo
above the grass.

And Bring Comfort

Sing the song of life
and bring comfort
to the silent minds
to mind aware:
sing it for companionship.

Sing the real, essential
being, the beautiful
relaxation of nature
its deep
spontaneous intensities.

Breeze in the valley,
and over the mountain.
From pine-trees, gazing down
through fields
of enlightened air.

Go Flee Pain

The dream forever
to escape the phantom,
into interior space
or virtual world,
or relationship,
or nature's detail,
or far space-time,
go run to flee
from blinding pain.

The dream forever
long for and pray
doomed in time
and transient
and therefore free
in time for emptiness
stripped down
don't cry for man
he's vanishing.

The routes the roads
they're done
why man be here
choose solitude
and silence nature
Tao these energies
let power rage on by
go seek what's left
of river mountain.

Old world poor world
what made elegance
in which we walk
time and chance
ecstatic emptiness
of form on form
now slipping down
and slipping by
the new society's failed

the old failed deeper
and the ancient? who
knows now slow gone
down into silt and sigh
of willows over stream
and grass for miles far.
I've no place among
all those voices drifters
deadbeats human deeps

all beautiful detail gone
means nothing now
the dream forever
and to chase the phantom
into nature mind relationship
virtual space far space-time
go flee forever
from the human
go flee blinding pain.

The Dark Vision In Empty Light

The dark vision in empty light.
Faces of the Maya, Aztec faces,
Mongol or Amerindian silences,
all the peoples of Asia, Gonds,
Aboriginal gatherers, San, even
Neanderthal and vaguer, gone,
lost and no one cares, the founders,
proud eyes in dying evening bleak
the dust dark of red-soiled Americas,
China, India, Arabia, Africa, Russia,
those who failed to sidestep in time
those whom the road buried dustily,
those whom the bare bones of pain
shrouded by avenues of vacant trails
turned to ghosts and phantom fire
dug down deep scarified shattered
fragile as we light under the surface,
nameless, family-less, faces, eyes,
wraiths of the tents and the ways,
undermining our tale with theirs,
and no respect no shame no mind
but the greed that levels forests
scars the plains drills ice and sand
a long far wailing cry in eternity.
Stand in the empty land, and feel.

Embracing Empty Peaks

Losing society, loving rocks, streams, boulders,
careful of freedom, unexpected acts, the spirit,
respecting individual being, in hatred of crowds,
a dream still of connection, though in solitude,
mind like a great wild space of energy empty
which is to say no possession, no authority,
intentionless, a universe without word or aim,
awake and aware in the movements of the process,
nothing inside or outside the process all surface,
no mortality in the liberation from being except
the common death of the spirit into the beauty,
and the radiant silence which is not wholly
expected, know Maya, hearing the bamboo flute,
climbing up hand and foot into the snowy void,
through raw fog and dark true night to summits
where the stars rise and circle in ancient groves
and the hiss of time is jewelled in far spaces.

With the tiny travellers on the frost-far road,
weaving between cataracts, fording high rivers,
cleansing the ears of space, all mind of time,
with ragged wanderers, the strange mad poets,
in love with truth and its delight, and fragile
delicate beauty and its delight, *amans amantis*,
stripping all meaning down to its essentials,
the glowing emptiness, the blue-sky dreaming,
the once clear call of the species the reverie
grounded but not where others are grounded
the moment in eternity the golden downpour
three times round the mountain and in silence
marking the trail advancing the trail reminding
this civilisation in love with power and time
novelty and matter and frantic movement
that in every pebble there is a shining jewel
one universe in the immense and in the slight.

No Problem, Needs No Answer

The long ranges covered with snow,
powdered dust on midnight rock
milk-thin streaks of far cloud
under a New Year full moon

looking up and out to the emptiness
the intentionless void white starlight
go tell the Buddhists and the Catholics:
transience no problem needs no answer,

here only silence challenging the spirit,
we being nothing if not spirit, to create,
as Milarepa did not say, love beauty truth
that what is, is, and is not of itself grief.

High carved folded canyons pale slopes
frosted pines in windless air, clear sky
glitter of trees, the dark brown boles, flow
of truth, those energies that pass by.

Don't make so much of man or self or time,
river flows land flows mountain flows star
sign of nothing sign of itself trembles flares
out of the rustling universe on snowy night

over rock-shrouded ice and cliff-bent yews
here a million years without patience moan
unwearied gracious elegant possession-less
shaped reformed dissolved beaten out new

so to return from the dead end of culture
now, realise our place in uncreated time
start from bitter blue cold in smoky mist
one more turn of the Earth about its star.

Empty, and Awake

Empty, and awake.

Examine the pine-tree cone, green needles,
dust on the path, bark and leaves,
see the beauty, see the products
of astounding chance appreciate
why everything here fits the hand.

What is free of external purpose,
with only its own purposes within,
is empty, the intentionless without
design, and no design on us,
don't go stamping your selfishness
on the void, free energy is emptiness.

Empty and awake.

Consider the given that nothing gave
and the grace and the beauty of all this
beauty in us amazed by form and being
who create love truth beauty in the mind
and are no more than mind a little meat

What is free of ownership and possession,
free of authority, not wielding power
though powerful its inertia, is empty
form free of all design.
Don't go imagining life as suffering
create from your compassion, love, delight.

Potentiality

Love truth and beauty
always there,
always potentially there,
beyond the individual
as a creative process
of the individual,
a possibility always
of this universe
since we have seen
and been
its actuality.

Its Surface Is Its Depth

Body like a drifting cloud
Mind like a falling stream,
Nothing I ask, nothing I need,
Sitting quiet, in the mountains.

What there is, is all that is,
Every sky-blue deep is surface,
No attachment no detachment,
Clinging to the mist and silence.

Nature inexhaustible,
Beauty inexhaustible,
Truth inexhaustible,
Love inexhaustible.

All hail!

The Road Is Not The Way

The road is not the way,
the way leads nowhere,

empty fields and hillsides,
no hoboos now, the cars secure, no rides,
all fenced, nowhere to sidestep now
except in mind,
to see that studied elegance
and excellence of natural being
four billion years coming
in hedge and bush,
and insects in the ground,

parting the grasses,
vanishing without trace, without sound
into the whispering grasses,
the road behind,
is not the way,
the way is empty,

goes nowhere, follows
nothing, sign or trail,
spoor or footprint, or logging
slash, where peoples went before;
quietly sitting also is the way,
the demolition out of mind,
the destruction,
no felled ranks, no gouged out pits,
a quarried silence growing over,
the road once crossed
is far behind, is not the way,
the way leads nowhere

let the machine go by,
straddle the ditch, through hedge, and fence,
over the tracks, hiss of rails,
over the streambed, into the wastelands,
drowned deep in feathered seed, in leaves,
the tangled undergrowth, no trace,
press dark mud, scramble old slopes
the thick of forgotten trees, abandoned scrub,
there's no road here
this space is the way,
where the sphere of the universe centres,
where only mind moves
and then no mind,

the poor, the poets and the lost
their faces gone,
sweet sanitised the road
is not the way
the way's directionless,
its compass earthwards
skywards, sky-blue eternity
or the diamond, pearl
in the hand,
the road we passed
beside the fields
in instant gone
the way goes nowhere
softly stalking emptiness
all living beings

anent the way we pass between the rows
along the furrow where the leveret hopped,
below the gull that soars,
through old dark stone
and gullies filled with leaves
down which streams flow
in other winters
the mind is blurred
no grasping no desires
breeze on skin and the ragged line
of centuries of tall adventurers
stalked invaders seeded armies
empty void of power

the road is not the way
the way is breath is thought
wild valleys and the high range
stretching eastwards
far as Kailas and the Shining Peak,
no vagrants on the road, no halts
forever flowing slowly dying
this fading river of imprisoned forms
the road is not the way
the way goes nowhere
and forever:
sidestep in mind,
unseen,
watch the road pass by

Not Ours

The land belonged to no one:
‘How can man possess
what he cannot take with him
when he passes?’
Or woman, tilling earth, crushing seeds,
knowing sweet transience
three yards of ground,
the true perspective.

The land was un-possessed
in glittering reaches
oh you who stood on the great divides
or at the source of mighty flows
who gazed from cliffs of fall
at prairies and savannahs
untouched by human feet,
it was not yours.

Oh grieving phantoms we in mind
remember, in the dim red light
of cedared woods, in golden forests,
nothing owned
of all that beauty:
though what we don't own
we can destroy,
of blue eternity.

The empty land the diamond light
and so strange ghosts of us
that lit on mountaintops
and hid deep
in the grasses of the world,
our angel selves the innocents
and walked waist-high through wastelands
un-betrayed.

Still owning nothing we are empty now
the land is un-possessed only waiting
the tribes of us down deep
the darkness under soil
more like when all men understood
the singing
and that the way through cannot be ours
our hands are empty.

Mind In World In Mind

The golden statue silent on its plinth,
below, dogs and small children
a rough patch of dust
one stunted tree, a girl
shy-eyed gazing from a doorway,
the golden face, the golden eyes,
the golden feet, the outstretched
golden hand, the humming
of the empty sky,
the irony of image,
the substantial
pointing at the transience,
beyond the spokes the wheel
the golden statue and above
the energies
galaxies in their immense whirling
in the black beyond eternal blue
the gold statue silent on its plinth:
'Cease to suffer, it's all a dream!'

Stock-Taking

All gone now the wild the wilderness
the un-penetrated un-flown-over unseen
by satellite or camera plane or truck
the un-conserved un-entered un-owned,
all gone down the wild and the wet, now
though beauty lingers sweet at the edges
though here the cougar and coyote howl
plants turn seeds heads flowers to the sun:
they sold the woods and carved the ground
the forests and the grasslands everywhere
and nothing's owned by anyone round here.

And the creatures not yet gone cling by a thread
or burrow hidden underneath the soft brush
or chipped and counted lair in life's recesses,
on sufferance in galleries of glittering air,
all the spreading lands that we hunted out,
all the mined lands which we have stripped,
all the dark seas where the whale's concealed,
all the last acres of the uninhabitable deserts
mountains waters all our pretences laid bare
all gone down now the truth of us the beauty
all gone now the wild and the wilderness.

Bamboo

Wu-Chên's sheathes and blades,
black wedges, white mist,
flock of dark wings, perching
in the void.

Hsü-Wei's clotted swallows
ink on a pale jointed stem
the knots of bone, the wisps
of sinew, soft whiteness,
sie-i (essence of things)

Shi-T'ao, Wang Yüan-Ch'i,
breeze-blown feathers, lean
from slender wires, thinnest strokes
out of black moss and white stone,
(snow slope or brilliant light?)
blur the eye.

Su Kuo, the downcast shrike
clings to the bowing stem,
leaf-sprays like bird's-feet prints in air,
the falling rain (unseen) on mottled water,
one seal (Sung), no calligraphy.

Fishing in a Mountain Stream

(Hsü Tao-Ning: ink on silk, Sung, 11th century)

Black boulders, tiny from here,
in the white flow.
Vertical cliffs with pines.
In the distance misty mountains
rivers without end,
winding depths of a hundred gorges.
Here dark trees along the shoreline;
the old trail crosses by a shaky bridge.
In the silence of white silk

I cast my line,
drift by slopes and shores,
by banks of crystal sands,
stare at the quiet flow below,
see the tall peaks touch the sky,
monochrome thoughts
without self or void,
slow valley curves,
those black boulders.

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