
Collected Poems,
1934-1952



by Dylan Thomas

Styled by **LimpidSoft**

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AUTHOR'S PROLOGUE

To Caitlin

The prologue in verse, written for this collected edition of my poems, is intended as an address to my readers, the strangers.

This book contains most of the poems I have written, and all, up to

the present year, that I wish to preserve. Some of them I have revised a little, but if I went on revising everything that I now do not like in this book I should be so busy that I would have no time to try to write new poems.

I read somewhere of a shepherd who, when asked why he made, from within fairy rings, ritual observances to the moon to protect his flocks, replied: 'I'd be a damn' fool if I didn't!' These poems, with all their crudities, doubts, and confusions, are written for the love of Man and in praise of God, and I'd be a damn' fool if they weren't.

November 1952.

AUTHOR'S PROLOGUE

This day winding down now
At God speeded summer's end
In the torrent salmon sun,
In my seashaken house
On a breakneck of rocks 5
Tangled with chirrup and fruit,
Froth, flute, fin, and quill
At a wood's dancing hoof,
By scummed, starfish sands
With their fishwife cross

10

Gulls, pipers, cockles, and sails,
Out there, crow black, men
Tackled with clouds, who kneel
To the sunset nets,
Geese nearly in heaven, boys

15

Stabbing, and herons, and shells
That speak seven seas,

AUTHOR'S PROLOGUE

Eternal waters away
From the cities of nine
Days' night whose towers will
catch 20

In the religious wind
Like stalks of tall, dry straw,
At poor peace I sing
To you strangers (though song
Is a burning and crested act,
25

The fire of birds in
The world's turning wood,
For my swan, splay sounds),
Out of these seathumbed leaves
That will fly and fall 30
Like leaves of trees and as soon
Crumble and undie
Into the dogdayed night.
Seaward the salmon, sucked sun

AUTHOR'S PROLOGUE

slips,
And the dumb swans drub blue
35

My dabbed bay's dusk, as I hack
This rumpus of shapes
For you to know
How I, a spining man,
Glory also this star, bird
40

Roared, sea born, man torn, blood
blest.

Hark: I trumpet the place,
From fish to jumping hill! Look:
I build my bellowing ark
To the best of my love 45
As the flood begins,
Out of the fountainhead
Of fear, rage read, manalive,
Molten and mountainous to stream

AUTHOR'S PROLOGUE

Over the wound asleep

50

Sheep white hollow farms

To Wales in my arms.

Hoo, there, in castle keep,

50

You king singsong owls, who
moonbeam

The flickering runs and dive

The dingle furred deer dead!

Huloo, on plumbed bryns,

O my ruffled ring dove

45

In the hooting, nearly dark

With Welsh and reverent rook,

Coo rooning the woods' praise,

Who moons her blue notes from
her nest

AUTHOR'S PROLOGUE

Down to the curlew herd!
40

Ho, hullaballoing clan
Agape, with woe
In your beaks, on the gabbing
capes!

Heigh, on horseback hill, jack
Whisking hare! who 35
Hears, there, this fox light, my
flood ship's

Clangour as I hew and smite
(A clash of anvils for my
Hubbub and fiddle, this tune
On a tounged puffball) 30

But animals thick as theives
On God's rough tumbling grounds
(Hail to His beasthood!).
Beasts who sleep good and thin,
Hist, in hogback woods! The

AUTHOR'S PROLOGUE

haystacked 25

Hollow farms in a throng
Of waters cluck and cling,
And barnroofs cockcrow war!
O kingdom of neighbors finned
Felled and quilled, flash to my
patch 20

Work ark and the moonshine
Drinking Noah of the bay,
With pelt, and scale, and fleece:
Only the drowned deep bells
Of sheep and churches noise
15

Poor peace as the sun sets
And dark shoals every holy field.
We will ride out alone, and then,
Under the stars of Wales,
Cry, Multiudes of arks! Across
10

AUTHOR'S PROLOGUE

The water lidded lands,
Manned with their loves they'll
 move,
Like wooden islands, hill to hill.
Huloo, my prowed dove with a
 flute!
Ahoy, old, sea-legged fox,
 5
Tom tit and Dai mouse!
My ark sings in the sun
At God speeded summer's end
And the flood flowers now.

I SEE THE BOYS OF SUMMER

I

I see the boys of summer in their
ruin

Lay the gold tithings barren,
Setting no store by harvest, freeze
the soils;

There in their heat the winter

I SEE THE BOYS OF SUMMER

floods
Of frozen loves they fetch their
girls,
And drown the cargoes in
their tides.

These boys of light are curdlers in
their folly,
Sour the boiling honey;
The jacks of frost they finger in the
hives;
There in the sun the frigid threads
Of doubt and dark they feed their
nerves;
The signal moon is zero in their
voids.

I see the summer children in their
mothers
Split up the brawned womb's

weathers,
Divide the night and day with fairy
thumbs;
There in the deep with quartered
shades
Of sun and moon they paint their
dams
As sunlight paints the shelling of
their heads.

I see that from these boys shall men
of nothing
Stature by seedy shifting,
Or lame the air with leaping from
its heats;
There from their hearts the dog-
dayed pulse
Of love and light bursts in their
throats.

I SEE THE BOYS OF SUMMER

O see the pulse of summer in the
ice.

II

But seasons must be challenged or
they totter

Into a chiming quarter

Where, punctual as death, we ring
the stars;

There, in his night, the black-
tongued bells

The sleepy man of winter pulls,

Nor blows back moon-and-
midnight as she blows.

We are the dark deniers, let us
summon

Death from a summer woman,

A muscling life from lovers in their
cramp,

I SEE THE BOYS OF SUMMER

From the fair dead who flush the
 sea
The bright-eyed worm on Davy's
 lamp,
And from the planted womb the
 man of straw.

We summer boys in this four-
 winded spinning,
Green of the seaweeds' iron,
Hold up the noisy sea and drop her
 birds,
Pick the world's ball of wave and
 froth
To choke the deserts with her tides,
And comb the county gardens for a
 wreath.

In spring we cross our foreheads
 with the holly,

Heigh ho the blood and berry,
And nail the merry squires to the
trees;
Here love's damp muscle dries and
dies,
Here break a kiss in no love's
quarry.
O see the poles of promise in the
boys.

III

I see you boys of summer in your
ruin.
Man in his maggot's barren.
And boys are full and foreign in the
pouch.
I am the man your father was.
We are the sons of flint and pitch.
O see the poles are kissing as they

I SEE THE BOYS OF SUMMER

CROSS.

WHEN ONCE THE TWILIGHT
LOCKS NO LONGER

Locked in the long worm of my fin-
ger
Nor damned the sea that sped
about my fist,
The mouth of time sucked, like a
sponge,

WHEN ONCE THE TWILIGHT LOCKS NO LONGER

The milky acid on each hinge,
And swallowed dry the waters of
the breast.

When the galactic sea was sucked
And all the dry seabed unlocked,
I sent my creature scouting on the
globe,
That globe itself of hair and bone
That, sewn to me by nerve and
brain,
Had stringed my flask of matter to
his rib.

My fuses timed to charge his heart,
He blew like powder to the light
And held a little sabbath with the
sun,
But when the stars, assuming
shape,

WHEN ONCE THE TWILIGHT LOCKS NO LONGER

Drew in his eyes the straws of
sleep,
He drowned his father's magics in
a dream.

All issue armoured, of the grave,
The redhaired cancer still alive,
The cataracted eyes that filmed
their cloth;
Some dead undid their bushy jaws,
And bags of blood let out their
flies;
He had by heart the Christ-cross-
row of death.

Sleep navigates the tides of time;
The dry Sargasso of the tomb
Gives up its dead to such a work-
ing sea;
And sleep rolls mute above the

WHEN ONCE THE TWILIGHT LOCKS NO LONGER

beds

Where fishes' food is fed the
shades

Who periscope through flowers to
the sky.

When once the twilight screws
were turned,

And mother milk was stiff as sand,
I sent my own ambassador to light;
By trick or chance he fell asleep
And conjured up a carcass shape
To rob me of my fluids in his heart.

Awake, my sleeper, to the sun,
A worker in the morning town,
And leave the popped pickthank
where he lies;

The fences of the light are down,
All but the briskest riders thrown

WHEN ONCE THE TWILIGHT LOCKS
NO LONGER

And worlds hang on the trees.

**A PROCESS IN THE WEATHER OF
THE HEART**

A process in the weather of the
heart

Turns damp to dry; the golden shot
Storms in the freezing tomb.

A weather in the quarter of the
veins

A PROCESS IN THE WEATHER OF THE HEART

Turns night to day; blood in their
suns

Lights up the living worm.

A process in the eye forwarns
The bones of blindness; and the
womb

Drives in a death as life leaks out.

A darkness in the weather of the
eye

Is half its light; the fathomed sea
Breaks on unangled land.

The seed that makes a forest of the
loin

Forks half its fruit; and half drops
down,

Slow in a sleeping wind.

A weather in the flesh and bone
Is damp and dry; the quick and

A PROCESS IN THE WEATHER OF THE HEART

dead
Move like two ghosts before the
eye.
A process in the weather of the
world
Turns ghost to ghost; each moth-
ered child
Sits in their double shade.
A process blows the moon into the
sun,
Pulls down the shabby curtains of
the skin;
And the heart gives up its dead.

BEFORE I KNOCKED

Before I knocked and flesh let enter,
With liquid hands tapped on the
womb,
I who was shapeless as the water
That shaped the Jordan near my
home
Was brother to Mnetha's daughter

BEFORE I KNOCKED

And sister to the fathering worm.
I who was deaf to spring and summer,
Who knew not sun nor moon by name,
Felt thud beneath my flesh's armour,
As yet was in a molten form
The leaden stars, the rainy hammer
Swung by my father from his dome.

I knew the message of the winter,
The darted hail, the childish snow,
And the wind was my sister suitor;
Wind in me leaped, the hellborn dew;
My veins flowed with the Eastern weather;

BEFORE I KNOCKED

Ungotten I knew night and day.

As yet ungotten, I did suffer;
The rack of dreams my lily bones
Did twist into a living cipher,
And flesh was snipped to cross the
 lines
Of gallow crosses on the liver
And brambles in the wringing
 brains.

My throat knew thirst before the
 structure
Of skin and vein around the well
Where words and water make a
 mixture
Unfailing till the blood runs foul;
My heart knew love, my belly
 hunger;
I smelt the maggot in my stool.

BEFORE I KNOCKED

And time cast forth my mortal
creature
To drift or drown upon the seas
Acquainted with the salt adventure
Of tides that never touch the
shores.

I who was rich was made the richer
By sipping at the vine of days.

I, born of flesh and ghost, was neither
A ghost nor man, but mortal ghost.
And I was struck down by death's
feather.

I was a mortal to the last
Long breath that carried to my father
The message of his dying christ.

BEFORE I KNOCKED

You who bow down at cross and altar,
Remember me and pity Him
Who took my flesh and bone for armour
And doublecrossed my mother's
womb.

**THE FORCE THAT THROUGH THE
GREEN FUSE DRIVES THE FLOWER**

The force that through the green
fuse drives the flower
Drives my green age; that blasts
the roots of trees
Is my destroyer.
And I am dumb to tell the crooked

THE FORCE THAT THROUGH THE
GREEN FUSE DRIVES THE FLOWER

rose

My youth is bent by the same win-
try fever.

The force that drives the water
through the rocks
Drives my red blood; that dries the
mouthing streams
Turns mine to wax.

And I am dumb to mouth unto my
veins
How at the mountain spring the
same mouth sucks.

The hand that whirls the water in
the pool
Stirs the quicksand; that ropes the
blowing wind
Hauls my shroud sail.
And I am dumb to tell the hanging

THE FORCE THAT THROUGH THE
GREEN FUSE DRIVES THE FLOWER

man

How of my clay is made the hang-
man's lime.

The lips of time leech to the foun-
tain head;

Love drips and gathers, but the
fallen blood

Shall calm her sores.

And I am dumb to tell a weather's
wind

How time has ticked a heaven
round the stars.

And I am dumb to tell the lover's
tomb

How at my sheet goes the same
crooked worm.

MY HERO BARES HIS NERVES

My hero bares his nerves along my
wrist
That rules from wrist to shoulder,
Unpacks the head that, like a
sleepy ghost,
Leans on my mortal ruler,
The proud spine spurning turn and

MY HERO BARES HIS NERVES

twist.

And these poor nerves so wired to
the skull

Ache on the lovelorn paper

I hug to love with my unruly
scrawl

That utters all love hunger

And tells the page the empty ill.

My hero bares my side and sees his
heart

Tread, like a naked Venus,

The beach of flesh, and wind her
bloodred plait;

Stripping my loin of promise,

He promises a secret heat.

He holds the wire from this box of
nerves

Praising the mortal error

MY HERO BARES HIS NERVES

Of birth and death, the two sad
knaves of thieves,
And the hunger's emperor;
He pulls that chain, the cistern
moves.

WHERE ONCE THE WATERS OF
YOUR FACE

Where once the waters of your face
Spun to my screws, your dry ghost
 blows,
The dead turns up its eye;
Where once the mermen through
 your ice

WHERE ONCE THE WATERS OF YOUR FACE

Pushed up their hair, the dry wind
steers
Through salt and root and roe.

Where once your green knots sank
their splice
Into the tided cord, there goes
The green unraveller,
His scissors oiled, his knife hung
loose
To cut the channels at their source
And lay the wet fruits low.

Invisible, your clocking tides
Break on the lovebeds of the
weeds;
The weed of love's left dry;
There round about your stones the
shades
Of children go who, from their

WHERE ONCE THE WATERS OF YOUR FACE

voids,
Cry to the dolphined sea.
Dry as a tomb, your coloured lids
Shall not be latched while magic
glides
Sage on the earth and sky;
There shall be corals in your beds,
There shall be serpents in your
tides,
Till all our sea-faiths die.

**IF I WERE TICKLED BY THE RUB
OF LOVE**

If I were tickled by the rub of love,
A rooking girl who stole me for her
side,
Broke through her straws, break-
ing my bandaged string,
If the red tickle as the cattle calve

IF I WERE TICKLED BY THE RUB OF LOVE

Still set to scratch a laughter from
my lung,
I would not fear the apple nor the
flood
Nor the bad blood of spring.

Shall it be male or female? say the
cells,
And drop the plum like fire from
the flesh.
If I were tickled by the hatching
hair,
The winging bone that sprouted in
the heels,
The itch of man upon the baby's
thigh,
I would not fear the gallows nor
the axe
Nor the crossed sticks of war.

IF I WERE TICKLED BY THE RUB OF LOVE

Shall it be male or female? say the
fingers
That chalk the walls with green
girls and their men.
I would not fear the muscling-in of
love
If I were tickled by the urchin
hungers
Rehearsing heat upon a raw-edged
nerve.
I would not fear the devil in the
loin
Nor the outspoken grave.

If I were tickled by the lovers' rub
That wipes away not crow's-foot
nor the lock
Of sick old manhood on the fallen
jaws,

IF I WERE TICKLED BY THE RUB OF LOVE

Time and the crabs and the sweet-
hearting crib
Would leave me cold as butter for
the flies,
The sea of scums could drown me
as it broke
Dead on the sweethearts' toes.

This world is half the devil's and
my own,
Daft with the drug that's smoking
in a girl
And curling round the bud that
forks her eye.
An old man's shank one-
marrowed with my bone,
And all the herrings smelling in the
sea,
I sit and watch the worm beneath

IF I WERE TICKLED BY THE RUB OF LOVE

my nail
Wearing the quick away.
And that's the rub, the only rub
that tickles.
The knobbly ape that swings along
his sex
From damp love-darkness and the
nurse's twist
Can never raise the midnight of a
chuckle,
Nor when he finds a beauty in the
breast
Of lover, mother, lovers, or his six
Feet in the rubbing dust.
And what's the rub? Death's
feather on the nerve?
Your mouth, my love, the thistle in
the kiss?

IF I WERE TICKLED BY THE RUB OF LOVE

My Jack of Christ born thorny on
the tree?

The words of death are dryer than
his stiff,

My wordy wounds are printed
with your hair.

I would be tickled by the rub that
is:

Man be my metaphor.

OUR EUNUCH DREAMS

I

Our eunuch dreams, all seedless in
the light,
Of light and love, the tempers of
the heart,
Whack their boys' limbs,
And, winding-footed in their

OUR EUNUCH DREAMS

shawl and sheet,
Groom the dark brides, the wid-
ows of the night
Fold in their arms.

The shades of girls, all flavoured
from their shrouds,
When sunlight goes are sundered
from the worm,
The bones of men, the broken in
their beds,
By midnight pulleys that unhouse
the tomb.

II

In this our age the gunman and his
moll,
Two one-dimensional ghosts, love
on a reel,
Strange to our solid eye,

OUR EUNUCH DREAMS

And speak their midnight nothings
as they swell;
When cameras shut they hurry to
their hole
down in the yard of day.
They dance between their ar-
clamps and our skull,
Impose their shots, showing the
nights away;
We watch the show of shadows
kiss or kill
Flavoured of celluloid give love the
lie.

III

Which is the world? Of our two
sleepings, which
Shall fall awake when cures and
their itch

OUR EUNUCH DREAMS

Raise up this red-eyed earth?
Pack off the shapes of daylight and
 their starch,
The sunny gentlemen, the Welsh-
 ing rich,
Or drive the night-gear'd forth.
The photograph is married to the
 eye,
Grafts on its bride one-sided skins
 of truth;
The dream has sucked the sleeper
 of his faith
That shrouded men might marrow
 as they fly.

IV

This is the world: the lying likeness
 of
Our strips of stuff that tatter as we

OUR EUNUCH DREAMS

move

Loving and being loth;
The dream that kicks the buried
from their sack
And lets their trash be honoured as
the quick.
This is the world. Have faith.
For we shall be a shouter like the
cock,
Blowing the old dead back; our
shots shall smack
The image from the plates;
And we shall be fit fellows for a
life,
And who remains shall flower as
they love,
Praise to our faring hearts.

**ESPECIALLY WHEN THE
OCTOBER WIND**

Especially when the October wind
With frosty fingers punishes my
hair,
Caught by the crabbing sun I walk
on fire
And cast a shadow crab upon the

ESPECIALLY WHEN THE OCTOBER
WIND

land,
By the sea's side, hearing the noise
of birds,
Hearing the raven cough in winter
sticks,
My busy heart who shudders as
she talks
Sheds the syllabic blood and drains
her words.

Shut, too, in a tower of words, I
mark
On the horizon walking like the
trees
The wordy shapes of women, and
the rows
Of the star-gestured children in the
park.
Some let me make you of the vow-

ESPECIALLY WHEN THE OCTOBER
WIND

elled beeches,
Some of the oaken voices, from the
roots
Of many a thorny shire tell you
notes,
Some let me make you of the wa-
ter's speeches.

Behind a pot of ferns the wagging
clock
Tells me the hour's word, the neu-
ral meaning
Flies on the shafted disk, declaims
the morning
And tells the windy weather in the
cock.
Some let me make you of the
meadow's signs;
The signal grass that tells me all I

ESPECIALLY WHEN THE OCTOBER
WIND

know
Breaks with the wormy winter
through the eye.
Some let me tell you of the raven's
sins.

Especially when the October wind
(Some let me make you of autumnal
spells,
The spider-tongued, and the loud
hill of Wales)
With fists of turnips punishes the
land,
Some let me make of you the heart-
less words.
The heart is drained that, spelling
in the scurry
Of chemic blood, warned of the
coming fury.

ESPECIALLY WHEN THE OCTOBER
WIND

By the sea's side hear the dark-
vowelled birds.

WHEN, LIKE A RUNNING GRAVE

When, like a running grave, time
tracks you down,
Your calm and cuddled is a scythe
of hairs,
Love in her gear is slowly through
the house,
Up naked stairs, a turtle in a

WHEN, LIKE A RUNNING GRAVE

hearse,
Hauled to the dome,
Comes, like a scissors stalking, tai-
lor age,
Deliver me who timid in my tribe,
Of love am barer than Cadaver's
trap
Robbed of the foxy tongue, his
footed tape
Of the bone inch
Deliver me, my masters, head and
heart,
Heart of Cadaver's candle waxes
thin,
When blood, spade-handed, and
the logic time
Drive children up like bruises to
the thumb,

WHEN, LIKE A RUNNING GRAVE

From maid and head,
For, sunday faced, with dusters in
 my glove,
Chaste and the chaser, man with
 the cockshut eye,
I, that time's jacket or the coat of ice
May fail to fasten with a virgin o
In the straight grave,
Stride through Cadaver's country
 in my force,
My pickbrain masters morsing on
 the stone
Despair of blood, faith in the
 maiden's slime,
Halt among eunuchs, and the nitric
 stain
On fork and face.
Time is a foolish fancy, time and

WHEN, LIKE A RUNNING GRAVE

fool.

No, no, you lover skull, descend-
ing hammer

Descends, my masters, on the en-
tered honour.

You hero skull, Cadaver in the
hangar

Tells the stick, 'fail.'

Joy is no knocking nation, sir and
madam,

The cancer's fashion, or the sum-
mer feather

Lit on the cuddled tree, the cross of
fever,

Not city tar and subway bored to
foster

Man through macadam.

I dump the waxlights in your

WHEN, LIKE A RUNNING GRAVE

tower dome.

Joy is the knock of dust, Cadaver's
shoot

Of bud of Adam through his boxy
shift,

Love's twilit nation and the skull of
state,

Sir, is your doom.

Everything ends, the tower ending
and,

(Have with the house of wind), the
leaning scene,

Ball of the foot depending from the
sun,

(Give, summer, over), the ce-
mented skin,

The actions' end.

All, men my madmen, the un-

WHEN, LIKE A RUNNING GRAVE

wholesome wind
With whistler's cough contages,
time on track
Shapes in a cinder death; love for
his trick,
Happy Cadaver's hunger as you
take
The kissproof world.

FROM LOVE'S FIRST FEVER TO
HER PLAGUE

From love's first fever to her
 plague, from the soft second
And to the hollow minute of the
 womb,
From the unfolding to the scissored
 caul,

FROM LOVE'S FIRST FEVER TO HER PLAGUE

The time for breast and the green
apron age
When no mouth stirred about the
hanging famine,
All world was one, one windy
nothing,
My world was christened in a
stream of milk.
And earth and sky were as one airy
hill.
The sun and mood shed one white
light.

From the first print of the unshod-
den foot, the lifting
Hand, the breaking of the hair,
From the first secret of the heart,
the warning ghost,
And to the first dumb wonder at

FROM LOVE'S FIRST FEVER TO HER PLAGUE

the flesh,
The sun was red, the moon was
grey,
The earth and sky were as two
mountains meeting.

The body prospered, teeth in the
marrowed gums,
The growing bones, the rumour of
the manseed
Within the hallowed gland, blood
blessed the heart,
And the four winds, that had long
blown as one,
Shone in my ears the light of
sound,
Called in my eyes the sound of
light.
And yellow was the multiplying

FROM LOVE'S FIRST FEVER TO HER PLAGUE

sand,
Each golden grain spat life into its
fellow,
Green was the singing house.

The plum my mother picked ma-
tured slowly,
The boy she dropped from dark-
ness at her side
Into the sided lap of light grew
strong,
Was muscled, matted, wise to the
crying thigh,
And to the voice that, like a voice
of hunger,
Itched in the noise of wind and
sun.

And from the first declension of the
flesh

FROM LOVE'S FIRST FEVER TO HER PLAGUE

I learnt man's tongue, to twist the
 shapes of thoughts
Into the stony idiom of the brain,
To shade and knit anew the patch
 of words
Left by the dead who, in their
 moonless acre,
Need no word's warmth.
The root of tongues ends in a
 spentout cancer,
That but a name, where maggots
 have their X.

I learnt the verbs of will, and had
 my secret;
The code of night tapped on my
 tongue;
What had been one was many
 sounding minded.

FROM LOVE'S FIRST FEVER TO HER PLAGUE

One wound, one mind, spewed out
the matter,
One breast gave suck the fever's is-
sue;
From the divorcing sky I learnt the
double,
The two-framed globe that spun
into a score;
A million minds gave suck to such
a bud
As forks my eye;
Youth did condense; the tears of
spring
Dissolved in summer and the hun-
dred seasons;
One sun, one manna, warmed and
fed.

IN THE BEGINNING

In the beginning was the three-
pointed star,
One smile of light across the empty
face;
One bough of bone across the root-
ing air,
The substance forked that mar-

IN THE BEGINNING

rowed the first sun;
And, burning ciphers on the round
of space,
Heaven and hell mixed as they
spun.

In the beginning was the pale sig-
nature,
Three-syllabled and starry as the
smile,
And after came the imprints on the
water,
Stamp of the minted face upon the
moon;
The blood that touched the
crosstree and the grail
Touched the first cloud and left a
sign.

In the beginning was the mounting

IN THE BEGINNING

fire

That set alight the weathers from a
spark,

A three-eyed, red-eyed spark,
blunt as a flower;

Life rose and spouted from the
rolling seas,

Burst in the roots, pumped from
the earth and rock

The secret oils that drive the grass.

In the beginning was the word, the
word

That from the solid bases of the
light

Abstracted all the letters of the
void;

And from the cloudy bases of the
breath

IN THE BEGINNING

The word flowed up, translating to
the heart
First characters of birth and death.
In the beginning was the secret
brain.
The brain was celled and soldered
in the thought
Before the pitch was forking to a
sun;
Before the veins were shaking in
their sieve,
Blood shot and scattered to the
winds of light
The ribbed original of love.

**LIGHT BREAKS WHERE NO SUN
SHINES**

Light breaks where no sun shines;
Where no sea runs, the waters of
the heart
Push in their tides;
And, broken ghosts with glow-
worms in their heads,

LIGHT BREAKS WHERE NO SUN SHINES

The things of light
File through the flesh where no
flesh decks the bones.

A candle in the thighs
Warms youth and seed and burns
the seeds of age;
Where no seed stirs,
The fruit of man unwrinkles in the
stars,
Bright as a fig;
Where no wax is, the candle shows
its hairs.

Dawn breaks behind the eyes;
From poles of skull and toe the
windy blood
Slides like a sea;
Nor fenced, nor staked, the gush-
ers of the sky

LIGHT BREAKS WHERE NO SUN SHINES

Spout to the rod
Divining in a smile the oil of tears.

Night in the sockets rounds,
Like some pitch moon, the limit of
the globes;
Day lights the bone;
Where no cold is, the skinning
gales unpin
The winter's robes;
The film of spring is hanging from
the lids.

Light breaks on secret lots,
On tips of thought where thoughts
smell in the rain;
When logics die,
The secret of the soil grows
through the eye,
And blood jumps in the sun;

LIGHT BREAKS WHERE NO SUN SHINES

Above the waste allotments the
dawn halts.

I FELLOWED SLEEP

I followed sleep who kissed me in
the brain,
Let fall the tear of time; the
sleeper's eye,
Shifting to light, turned on me like
a moon.
So, planning-heeled, I flew along

I FELLOWED SLEEP

my man
And dropped on dreaming and the
upward sky.

I fled the earth and, naked, climbed
the weather,
Reaching a second ground far from
the stars;
And there we wept, I and a ghostly
other,
My mothers-eyed, upon the tops of
trees;
I fled that ground as lightly as a
feather.

'My fathers' globe knocks on its
nave and sings.'
'This that we tread was, too, your
father's land.'
'But this we tread bears the angelic

I FELLOWED SLEEP

gangs,
Sweet are their fathered faces in
their wings.'

'These are but dreaming men.
Breathe, and they fade.'

Faded my elbow ghost, the
mothers-eyed,
As, blowing on the angels, I was
lost

On that cloud coast to each grave-
grabbing shade;

I blew the dreaming fellows to
their bed

Where still they sleep unknowing
of their ghost.

Then all the matter of the living air
Raised up a voice, and, climbing on
the words,

I FELLOWED SLEEP

I spelt my vision with a hand and
hair,
How light the sleeping on this soily
star,
How deep the waking in the
worlded clouds.

There grows the hours' ladder to
the sun,
Each rung a love or losing to the
last,
The inches monkeyed by the blood
of man.
An old, mad man still climbing in
his ghost,
My fathers' ghost is climbing in the
rain.

I DREAMED MY GENESIS

I dreamed my genesis in sweat of
sleep, breaking
Through the rotating shell, strong
As motor muscle on the drill, driv-
ing
Through vision and the girdered
nerve.

I DREAMED MY GENESIS

From limbs that had the measure of
the worm, shuffled
Off from the creasing flesh, filed
Through all the irons in the grass,
metal
Of suns in the man-melting night.

Heir to the scalding veins that hold
love's drop, costly
A creature in my bones I
Rounded my globe of heritage,
journey
In bottom gear through night-
geared man.

I dreamed my genesis and died
again, shrapnel
Rammed in the marching heart,
hole
In the stitched wound and clotted

I DREAMED MY GENESIS

wind, muzzled
Death on the mouth that ate the
gas.

Sharp in my second death I marked
the hills, harvest
Of hemlock and the blades, rust
My blood upon the tempered
dead, forcing
My second struggling from the
grass.

And power was contagious in my
birth, second
Rise of the skeleton and
Rerobing of the naked ghost. Man-
hood
Spat up from the resuffered pain.
I dreamed my genesis in sweat of
death, fallen

I DREAMED MY GENESIS

Twice in the feeding sea, grown
Stale of Adam's brine until, vision
Of new man strength, I seek the
sun.

MY WORLD IS PYRAMID

I

Half of the fellow father as he dou-
bles

His sea-sucked Adam in the hol-
low hulk,

Half of the fellow mother as she
dabbles

MY WORLD IS PYRAMID

To-morrow's diver in her horny
milk,
Bisected shadows on the thunder's
bone
Bolt for the salt unborn.

The fellow half was frozen as it
bubbled
Corrosive spring out of the ice-
berg's crop,
The fellow seed and shadow as it
babbled
The swing of milk was tufted in the
pap,
For half of love was planted in the
lost,
And the unplanted ghost.

The broken halves are fellowed in
a cripple,

MY WORLD IS PYRAMID

The crutch that marrow taps upon
their sleep,
Limp in the street of sea, among the
rabble
Of tide-tongued heads and bladders
in the deep,
And stake the sleepers in the savage
grave
That the vampire laugh.

The patchwork halves were cloven
as they scudded
The wild pigs' wood, and slime
upon the trees,
Sucking the dark, kissed on the
cyanide,
And loosed the braiding adders
from their hairs,
Rotating halves are horning as they

MY WORLD IS PYRAMID

drill

The arterial angel.

What colour is glory? death's
feather? tremble

The halves that pierce the pin's
point in the air,

And prick the thumb-stained
heaven through the thimble.

The ghost is dumb that stammered
in the straw,

The ghost that hatched his havoc as
he flew

Blinds their cloud-tracking eye.

II

My world is pyramid. The padded
mummer

Weeps on the desert ochre and the
salt

MY WORLD IS PYRAMID

Incising summer.
My Egypt's armour buckling in its
sheet,
I scrape through resin to a starry
bone
And a blood parhelion.

My world is cypress, and an En-
glish valley.
I piece my flesh that rattled on the
yards
Red in an Austrian volley.
I hear, through dead men's drums,
the riddled lads,
Screwing their bowels from a hill of
bones,
Cry Eloi to the guns.

My grave is watered by the cross-
ing Jordan.

MY WORLD IS PYRAMID

The Arctic scut, and basin of the
South,
Drip on my dead house garden.
Who seek me landward, marking
in my mouth
The straws of Asia, lose me as I
turn
Through the Atlantic corn.

The fellow halves that, cloven as
they swivel
On casting tides, are tangled in the
shells,
Bearding the unborn devil,
Bleed from my burning fork and
smell my heels.
The tongue's of heaven gossip as I
glide
Binding my angel's hood.

MY WORLD IS PYRAMID

Who blows death's feather? What
glory is colour?

I blow the stammel feather in the
vein.

The loin is glory in a working pal-
lor.

My clay unsuckled and my salt un-
born,

The secret child, I sift about the sea
Dry in the half-tracked thigh.

**ALL ALL AND ALL THE DRY
WORLDS LEVER**

I

All all and all the dry worlds lever,
Stage of the ice, the solid ocean,
All from the oil, the pound of lava.
City of spring, the governed

ALL ALL AND ALL THE DRY WORLDS
LEVER

flower,
Turns in the earth that turns the
 ashen
Towns around on a wheel of fire.
How now my flesh, my naked fel-
 low,
Dug of the sea, the glanded mor-
 row,
Worm in the scalp, the staked and
 fallow.
All all and all, the corpse's lover,
Skinny as sin, the foaming marrow,
All of the flesh, the dry worlds
 lever.

II

Fear not the waking world, my
 mortal,
Fear not the flat, synthetic blood,

ALL ALL AND ALL THE DRY WORLDS
LEVER

Nor the heart in the ribbing metal.
Fear not the tread, the seeded
 milling,
The trigger and scythe, the bridal
 blade,
Nor the flint in the lover's mauling.
Man of my flesh, the jawbone
 riven,
Know now the flesh's lock and
 vice,
And the cage for the scythe-eyed
 raven.
Know, O my bone, the jointed
 lever,
Fear not the screws that turn the
 voice,
And the face to the driven lover.

III

ALL ALL AND ALL THE DRY WORLDS
LEVER

All all and all the dry worlds couple,
Ghost with her ghost, contagious man
With the womb of his shapeless people.
All that shapes from the caul and suckle,
Stroke of mechanical flesh on mine,
Square in these worlds the mortal circle.

Flower, flower the people's fusion,
O light in zenith, the coupled bud,
And the flame in the flesh's vision.
Out of the sea, the drive of oil,
Socket and grave, the brassy blood,
Flower, flower, all all and all.

I, IN MY INTRICATE IMAGE

I

I, in my intricate image, stride on
two levels,

Forged in man's minerals, the
brassy orator

Laying my ghost in metal,

The scales of this twin world tread

I, IN MY INTRICATE IMAGE

on the double,
My half ghost in armour hold hard
in death's corridor,
To my man-iron side.

Beginning with doom in the bulb,
the spring unravels,
Bright as her spinning-wheels, the
colic season

Worked on a world of petals;
She threads off the sap and needles,
blood and bubble
Casts to the pine roots, raising man
like a mountain
Out of the naked entrail.

Beginning with doom in the ghost,
and the springing marvels,
Image of images, my metal phantom

I, IN MY INTRICATE IMAGE

Forcing forth through the harebell,
My man of leaves and the bronze
 root, mortal, unmortal,
I, in my fusion of rose and male
 motion,
Create this twin miracle.

This is the fortune of manhood: the
 natural peril,
A steeplejack tower, bonerailed
 and masterless,
No death more natural;
Thus the shadowless man or ox,
 and the pictured devil,
In seizure of silence commit the
 dead nuisance:
The natural parallel.

My images stalk the trees and the
 slant sap's tunnel,

I, IN MY INTRICATE IMAGE

No tread more perilous, the green
steps and spire
Mount on man's footfall,
I with the wooden insect in the tree
of nettles,
In the glass bed of grapes with
snail and flower,
Hearing the weather fall.

Intricate manhood of ending, the
invalid rivals,
Voyaging clockwise off the sym-
boled harbour,
Finding the water final,
On the consumptives' terrace tak-
ing their two farewells,
Sail on the level, the departing ad-
venture,
To the sea-blown arrival.

I, IN MY INTRICATE IMAGE

II

They climb the country pinnacle,
Twelve winds encounter by the
white host at pasture,
Corner the mounted meadows in
the hill corral;
They see the squirrel stumble,
The haring snail go giddily round
the flower,
A quarrel of weathers and trees in
the windy spiral.

As they dive, the dust settles,
The cadaverous gravels, falls thick
and steadily,
The highroad of water where the
seabear and mackerel
Turn the long sea arterial
Turning a petrol face blind to the

I, IN MY INTRICATE IMAGE

enemy
Turning the riderless dead by the
channel wall.

(Death instrumental,
Splitting the long eye open, and the
spiral turnkey,
Your corkscrew grave centred in
navel and nipple,
The neck of the nostril,
Under the mask and the ether, they
making bloody
The tray of knives, the antiseptic
funeral;

Bring out the black patrol,
Your monstrous officers and the
decaying army,
The sexton sentinel, garrisoned un-
der thistles,

I, IN MY INTRICATE IMAGE

A cock-on-a-dunghill
Crowing to Lazarus the morning is
vanity,
Dust be your saviour under the
conjured soil.)

As they drown, the chime travels,
Sweetly the diver's bell in the
steeple of spindrift
Rings out the Dead Sea scale;
And, clapped in water till the triton
dangles,
Strung by the flaxen whale-weed,
from the hangman's raft,
Hear they the salt glass breakers
and the tongues of burial.

(Turn the sea-spindle lateral,
The grooved land rotating, that the
stylus of lightning

I, IN MY INTRICATE IMAGE

Dazzle this face of voices on the
 moon-turned table,
Let the wax disk babble
Shames and the damp dishonours,
 the relic scraping.
These are your years' recorders.
 The circular world stands still.)

III

They suffer the undead water
 where the turtle nibbles,
Come unto sea-stuck towers, at the
 fibre scaling,
The flight of the carnal skull
And the cell-stepped thimble;
Suffer, my topsy-turvies, that a
 double angel
Sprout from the stony lockers like
 a tree on Aran.

I, IN MY INTRICATE IMAGE

Be by your one ghost pierced, his
pointed ferrule,
Brass and the bodiless image, on a
stick of folly
Star-set at Jacob's angle,
Smoke hill and hophead's valley,
And the five-fathomed Hamlet on
his father's coral,
Thrusting the tom-thumb vision
up the iron mile.

Suffer the slash of vision by the fin-
green stubble,
Be by the ships' sea broken at the
manstring anchored
The stoved bones' voyage down-
ward
In the shipwreck of muscle;
Give over, lovers, locking, and the

I, IN MY INTRICATE IMAGE

seawax struggle,
Love like a mist or fire through the
bed of eels.

And in the pincers of the boiling
circle,

The sea and instrument, nicked in
the locks of time,

My great blood's iron single

In the pouring town,

I, in a wind on fire, from green
Adam's cradle,

No man more magical, clawed out
the crocodile.

Man was the scales, the death birds
on enamel,

Tail, Nile, and snout, a saddler of
the rushes,

Time in the hourless houses

I, IN MY INTRICATE IMAGE

Shaking the sea-hatched skull,
And, as for oils and ointments on
the flying grail,
All-hollowed man wept for his
white apparel.

Man was Cadaver's masker, the
harnessing mantle,
Windily master of man was the rot-
ten fathom,
My ghost in his metal neptune
Forged in man's mineral.
This was the god of beginning in
the intricate seawhirl,
And my images roared and rose on
heaven's hill.

THIS BREAD I BREAK

This bread I break was once the oat,
This wine upon a foreign tree
Plunged in its fruit;
Man in the day or wine at night
Laid the crops low, broke the
grape's joy.

Once in this time wine the summer

THIS BREAD I BREAK

blood
Knocked in the flesh that decked
the vine,
Once in this bread
The oat was merry in the wind;
Man broke the sun, pulled the
wind down.

This flesh you break, this blood
you let
Make desolation in the vein,
Were oat and grape
Born of the sensual root and sap;
My wine you drink, my bread you
snap.

INCARNATE DEVIL

Incarinate devil in a talking snake,
The central plains of Asia in his
garden,
In shaping-time the circle stung
awake,
In shapes of sin forked out the
bearded apple,

INCARNATE DEVIL

And God walked there who was a
fiddling warden
And played down pardon from the
heavens' hill.

When we were strangers to the
guided seas,
A handmade moon half holy in a
cloud,
The wisemen tell me that the gar-
den gods
Twined good and evil on an east-
ern tree;
And when the moon rose windily
it was
Black as the beast and paler than
the cross.

We in our Eden knew the secret
guardian

INCARNATE DEVIL

In sacred waters that no frost could
 harden,
And in the mighty mornings of the
 earth;
Hell in a horn of sulphur and the
 cloven myth,
All heaven in the midnight of the
 sun,
A serpent fiddled in the shaping-
 time.

TO-DAY, THIS INSECT

To-day, this insect, and the world I
breathe,
Now that my symbols have outel-
bowed space,
Time at the city spectacles, and half
The dear, daft time I take to nudge
the sentence,

TO-DAY, THIS INSECT

In trust and tale I have divided
sense,
Slapped down the guillotine, the
blood-red double
Of head and tail made witnesses to
this
Murder of Eden and green genesis.
The insect certain is the plague of
fables.

This story's monster has a serpent
caul,
Blind in the coil scrams round the
blazing outline,
Measures his own length on the
garden wall
And breaks his shell in the last
shocked beginning;
A crocodile before the chrysalis,

TO-DAY, THIS INSECT

Before the fall from love the flying
heartbone,
Winged like a sabbath ass this chil-
dren's piece
Uncredited blows Jericho on Eden.
The insect fable is the certain
promise.

Death: death of Hamlet and the
nightmare madmen,
An air-drawn windmill on a
wooden horse,
John's beast, Job's patience, and
the fibs of vision,
Greek in the Irish sea the ageless
voice:
'Adam I love, my madmen's love is
endless,
No tell-tale lover has an end more

TO-DAY, THIS INSECT

certain,
All legends' sweethearts on a tree
of stories,
My cross of tales behind the fabu-
lous curtain.'

THE SEED-AT-ZERO

The seed-at-zero shall not storm
That town of ghosts, the trodden
womb,
With her rampart to his tapping,
No god-in-hero tumble down
Like a tower on the town
Dumbly and divinely stumbling

THE SEED-AT-ZERO

Over the manwaging line.

The seed-at-zero shall not storm
That town of ghosts, the man-
waged tomb

With her rampart to his tapping,
No god-in-hero tumble down
Like a tower on the town
Dumbly and divinely leaping
Over the warbearing line.

Through the rampart of the sky
Shall the star-flanked seed be rid-
dled,

Manna for the rumbling ground,
Quickening for the riddled sea;
Settled on a virgin stronghold
He shall grapple with the guard
And the keeper of the key.

Through the rampart of the sky

THE SEED-AT-ZERO

Shall the star-flanked seed be riddled,
Manna for the guarded ground,
Quickening for the virgin sea;
Settling on a riddled stronghold
He shall grapple with the guard
And the loser of the key.

May a humble village labour
And a continent deny?
A hemisphere may scold him
And a green inch be his bearer;
Let the hero seed find harbour,
Seaports by a drunken shore
Have their thirsty sailors hide him.

May a humble planet labour
And a continent deny?
A village green may scold him
And a high sphere be his bearer;

THE SEED-AT-ZERO

Let the hero seed find harbour,
Seaports by a thirsty shore
Have their drunken sailors hide
him.

Man-in-seed, in seed-at-zero,
From the foreign fields of space,
Shall not thunder on the town
With a star-flanked garrison,
Nor the cannons of his kingdom
Shall the hero-in-tomorrow
Range on the sky-scraping place.

Man-in-seed, in seed-at-zero,
From the star-flanked fields of
space,
Thunders on the foreign town
With a sand-bagged garrison,
Nor the cannons of his kingdom
Shall the hero-in-to-morrow

THE SEED-AT-ZERO

Range from the grave-groping
place.

SHALL GODS BE SAID TO THUMP
THE CLOUDS

Shall gods be said to thump the
clouds
When clouds are cursed by thun-
der,
Be said to weep when weather
howls?

SHALL GODS BE SAID TO THUMP THE CLOUDS

Shall rainbows be their tunics'
colour?

When it is rain where are the gods?
Shall it be said they sprinkle water
From garden cans, or free the
floods?

Shall it be said that, venuswise,
An old god's dugs are pressed and
pricked,
The wet night scolds me like a
nurse?

It shall be said that gods are stone.
Shall a dropped stone drum on the
ground,
Flung gravel chime? Let the stones
speak
With tongues that talk all tongues.

HERE IN THIS SPRING

Here in this spring, stars float
along the void;
Here in this ornamental winter
Down pelts the naked weather;
This summer buries a spring bird.
Symbols are selected from the
years'

HERE IN THIS SPRING

Slow rounding of four seasons'
coasts,
In autumn teach three seasons'
fires
And four birds' notes.

I should tell summer from the
trees, the worms
Tell, if at all, the winter's storms
Or the funeral of the sun;
I should learn spring by the cuck-
ooing,
And the slug should teach me de-
struction.

A worm tells summer better than
the clock,
The slug's a living calendar of
days;
What shall it tell me if a timeless in-

HERE IN THIS SPRING

sect
Says the world wears away?

DO YOU NOT FATHER ME

Do you not father me, nor the
erected arm
For my tall tower's sake cast in her
stone?
Do you not mother me, nor, as I
am,
The lovers' house, lie suffering my

DO YOU NOT FATHER ME

stain?

Do you not sister me, nor the
erected crime

For my tall turrets carry as your
sin?

Do you not brother me, nor, as you
climb,

Adore my windows for their sum-
mer scene?

Am I not father, too, and the as-
cending boy,

The boy of woman and the wanton
starrer

Marking the flesh and summer in
the bay?

Am I not sister, too, who is my
saviour?

Am I not all of you by the directed

DO YOU NOT FATHER ME

sea

Where bird and shell are babbling
in my tower?

Am I not you who front the tidy
shore,

Nor roof of sand, nor yet the tow-
ering tiler?

You are all these, said she who
gave me the long suck,

All these, he said who sacked the
children's town,

Up rose the Abraham-man, mad
for my sake,

They said, who hacked and hu-
moured, they were mine.

I am, the tower told, felled by a
timeless stroke,

Who razed my wooden folly

DO YOU NOT FATHER ME

stands aghast,
For man-begetters in the dry-as-
paste,
The ringed-sea ghost, rise grimly
from the wrack.

Do you not father me on the de-
stroying sand?
You are your sisters' sire, said sea-
weedy,
The salt sucked dam and darlings
of the land
Who play the proper gentleman
and lady.
Shall I still be love's house on the
widdershin earth,
Woe to the windy masons at my
shelter?
Love's house, they answer, and the

DO YOU NOT FATHER ME

 tower death
Lie all unknowing of the grave sin-
 eater.

OUT OF THE SIGHS

Out of the sighs a little comes,
But not of grief, for I have knocked
 down that
Before the agony; the spirit grows,
Forgets, and cries;
A little comes, is tasted and found
 good;

OUT OF THE SIGHS

All could not disappoint;
There must, be praised, some certainty,
If not of loving well, then not,
And that is true after perpetual defeat.

After such fighting as the weakest know,
There's more than dying;
Lose the great pains or stuff the wound,
He'll ache too long
Through no regret of leaving woman waiting
For her soldier stained with spilt words
That spill such acrid blood.
Were that enough, enough to ease

OUT OF THE SIGHS

the pain,
Feeling regret when this is wasted
That made me happy in the sun,
How much was happy while it
lasted,
Were vagueness enough and the
sweet lies plenty,
The hollow words could bear all
suffering
And cure me of ills.

Were that enough, bone, blood,
and sinew,
The twisted brain, the fair-formed
loin,
Groping for matter under the dog's
plate,
Man should be cured of distemper.
For all there is to give I offer:

OUT OF THE SIGHS

Crumbs, barn, and halter.

**HOLD HARD, THESE ANCIENT
MINUTES IN THE CUCKOO'S
MONTH**

Hold hard, these ancient minutes
in the cuckoo's month,
Under the lank, fourth folly on
Glamorgan's hill,

HOLD HARD, THESE ANCIENT
MINUTES IN THE CUCKOO'S MONTH

As the green blooms ride upward,
to the drive of time;
Time, in a folly's rider, like a
county man
Over the vault of ridings with his
hound at heel,
Drives forth my men, my children,
from the hanging south.

Country, your sport is summer,
and December's pools
By crane and water-tower by the
seedy trees
Lie this fifth month unskated, and
the birds have flown;
Holy hard, my country children in
the world of tales,
The greenwood dying as the deer
fall in their tracks,

HOLD HARD, THESE ANCIENT
MINUTES IN THE CUCKOO'S MONTH

The first and steepled season, to
the summer's game.

And now the horns of England, in
the sound of shape,

Summon your snowy horsemen,
and the four-stringed hill,

Over the sea-gut loudening, sets a
rock alive;

Hurdles and guns and railings, as
the boulders heave,

Crack like a spring in vice, bone
breaking April,

Spill the lank folly's hunter and the
hard-held hope.

Down fall four padding weathers
on the scarlet lands,

Stalking my children's faces with a
tail of blood,

HOLD HARD, THESE ANCIENT
MINUTES IN THE CUCKOO'S MONTH

Time, in a rider rising, from the
harnessed valley;
Hold hard, my country darlings,
for a hawk descends,
Golden Glamorgan straightens, to
the falling birds.
Your sport is summer as the spring
runs angrily.

WAS THERE A TIME

Was there a time when dancers
with their fiddles
In children's circuses could stay
their troubles?
There was a time they could cry
over books,
But time has set its maggot on their

WAS THERE A TIME

track.

Under the arc of the sky they are
unsafe.

What's never known is safest in
this life.

Under the skysigns they who have
no arms

Have cleanest hands, and, as the
heartless ghost

Alone's unhurt, so the blind man
sees best.

Now

Now
Say nay,
Man dry man,
Dry lover mine
The deadrock base and blow the
 flowered anchor,
Should he, for centre sake, hop in

the dust,
Forsake, the fool, the hardiness of
anger.

Now
Say nay,
Sir no say,
Death to the yes,
the yes to death, the yesman and
the answer,
Should he who split his children
with a cure
Have brotherless his sister on the
handsaw.

Now
Say nay,
No say sir
Yea the dead stir,
And this, nor this, is shade, the

landed crow,
He lying low with ruin in his ear,
The cockrel's tide upcasting from
the fire.

Now
Say nay,
So star fall,
So the ball fail,
So solve the mystic sun, the wife of
light,
The sun that leaps on petals
through a nought,
The come-a-cropper rider of the
flower.

Now
Say nay
A fig for
The seal of fire,

NOW

Death hairy-heeled and the tapped
ghost in wood,
We make me mystic as the arm of
air,
The two-a-vein, the foreskin, and
the cloud.

WHY EAST WIND CHILLS

Why east wind chills and south
wind cools
Shall not be known till windwell
dries
And west's no longer drowned
In winds that bring the fruit and
rind

WHY EAST WIND CHILLS

Of many a hundred falls;
Why silk is soft and the stone
 wounds
The child shall question all his
 days,
Why night-time rain and the
 breast's blood
Both quench his thirst he'll have a
 black reply.

When cometh Jack Frost? the chil-
 dren ask.
Shall they clasp a comet in their
 fists?
Not till, from high and low, their
 dust
Sprinkles in children's eyes a long-
 last sleep
And dusk is crowded with the chil-

WHY EAST WIND CHILLS

dren's ghosts,
Shall a white answer echo from the
rooftops.

All things are known: the stars' ad-
vice
Calls some content to travel with
the winds,
Though what the stars ask as they
round
Time upon time the towers of the
skies
Is heard but little till the stars go
out.

I hear content, and 'Be Content'
Ring like a handbell through the
corridors,
And 'Know no answer,' and I
know

WHY EAST WIND CHILLS

No answer to the children's cry
Of echo's answer and the man of
frost
And ghostly comets over the raised
fists.

A GRIEF AGO

A grief ago,
She who was who I hold, the fats
 and the flower,
Or, water-lammed, from the
 scythe-sided thorn,
Hell wind and sea,
A stem cementing, wrestled up the

A GRIEF AGO

tower,
Rose maid and male,
Or, master venus, through the pad-
dler's bowl
Sailed up the sun;
Who is my grief,
A chrysalis unwrinkling on the
iron,
Wrenched by my fingerman, the
leaden bud
Shot through the leaf,
Was who was folded on the rod the
aaron
Road east to plague,
The horn and ball of water on the
frog
Housed in the side.
And she who lies,

A GRIEF AGO

Like exodus a chapter from the garden,
Brand of the lily's anger on her ring,
Tugged through the days
Her ropes of heritage, the wars of pardon,
On field and sand
The twelve triangles of the cherub wind
Engraving going.

Who then is she,
She holding me? The people's sea
drives on her,
Drives out the father from the caesared camp;
The dens of shape
Shape all her whelps with the long

A GRIEF AGO

voice of water,
That she I have,
The country-handed grave boxed
into love,
Rise before dark.

The night is near,
A nitric shape that leaps her, time
and acid;
I tell her this: before the suncock
cast
Her bone to fire,
Let her inhale her dead, through
seed and solid
Draw in their seas,
So cross her hand with their grave
gipsy eyes,
And close her fist.

HOW SOON THE SERVANT SUN

How soon the servant sun,
(Sir morrow mark),
Can time unriddle, and the cup-
board stone,
(Fog has a bone
He'll trumpet into meat),
Unshelve that all my gristles have

HOW SOON THE SERVANT SUN

a gown
And the naked egg stand straight,
Sir morrow at his sponge,
(The wound records),
The nurse of giants by the cut sea
basin,
(Fog by his spring
Soaks up the sewing tides),
Tells you and you, my masters, as
his strange
Man morrow blows through food.

All nerves to serve the sun,
The rite of light,
A claw I question from the mouse's
bone,
The long-tailed stone
Trap I with coil and sheet,
Let the soil squeal I am the biting

HOW SOON THE SERVANT SUN

man

And the velvet dead inch out.

How soon my level, lord,

(Sir morrow stamps

Two heels of water on the floor of
seed),

Shall raise a lamp

Or spirit up a cloud,

Erect a walking centre in the
shroud,

Invisible on the stump

A leg as long as trees,

This inward sir,

Mister and master, darkness for his
eyes,

The womb-eyed, cries,

And all sweet hell, deaf as an
hour's ear,

HOW SOON THE SERVANT SUN

Blasts back the trumpet voice.

EARS IN THE TURRETS HEAR

Ears in the turrets hear
Hands grumble on the door,
Eyes in the gables see
The fingers at the locks.
Shall I unbolt or stay
Alone till the day I die
Unseen by stranger-eyes

EARS IN THE TURRETS HEAR

In this white house?
Hands, hold you poison or grapes?

Beyond this island bound
By a thin sea of flesh
And a bone coast,
The land lies out of sound
And the hills out of mind.
No birds or flying fish
Disturbs this island's rest.

Ears in this island hear
The wind pass like a fire,
Eyes in this island see
Ships anchor off the bay.
Shall I run to the ships
With the wind in my hair,
Or stay till the day I die
And welcome no sailor?
Ships, hold you poison or grapes?

EARS IN THE TURRETS HEAR

Hands grumble on the door,
Ships anchor off the bay,
Rain beats the sand and slates.
Shall I let in the stranger,
Shall I welcome the sailor,
Or stay till the day I die?

Hands of the stranger and holds of
the ships,
Hold you poison or grapes?

FOSTER THE LIGHT

Foster the light nor veil the man-
shaped moon,
Nor weather winds that blow not
down the bone,
But strip the twelve-winded mar-
row from his circle;
Master the night nor serve the

FOSTER THE LIGHT

snowman's brain
That shapes each bushy item of the
air
Into a polestar pointed on an icicle.
Murmur of spring nor crush the
cockerel's eggs,
Nor hammer back a season in the
figs,
But graft these four-fruited ridings
on your country;
Farmer in time of frost the burning
leagues,
By red-eyed orchards sow the
seeds of snow,
In your young years the vegetable
century.
And father all nor fail the fly-lord's
acre,

FOSTER THE LIGHT

Nor sprout on owl-seed like a
goblin-sucker,
But rail with your wizard's ribs the
heart-shaped planet;
Of mortal voices to the ninnies'
choir,
High lord esquire, speak up the
singing cloud,
And pluck a mandrake music from
the marrowroot.

Roll unmanly over this turning
tuft,
O ring of seas, nor sorrow as I shift
From all my mortal lovers with a
starboard smile;
Nor when my love lies in the cross-
boned drift
Naked among the bow-and-arrow

FOSTER THE LIGHT

birds
Shall you turn cockwise on a tufted
axle.
Who gave these seas their colour in
a shape,
Shaped my clayfellow, and the
heaven's ark
In time at flood filled with his
coloured doubles;
O who is glory in the shapeless
maps,
Now make the world of me as I
have made
A merry manshape of your walk-
ing circle.

THE HAND THAT SIGNED THE PAPER

The hand that signed the paper
felled a city;
Five sovereign fingers taxed the
breath,
Doubled the globe of dead and
halved a country;

THE HAND THAT SIGNED THE PAPER

These five kings did a king to
death.

The mighty hand leads to a sloping
shoulder,

The finger joints are cramped with
chalk;

A goose's quill has put an end to
murder

That put an end to talk.

The hand that signed the treaty
bred a fever,

And famine grew, and locusts
came;

Great is the hand that holds domin-
ion over

Man by a scribbled name.

The five kings count the dead but
do not soften

THE HAND THAT SIGNED THE PAPER

The crusted wound nor pat the
brow;
A hand rules pity as a hand rules
heaven;
Hands have no tears to flow.

SHOULD LANTERNS SHINE

Should lanterns shine, the holy
face,
Caught in an octagon of unaccus-
tomed light,
Would wither up, and any boy of
love
Look twice before he fell from

SHOULD LANTERNS SHINE

grace.

The features in their private dark
Are formed of flesh, but let the
false day come
And from her lips the faded pig-
ments fall,
The mummy cloths expose an an-
cient breast.

I have been told to reason by the
heart,
But heart, like head, leads help-
lessly;
I have been told to reason by the
pulse,
And, when it quickens, alter the ac-
tions' pace
Till field and roof lie level and the
same

SHOULD LANTERNS SHINE

So fast I move defying time, the
quiet gentleman
Whose beard wags in Egyptian
wind.

I have heard many years of telling,
And many years should see some
change.

The ball I threw while playing in
the park
Has not yet reached the ground.

I HAVE LONGED TO MOVE AWAY

I have longed to move away
From the hissing of the spent lie
And the old terrors' continual cry
Growing more terrible as the day
Goes over the hill into the deep sea;
I have longed to move away
From the repetition of salutes,

I HAVE LONGED TO MOVE AWAY

For there are ghosts in the air
And ghostly echoes on paper,
And the thunder of calls and notes.

I have longed to move away but
am afraid;

Some life, yet unspent, might ex-
plode

Out of the old lie burning on the
ground,

And, crackling into the air, leave
me half-blind.

Neither by night's ancient fear,

The parting of hat from hair,

Pursed lips at the receiver,

Shall I fall to death's feather.

By these I would not care to die,

Half convention and half lie.

FIND MEAT ON BONES

'Find meat on bones that soon have
 none,
And drink in the two milked crags,
The merriest marrow and the dregs
Before the ladies' breasts are hags
And the limbs are torn.
Disturb no winding-sheets, my

FIND MEAT ON BONES

son,
But when the ladies are cold as
stone
Then hang a ram rose over the
rags.

'Rebel against the binding moon
And the parliament of sky,
The kingcrafts of the wicked sea,
Autocracy of night and day,
Dictatorship of sun.
Rebel against the flesh and bone,
The word of the blood, the wily
skin,
And the maggot no man can slay.'

'The thirst is quenched, the hunger
gone,
And my heart is cracked across;
My face is haggard in the glass,

FIND MEAT ON BONES

My lips are withered with a kiss,
My breasts are thin.

A merry girl took me for man,
I laid her down and told her sin,
And put beside her a ram rose.

'The maggot that no man can kill
And the man no rope can hang
Rebel against my father's dream
That out of a bower of red swine
Howls the foul fiend to heel.
I cannot murder, like a fool,
Season and sunshine, grace and
girl,
Nor can I smother the sweet wak-
ing.'

Black night still ministers the
moon,
And the sky lays down her laws,

FIND MEAT ON BONES

The sea speaks in a kingly voice,
Light and dark are no enemies
But one companion.
'War on the spider and the wren!
War on the destiny of man!
Doom on the sun!'
Before death takes you, O take
back this.

GRIEF THIEF OF TIME

Grief thief of time crawls off,
The moon-drawn grave, with the
 seafaring years,
The knave of pain steals off
The sea-halved faith that blew time
 to his knees,
The old forget the cries,

GRIEF THIEF OF TIME

Lean time on tide and times the
wind stood rough,
Call back the castaways
Riding the sea light on a sunken
path,
The old forget the grief,
Hack of the cough, the hanging al-
batross,
Cast back the bone of youth
And salt-eyed stumble bedward
where she lies
Who tossed the high tide in a time
of stories
And timelessly lies loving with the
thief.

Now Jack my fathers let the time-
faced crook,
Death flashing from his sleeve,

GRIEF THIEF OF TIME

With swag of bubbles in a seedy
sack
Sneak down the stallion grave,
Bull's-eye the outlaw through a eu-
nuch crack
And free the twin-boxed grief,
No silver whistles chase him down
the weeks'
Dayed peaks to day to death,
These stolen bubbles have the bites
of snakes
And the undead eye-teeth,
No third eye probe into a rain-
bow's sex
That bridged the human halves,
All shall remain and on the grave-
ward gulf
Shape with my fathers' thieves.

AND DEATH SHALL HAVE NO
DOMINION

And death shall have no dominion.
Dead men naked they shall be one
With the man in the wind and the
west moon;
When their bones are picked clean
and the clean bones gone,

AND DEATH SHALL HAVE NO
DOMINION

They shall have stars at elbow and
foot;
Though they go mad they shall be
sane,
Though they sink through the sea
they shall rise again;
Though lovers be lost love shall
not;
And death shall have no dominion.

And death shall have no dominion.
Under the windings of the sea
They lying long shall not die
windily;
Twisting on racks when sinews
give way,
Strapped to a wheel, yet they shall
not break;
Faith in their hands shall snap in

AND DEATH SHALL HAVE NO
DOMINION

two,
And the unicorn evils run them
through;
Split all ends up they shan't crack;
And death shall have no dominion.

And death shall have no dominion.
No more may gulls cry at their ears
Or waves break loud on the
seashores;
Where blew a flower may a flower
no more
Lift its head to the blows of the
rain;
Though they be mad and dead as
nails,
Heads of the characters hammer
through daisies;
Break in the sun till the sun breaks

AND DEATH SHALL HAVE NO
DOMINION

down,
And death shall have no dominion.

THEN WAS MY NEOPHYTE

Then was my neophyte,
Child in white blood bent on its
 knees
Under the bell of rocks,
Ducked in the twelve, disciple seas
The winder of the water-clocks
Calls a green day and night.

THEN WAS MY NEOPHYTE

My sea hermaphrodite,
Snail of man in His ship of fires
That burn the bitten decks,
Knew all His horrible desires
The climber of the water sex
Calls the green rock of light.

Who in these labyrinths,
This tidethread and the lane of
 scales,
Twine in a moon-blown shell,
Escapes to the flat cities' sails
Furled on the fishes' house and
 hell,
Nor falls to His green myths?
Stretch the salt photographs,
The landscape grief, love in His
 oils
Mirror from man to whale

THEN WAS MY NEOPHYTE

That the green child see like a grail
Through veil and fin and fire and
 coil
Time on the canvas paths.

He films my vanity.
Shot in the wind, by tilted arcs,
Over the water come
Children from homes and chil-
 dren's parks
Who speak on a finger and thumb,
And the masked, headless boy.
His reels and mystery
The winder of the clockwise scene
Wound like a ball of lakes
Then threw on that tide-hoisted
 screen
Love's image till my heartbone
 breaks

THEN WAS MY NEOPHYTE

By a dramatic sea.
Who kills my history?
The year-hedged row is lame with
 flint,
Blunt scythe and water blade.
'Who could snap off the shapeless
 print
From your to-morrow-treading
 shade
With oracle for eye?'
Time kills me terribly.
'Time shall not murder you,' He
 said,
'Nor the green nought be hurt;
Who could hack out your un-
 sucked heart,
O green and unborn and undead?'
I saw time murder me.

ALTARWISE BY OWL-LIGHT

I

Altarwise by owl-light in the half-
way house

The gentleman lay graveward with
his furies;

Abaddon in the hangnail cracked
from Adam,

ALTARWISE BY OWL-LIGHT

And, from his fork, a dog among
the fairies,
The atlas-eater with a jaw for news,
Bit out the mandrake with to-
morrow's scream.
Then, penny-eyed, that gentlemen
of wounds,
Old cock from nowheres and the
heaven's egg,
With bones unbuttoned to the half-
way winds,
Hatched from the windy salvage
on one leg,
Scraped at my cradle in a walking
word
That night of time under the
Christward shelter:
I am the long world's gentleman,
he said,

ALTARWISE BY OWL-LIGHT

And share my bed with Capricorn
and Cancer.

II

Death is all metaphors, shape in
one history;

The child that sucketh long is
shooting up,

The planet-ducted pelican of cir-
cles

Weans on an artery the gender's
strip;

Child of the short spark in a shape-
less country

Soon sets alight a long stick from
the cradle;

The horizontal cross-bones of
Abaddon,

You by the cavern over the black

ALTARWISE BY OWL-LIGHT

stairs,
Rung bone and blade, the verticals
of Adam,
And, manned by midnight, Jacob
to the stars.
Hairs of your head, then said the
hollow agent,
Are but the roots of nettles and of
feathers
Over these groundworks thrusting
through a pavement
And hemlock-headed in the wood
of weathers.

III

First there was the lamb on knock-
ing knees
And three dead seasons on a climb-
ing grave

ALTARWISE BY OWL-LIGHT

That Adam's wether in the flock of
horns,
Butt of the tree-tailed worm that
mounted Eve,
Horned down with skullfoot and
the skull of toes
On thunderous pavements in the
garden time;
Rip of the vaults, I took my
marrow-ladle
Out of the wrinkled undertaker's
van,
And, Rip Van Winkle from a time-
less cradle,
Dipped me breast-deep in the de-
scending bone;
The black ram, shuffling of the
year, old winter,
Alone alive among his mutton

ALTARWISE BY OWL-LIGHT

fold,
We rung our weathering changes
on the ladder,
Said the antipodes, and twice
spring chimed.

IV

What is the metre of the dictionary?
The size of genesis? the short
spark's gender?
Shade without shape? the shape of
Pharaoh's echo?
(My shape of age nagging the
wounded whisper).
Which sixth of wind blew out the
burning gentry?
(Questions are hunchbacks to the
poker marrow).

ALTARWISE BY OWL-LIGHT

What of a bamboo man among
your acres?
Corset the boneyards for a crooked
boy?
Button your bodice on a hump of
splinters,
My camel's eyes will needle
through the shroud.
Love's reflection of the mushroom
features,
Stills snapped by night in the
bread-sided field,
Once close-up smiling in the wall
of pictures,
Arc-lamped thrown back upon the
cutting flood.

V

And from the windy West came

ALTARWISE BY OWL-LIGHT

two-gunned Gabriel,
From Jesu's sleeve trumped up the
king of spots,
The sheath-decked jacks, queen
with a shuffled heart;
Said the fake gentleman in suit of
spades,
Black-tongued and tipsy from sal-
vation's bottle.
Rose my Byzantine Adam in the
night.
For loss of blood I fell on Ishmael's
plain,
Under the milky mushrooms slew
my hunger,
A climbing sea from Asia had me
down
And Jonah's Moby snatched me by
the hair,

ALTARWISE BY OWL-LIGHT

Cross-stroked salt Adam to the
frozen angel
Pin-legged on pole-hills with a
black medusa
By waste seas where the white bear
quoted Virgil
And sirens singing from our lady's
sea-straw.

VI

Cartoon of slashes on the tide-
traced crater,
He in a book of water tallow-eyed
By lava's light split through the
oyster vowels
And burned sea silence on a wick
of words.
Pluck, cock, my sea eye, said
medusa's scripture,

ALTARWISE BY OWL-LIGHT

Lop, love, my fork tongue, said the
pin-hilled nettle;
And love plucked out the stinging
siren's eye,
Old cock from nowheres lopped
the minstrel tongue
Till tallow I blew from the wax's
tower
The fats of midnight when the salt
was singing;
Adam, time's joker, on a witch of
cardboard
Spelt out the seven seas, an evil in-
dex,
The bagpipe-breasted ladies in the
deadweed
Blew out the blood gauze through
the wound of manwax.

ALTARWISE BY OWL-LIGHT

VII

Now stamp the Lord's Prayer on a
grain of rice,
A Bible-leaved of all the written
woods
Strip to this tree: a rocking alpha-
bet,
Genesis in the root, the scarecrow
word,
And one light's language in the
book of trees.
Doom on deniers at the wind-
turned statement.
Time's tune my ladies with the
teats of music,
The scaled sea-sawers, fix in a
naked sponge
Who sucks the bell-voiced Adam

ALTARWISE BY OWL-LIGHT

out of magic,
Time, milk, and magic, from the
world beginning.
Time is the tune my ladies lend
their heartbreak,
From bald pavilions and the house
of bread
Time tracks the sound of shape on
man and cloud,
On rose and icicle the ringing
handprint.

VIII

This was the crucifixion on the
mountain,
Time's nerve in vinegar, the gallow
grave
As tarred with blood as the bright
thorns I wept;

ALTARWISE BY OWL-LIGHT

The world's my wound, God's
Mary in her grief,
Bent like three trees and bird-
papped through her shift,
With pins for teardrops is the long
wound's woman.
This was the sky, Jack Christ, each
minstrel angle
Drove in the heaven-driven of the
nails
Till the three-coloured rainbow
from my nipples
From pole to pole leapt round the
snail-waked world.
I by the tree of thieves, all glory's
sawbones,
Unsex the skeleton this mountain
minute,
And by this blowcock witness of

ALTARWISE BY OWL-LIGHT

the sun
Suffer the heaven's children
through my heartbeat.

IX

From the oracular archives and the
parchment,
Prophets and fibre kings in oil and
letter,
The lamped calligrapher, the queen
in splints,
Buckle to lint and cloth their natron
footsteps,
Draw on the glove of prints, dead
Cairo's henna
Pour like a halo on the caps and
serpents.
This was the resurrection in the
desert,

ALTARWISE BY OWL-LIGHT

Death from a bandage, rants the
mask of scholars
Gold on such features, and the
linen spirit
Weds my long gentleman to dusts
and furies;
With priest and pharaoh bed my
gentle wound,
World in the sand, on the triangle
landscape,
With stones of odyssey for ash and
garland
And rivers of the dead around my
neck.

X

Let the tale's sailor from a Chris-
tian voyage
Atlaswise hold half-way off the

ALTARWISE BY OWL-LIGHT

dummy bay
Time's ship-racked gospel on the
globe I balance:
So shall winged harbours through
the rockbirds' eyes
Spot the blown word, and on the
seas I image
December's thorn screwed in a
brow of holly.
Let the first Peter from a rainbow's
quayrail
Ask the tall fish swept from the
bible east,
What rhubarb man peeled in her
foam-blue channel
Has sown a flying garden round
that sea-ghost?
Green as beginning, let the garden
diving

ALTARWISE BY OWL-LIGHT

Soar, with its two bark towers, to
that Day
When the worm builds with the
gold straws of venom
My nest of mercies in the rude, red
tree.

**BECAUSE THE PLEASURE-BIRD
WHISTLES**

Because the pleasure-bird whistles
after the hot wires,
Shall the blind horse sing sweeter?
Convenient bird and beast lie
lodged to suffer
The supper and knives of a mood.

BECAUSE THE PLEASURE-BIRD WHISTLES

In the sniffed and poured snow on
the tip of the tongue of the year
That clouts the spittle like bubbles
with broken rooms,
An enamoured man alone by the
twigs of his eyes, two fires,
Camped in the drug-white shower
of nerves and food,
Savours the lick of the times
through a deadly wood of hair
In a wind that plucked a goose,
Nor ever, as the wild tongue breaks
its tombs,
Rounds to look at the red, wagged
root.
Because there stands, one story out
of the bum city,
That frozen wife whose juices drift
like a fixed sea

BECAUSE THE PLEASURE-BIRD WHISTLES

Secretly in statuary,
Shall I, struck on the hot and rock-
ing street,
Not spin to stare at an old year
Toppling and burning in the mud-
dle of towers and galleries
Like the mauled pictures of boys?
The salt person and blasted place
I furnish with the meat of a fable;
If the dead starve, their stomachs
turn to tumble
An upright man in the antipodes
Or spray-based and rock-chested
sea:
Over the past table I repeat this
present grace.

**I MAKE THIS IN A WARRING
ABSENCE**

I make this in a warring absence
when
Each ancient, stone-necked minute
of love's season
Harbours my anchored tongue,
slips the quaystone,

I MAKE THIS IN A WARRING ABSENCE

When, praise is blessed, her pride
in mast and fountain
Sailed and set dazzling by the
handshaped ocean,
In that proud sailing tree with
branches driven
Through the last vault and veg-
etable groyne,
And this weak house to marrow-
columned heaven,

Is corner-cast, breath's rag,
scrawled weed, a vain
And opium head, crow stalk,
puffed, cut, and blown,
Or like the tide-looped breastknot
reefed again
Or rent ancestrally the roped sea-
hymen,

I MAKE THIS IN A WARRING ABSENCE

And, pride is last, is like a child
alone
By magnet winds to her blind
mother drawn,
Bread and milk mansion in a tooth-
less town.

She makes for me a nettle's inno-
cence
And a silk pigeon's guilt in her
proud absence,
In the molested rocks the shell of
virgins,
The frank, closed pearl, the sea-
girls' lineaments
Glint in the staved and siren-
printed caverns,
Is maiden in the shameful oak,
omens

I MAKE THIS IN A WARRING ABSENCE

Whalebed and bulldance, the gold
bush of lions,
Proud as a sucked stone and huge
as sandgrains.

These are her contraries: the beast
who follows
With priest's grave foot and hand
of five assassins
Her molten flight up cinder-
nesting columns,
Calls the starved fire herd, is cast in
ice,
Lost in a limp-treed and uneating
silence,
Who scales a hailing hill in her cold
flintsteps
Falls on a ring of summers and
locked noons.

I MAKE THIS IN A WARRING ABSENCE

I make a weapon of an ass's skeleton

And walk the warring sands by the dead town.

Cudgel great air, wreck east, and topple sundown,

Storm her sped heart, hang with beheaded veins

Its wringing shell, and let her eyelids fasten.

Destruction, picked by birds, brays through the jaw-bone,

And, for that murder's sake, dark with contagion

Like an approaching wave I sprawl to ruin.

Ruin, the room of errors, one rood dropped

I MAKE THIS IN A WARRING ABSENCE

Down the stacked sea and water-
pillared shade,
Weighed in rock shroud, is my
proud pyramid;
Where, wound in emerald linen
and sharp wind,
The hero's head lies scraped of ev-
ery legend,
Comes love's anatomist with sun-
gloved hand
Who picks the live heart on a dia-
mond.

'His mother's womb had a tongue
that lapped up mud,'
Cried the topless, inchtaped lips
from hank and hood
In that bright anchorground where
I lay lined,

I MAKE THIS IN A WARRING ABSENCE

'A lizard darting with black
venom's thread
Doubled, to fork him back,
through the lockjaw bed
And the breath-white, curtained
mouth of seed.'
'See,' drummed the taut masks,
'how the dead ascend:
In the groin's endless coil a man is
tangled.'

These once-blind eyes have
breathed a wind of visions,
The cauldron's root through this
once-rindless hand
Fumed like a tree, and tossed a
burning bird;
With loud, torn tooth and tail and
cobweb drum

I MAKE THIS IN A WARRING ABSENCE

The crumpled packs fled past this
ghost in bloom,
And, mild as pardon from a cloud
of pride,
The terrible world my brother
bares his skin.

Now in the cloud's big breast lie
quiet countries,
Delivered seas my love from her
proud place
Walks with no wound, nor light-
ning in her face,
A calm wind blows that raised the
trees like hair
Once where the soft snow's blood
was turned to ice.
And though my love pulls the pale,
nipples air,

I MAKE THIS IN A WARRING ABSENCE

Prides of to-morrow suckling in
her eyes,
Yet this I make in a forgiving pres-
ence.

**WHEN ALL MY FIVE AND
COUNTRY SENSES SEE**

When all my five and country
senses see,
The fingers will forget green
thumbs and mark
How, through the halfmoon's veg-
etable eye,

WHEN ALL MY FIVE AND COUNTRY
SENSES SEE

Husk of young stars and handfull
zodiac,
Love in the frost is pared and win-
tered by,
The whispering ears will watch
love drummed away
Down breeze and shell to a discor-
dant beach,
And, lashed to syllables, the lynx
tongue cry
That her fond wounds are mended
bitterly.
My nostrils see her breath burn like
a bush.

My one and noble heart has wit-
nesses
In all love's countries, that will
grope awake;

WHEN ALL MY FIVE AND COUNTRY
SENSES SEE

And when blind sleep drops on the
 spying senses,
The heart is sensual, though five
 eyes break.

WE LYING BY SEASAND

We lying by seasand, watching yellow
And the grave sea, mock who deride
Who follow the red rivers, hollow
Alcove of words out of cicada
shade,

WE LYING BY SEASAND

For in this yellow grave of sand
and sea

A calling for colour calls with the
wind

That's grave and gay as grave and
sea

Sleeping on either hand.

The lunar silences, the silent tide
Lapping the still canals, the dry
tide-master

Ribbed between desert and water
storm,

Should cure our ills of the water
With a one-coloured calm;

The heavenly music over the sand
Sounds with the grains as they
hurry

Hiding the golden mountains and
mansions

WE LYING BY SEASAND

Of the grave, gay, seaside land.
Bound by a sovereign strip, we lie,
Watch yellow, wish for wind to
blow away

The strata of the shore and drown
red rock;

But wishes breed not, neither
Can we fend off rock arrival,
Lie watching yellow until the
golden weather

Breaks, O my heart's blood, like a
heart and hill.

It is the sinners' dust-tongued bell

It is the sinners' dust-tongued bell
claps me to churches

When, with his torch and hour-
glass, like a sulphur priest,
His beast heel cleft in a sandal,

WE LYING BY SEASAND

Time marks a black aisle kindle
from the brand of ashes,
Grief with dishevelled hands tear
out the altar ghost
And a firewind kill the candle.

Over the choir minute I hear the
hour chant:
Time's coral saint and the salt grief
drown a foul sepulchre
And a whirlpool drives the prayer-
wheel;
Moonfall and sailing emperor, pale
as their tide-print,
Hear by death's accident the
clocked and dashed-down
spire
Strike the sea hour through bell-
metal.

WE LYING BY SEASAND

There is loud and dark directly un-
der the dumb flame,
Storm, snow, and fountain in the
weather of fireworks,
Cathedral calm in the pulled
house;
Grief with drenched book and can-
dle christens the cherub time
From the emerald, still bell; and
from the pacing weather-cock
The voice of bird on coral prays.

Forever it is a white child in the
dark-skinned summer
Out of the font of bone and plants
at that stone tocsin
Scales the blue wall of spirits;
From blank and leaking winter
sails the child in colour,

WE LYING BY SEASAND

Shakes, in crabbed burial shawl, by
sorcerer's insect woken,
Ding dong from the mute turrets.

I mean by time the cast and curfew
rascal of our marriage,
At nightbreak born in the fat side,
from an animal bed

In a holy room in a wave;
And all love's sinners in sweet
cloth kneel to a hyleg image,
Nutmeg, civet, and sea-parsley
serve the plagued groom and
bride

Who have brought forth the urchin
grief.

O MAKE ME A MASK

O make me a mask and a wall to
shut from your spies
Of the sharp, enamelled eyes and
the spectacled claws
Rape and rebellion in the nurseries
of my face,
Gag of dumbstruck tree to block

O MAKE ME A MASK

from bare enemies
The bayonet tongue in this undefended
prayerpiece,
The present mouth, and the sweetly blown
trumpet of lies,
Shaped in old armour and oak the countenance
of a dunce
To shield the glistening brain and blunt the
examiners,
And a tear-stained widower grief drooped
from the lashes
To veil belladonna and let the dry eyes
perceive
Others betray the lamenting lies of their
losses
By the curve of the nude mouth or the laugh
up the sleeve.

THE SPIRE CRANES

The spire cranes. Its statue is an
aviary.
From the stone nest it does not let
the feathery
Carved birds blunt their striking
throats on the salt gravel,
Pierce the spilt sky with diving

THE SPIRE CRANES

wing in weed and heel
An inch in froth. Chimes cheat the
prison spire, pelter
In time like outlaw rains on that
priest, water,
Time for the swimmers' hands,
music for silver lock
And mouth. Both note and plume
plunge from the spire's hook.
Those craning birds are choice for
you, songs that jump back
To the built voice, or fly with win-
ter to the bells,
But do not travel down dumb wind
like prodigals.

AFTER THE FUNERAL

(IN MEMORY OF ANN JONES)

After the funeral, mule praises,
brays,
Windshake of sailshaped ears,
muffle-toed tap
Tap happily of one peg in the thick

AFTER THE FUNERAL

Grave's foot, blinds down the lids,
the teeth in black,
The spittled eyes, the salt ponds in
the sleeves,
Morning smack of the spade that
wakes up sleep,
Shakes a desolate boy who slits his
throat
In the dark of the coffin and sheds
dry leaves,
That breaks one bone to light with
a judgment clout,
After the feast of tear-stuffed time
and thistles
In a room with a stuffed fox and a
stale fern,
I stand, for this memorial's sake,
alone
In the snivelling hours with dead,

AFTER THE FUNERAL

humped Ann
Whose hooded, fountain heart
once fell in puddles
Round the parched worlds of
Wales and drowned each sun
(Though this for her is a monstrous
image blindly
Magnified out of praise; her death
was a still drop;
She would not have me sinking in
the holy
Flood of her heart's fame; she
would lie dumb and deep
And need no druid of her broken
body).
But I, Ann's bard on a raised
hearth, call all
The seas to service that her wood-
tongued virtue

AFTER THE FUNERAL

Babble like a bellbuoy over the
hymning heads,
Bow down the walls of the ferned
and foxy woods
That her love sing and swing
through a brown chapel,
Bless her bent spirit with four,
crossing birds.
Her flesh was meek as milk, but
this skyward statue
With the wild breast and blessed
and giant skull
Is carved from her in a room with a
wet window
In a fiercely mourning house in a
crooked year.
I know her scrubbed and sour
humble hands
Lie with religion in their cramp,

AFTER THE FUNERAL

her threadbare
Whisper in a damp word, her wits
drilled hollow,
Her fist of a face died clenched on
a round pain;
And sculptured Ann is seventy
years of stone.
These cloud-sopped, marble
hands, this monumental
Argument of the hewn voice, ges-
ture and psalm,
Storm me forever over her grave
until
The stuffed lung of the fox twitch
and cry Love
And the strutting fern lay seeds on
the black sill.

ONCE IT WAS THE COLOUR OF
SAYING

Once it was the colour of saying
Soaked my table the uglier side of
a hill
With a capsized field where a
school sat still
And a black and white patch of

ONCE IT WAS THE COLOUR OF
SAYING

girls grew playing;
The gentle seaslides of saying I
must undo
That all the charmingly drowned
arise to cockcrow and kill.
When I whistled with mitching
boys through a reservoir park
Where at night we stoned the cold
and cuckoo
Lovers in the dirt of their leafy
beds,
The shade of their trees was a word
of many shades
And a lamp of lightning for the
poor in the dark;
Now my saying shall be my undo-
ing,
And every stone I wind off like a
reel.

NOT FROM THIS ANGER

Not from this anger, anticlimax af-
ter
Refusal struck her loin and the
lame flower
Bent like a beast to lap the singular
floods
In a land strapped by hunger

NOT FROM THIS ANGER

Shall she receive a bellyful of
weeds
And bear those tendril hands I
touch across
The agonized, two seas.
Behind my head a square of sky
sags over
The circular smile tossed from
lover to lover
And the golden ball spins out of
the skies;
Not from this anger after
Refusal struck like a bell under wa-
ter
Shall her smile breed that mouth,
behind the mirror,
That burns along my eyes.

HOW SHALL MY ANIMAL

How shall my animal
Whose wizard shape I trace in the
 cavernous skull,
Vessel of abscesses and exultation's
 shell,
Endure burial under the spelling
 wall,

HOW SHALL MY ANIMAL

The invoked, shrouding veil at the
cap of the face,
Who should be furious,
Drunk as a vineyard snail, flailed
like an octopus,
Roaring, crawling, quarrel
With the outside weathers,
The natural circle of the discovered
skies
Draw down to its weird eyes?

How shall it magnetize,
Towards the studded male in a
bent, midnight blaze
That melts the lionhead's heel and
horseshoe of the heart,
A brute land in the cool top of the
country days
To trot with a loud mate the

HOW SHALL MY ANIMAL

haybeds of a mile,
Love and labour and kill
In quick, sweet, cruel light till the
 locked ground sprout out,
The black, burst sea rejoice,
The bowels turn turtle,
Claw of the crabbed veins squeeze
 from each red particle
The parched and raging voice?

Fishermen of mermen
Creep and harp on the tide, sinking
 their charmed, bent pin
With bridebait of gold bread, I with
 a living skein,
Tongue and ear in the thread, angle
 the temple-bound
Curl-locked and animal cavepools
 of spells and bone,

HOW SHALL MY ANIMAL

Trace out a tentacle,
Nailed with an open eye, in the
 bowl of wounds and weed
To clasp my fury on ground
And clap its great blood down;
Never shall beast be born to atlas
 the few seas
Or poise the day on a horn.

Sigh long, clay cold, lie shorn,
Cast high, stunned on gilled stone;
 sly scissors ground in frost
Clack through the thicket of
 strength, love hewn in pillars
 drops
With carved bird, saint, and
 sun, the wrackspiked maiden
 mouth
Lops, as a bush plumed with

HOW SHALL MY ANIMAL

flames, the rant of the fierce eye,
Clips short the gesture of breath.
Die in red feathers when the flying
 heaven's cut,
And roll with the knocked earth:
Lie dry, rest robbed, my beast.
You have kicked from a dark den,
 leaped up the whinnying light,
And dug your grave in my breast.

THE TOMBSTONE TOLD WHEN
SHE DIED

The tombstone told when she died.
Her two surnames stopped me
still.

A virgin married at rest.
She married in this pouring place,
That I struck one day by luck,

THE TOMBSTONE TOLD WHEN SHE DIED

Before I heard in my mother's side
Or saw in the looking-glass shell
The rain through her cold heart
 speak
And the sun killed in her face.
More the thick stone cannot tell.
Before she lay on a stranger's bed
With a hand plunged through her
 hair,
Or that rainy tongue beat back
Through the devilish years and in-
 nocent deaths
To the room of a secret child,
Among men later I heard it said
She cried her white-dressed limbs
 were bare
And her red lips were kissed black,
She wept in her pain and made
 mouths,

THE TOMBSTONE TOLD WHEN SHE DIED

Talked and tore though her eyes
smiled.

I who saw in a hurried film
Death and this mad heroine
Meet once on a mortal wall
Heard her speak through the
chipped beak
Of the stone bird guarding her:
I died before bedtime came
But my womb was bellowing
And I felt with my bare fall
A blazing red harsh head tear up
And the dear floods of his hair.

ON NO WORK OF WORDS

On no work of words now for three
lean months in the bloody
Belly of the rich year and the big
purse of my body
I bitterly take to task my poverty
and craft:
To take to give is all, return what is

ON NO WORK OF WORDS

hungrily given
Puffing the pounds of manna up
through the dew to heaven,
The lovely gift of the gab bangs
back on a blind shaft.

To lift to leave from treasures of
man is pleasing death
That will rake at last all currencies
of the marked breath
And count the taken, forsaken
mysteries in a bad dark.

To surrender now is to pay the ex-
pensive ogre twice.
Ancient woods of my blood, dash
down to the nut of the seas
If I take to burn or return this world
which is each man's work.

A SAINT ABOUT TO FALL

A saint about to fall,
The stained flats of heaven hit and
 razed
To the kissed kite hems of his
 shawl,
On the last street wave praised
The unwinding, song by rock,

A SAINT ABOUT TO FALL

Of the woven wall
Of his father's house in the sands,
The vanishing of the musical ship-
work and the chucked bells,
The wound-down cough of the
blood-counting clock
Behind a face of hands,
On the angelic etna of the last
whirring featherlands,
Wind-heeled foot in the hole of a
fireball,
Hymned his shrivelling flock,
On the last rick's tip by spilled
wine-wells
Sang heaven hungry and the quick
Cut Christbread spitting vinegar
and all
The mazes of his praise and en-
vious tongue were worked in

A SAINT ABOUT TO FALL

flames and shells.

Glory cracked like a flea.
The sun-leaved holy candlewoods
Drivelled down to one singeing
tree
With a stub of black buds,
The sweet, fish-gilled boats bring-
ing blood
Lurched through a scuttled sea
With a hold of leeches and straws,
Heaven fell with his fall and one
crooked bell beat the left air.
O wake in me in my house in the
mud
Of the crotch of the squawking
shores,
Flicked from the carbolic city puz-
zle in a bed of sores

A SAINT ABOUT TO FALL

The scudding base of the familiar
sky,
The lofty roots of the clouds.
From an odd room in a split house
stare,
Milk in your mouth, at the sour
floods
That bury the sweet street slowly,
see
The skull of the earth is barbed
with a war of burning brains
and hair.

Strike in the time-bomb town,
Raise the live rafters of the
eardrum,
Throw your fear a parcel of stone
Through the dark asylum,
Lapped among herods wail

A SAINT ABOUT TO FALL

As their blade marches in
That the eyes are already murdered,
The stocked heart is forced, and
agony has another mouth to
feed.

O wake to see, after a noble fall,
The old mud hatch again, the hor-
rid

Woe drip from the dishrag hands
and the pressed sponge of the
forehead,

The breath draw back like a bolt
through white oil

And a stranger enter like iron.

Cry joy that hits witchlike midwife
second

Bullies into rough seas you so gen-
tle

A SAINT ABOUT TO FALL

And makes with a flick of the
thumb and sun
A thundering bullring of your
silent and girl-circled island.

**'IF MY HEAD HURT A HAIR'S
FOOT'**

'If my head hurt a hair's foot
Pack back the downed bone. If the
unpricked ball of my breath
Bump on a spout let the bubbles
jump out.
Sooner drop with the worm of the

'IF MY HEAD HURT A HAIR'S FOOT'

ropes round my throat
Than bully ill love in the clouted
scene.

'All game phrases fit your ring of a
cockfight:

I'll comb the snared woods with a
glove on a lamp,

Peck, sprint, dance on fountains
and duck time

Before I rush in a crouch the ghost
with a hammer, air,

Strike light, and bloody a loud
room.

'If my bunched, monkey coming is
cruel

Rage me back to the making house.

My hand unravel

When you sew the deep door. The

'IF MY HEAD HURT A HAIR'S FOOT'

bed is a cross place.
Bend, if my journey ache, direction
like an arc or make
A limp and riderless shape to leap
nine thinning months.'

'No. Not for Christ's dazzling bed
Or a nacreous sleep among soft
particles and charms
My dear would I change my tears
or your iron head.
Thrust, my daughter or son, to es-
cape, there is none, none, none,
Nor when all ponderous heaven's
host of waters breaks.

'Now to awake husked of gestures
and my joy like a cave
To the anguish and carrion, to the
infant forever unfree,

'IF MY HEAD HURT A HAIR'S FOOT'

O my lost love bounced from a
good home;
The grain that hurries this way
from the rim of the grave
Has a voice and a house, and there
and here you must couch and
cry.

'Rest beyond choice in the dust-
appointed grain,
At the breast stored with seas. No
return
Through the waves of the fat
streets nor the skeleton's thin
ways.
The grave and my calm body are
shut to your coming as stone,
And the endless beginning of
prodigies suffers open.'

TWENTY-FOUR YEARS

Twenty-four years remind the tears
of my eyes.

(Bury the dead for fear that they
walk to the grave in labour.)

In the groin of the natural doorway
I crouched like a tailor
Sewing a shroud for a journey

TWENTY-FOUR YEARS

By the light of the meat-eating sun.
Dressed to die, the sensual strut be-
gun,
With my red veins full of money,
In the final direction of the elemen-
tary town
I advance for as long as forever is.

THE CONVERSATION OF PRAYER

The conversation of prayers about
to be said
By the child going to bed and the
man on the stairs
Who climbs to his dying love in her
high room,
The one not caring to whom in his

THE CONVERSATION OF PRAYER

sleep he will move
And the other full of tears that she
will be dead,

Turns in the dark on the sound
they know will arise
Into the answering skies from the
green ground,
From the man on the stairs and the
child by his bed.

The sound about to be said in the
two prayers
For the sleep in a safe land and the
love who dies

Will be the same grief flying.
Whom shall they calm?
Shall the child sleep unharmed or
the man be crying?
The conversation of prayers about

THE CONVERSATION OF PRAYER

to be said

Turns on the quick and the dead,
and the man on the stairs

To-night shall find no dying but
alive and warm

In the fire of his care his love in the
high room.

And the child not caring to whom
he climbs his prayer

Shall drown in a grief as deep as his
true grave,

And mark the dark eyed wave,
through the eyes of sleep,

Dragging him up the stairs to one
who lies dead.

A Refusal to Mourn the Death, by
Fire, of a Child in London

Never until the mankind making

THE CONVERSATION OF PRAYER

Bird beast and flower
Fathering and all humbling dark-
ness
Tells with silence the last light
breaking
And the still hour
Is come of the sea tumbling in har-
ness

And I must enter again the round
Zion of the water bead
And the synagogue of the ear of
corn
Shall I let pray the shadow of a
sound
Or sow my salt seed
In the least valley of sackcloth to
mourn

The majesty and burning of the

THE CONVERSATION OF PRAYER

child's death.
I shall not murder
The mankind of her going with a
grave truth
Nor blaspheme down the stations
of the breath
With any further
Elegy of innocence and youth.
Deep with the first dead lies Lon-
don's daughter,
Robed in the long friends,
The grains beyond age, the dark
veins of her mother,
Secret by the unmourning water
Of the riding Thames.
After the first death, there is no
other.

POEM IN OCTOBER

It was my thirtieth year to
heaven
Woke to my hearing from harbour
and neighbour wood
And the mussel pooled and the
heron
Priested shore

POEM IN OCTOBER

The morning beckon
With water praying and call of
seagull and rook
And the knock of sailing boats on
the net webbed wall
Myself to set foot
That second
In the still sleeping town and set
forth.

My birthday began with the
water-
Birds and the birds of the winged
trees flying my name
Above the farms and the white
horses
And I rose
In rainy autumn
And walked abroad in a shower of

POEM IN OCTOBER

all my days.
High tide and the heron dived
when I took the road
Over the border
And the gates
Of the town closed as the town
awoke.

A springful of larks in a rolling
Cloud and the roadside bushes
brimming with whistling
Blackbirds and the sun of Octo-
ber
Summery
On the hill's shoulder,
Here were fond climates and sweet
singers suddenly
Come in the morning where I wan-
dered and listened

POEM IN OCTOBER

To the rain wringing
Wind blow cold
In the wood faraway under me.

Pale rain over the dwindling
harbour
And over the sea wet church the
size of a snail
With its horns through mist and
the castle
Brown as owls
But all the gardens
Of spring and summer were
blooming in the tall tales
Beyond the border and under the
lark full cloud.
There could I marvel
My birthday
Away but the weather turned

POEM IN OCTOBER

around.

It turned away from the blithe
country
And down the other air and the
blue altered sky
Streamed again a wonder of
summer
 With apples
 Pears and red currants
And I saw in the turning so clearly
a child's
Forgotten mornings when he
walked with his mother
 Through the parables
 Of sun light
And the legends of the green
chapels
And the twice told fields of in-

POEM IN OCTOBER

fancy
That his tears burned my cheeks
and his heart moved in mine.
These were the woods the river
and sea
Where a boy
In the listening
Summertime of the dead whis-
pered the truth of his joy
To the trees and the stones and the
fish in the tide.
And the mystery
Sang alive
Still in the water and singing-
birds.

And there could I marvel my
birthday
Away but the weather turned

POEM IN OCTOBER

around. And the true
Joy of the long dead child sang
burning

In the sun.

It was my thirtieth
Year to heaven stood there then in
the summer noon

Though the town below lay leaved
with October blood.

O may my heart's truth
Still be sung

On this high hill in a year's turn-
ing.

THIS SIDE OF THE TRUTH

(FOR LLEWELYN)

This side of the truth,
You may not see, my son,
King of your blue eyes
In the blinding country of youth,
That all is undone,

THIS SIDE OF THE TRUTH

Under the unminding skies,
Of innocence and guilt
Before you move to make
One gesture of the heart or head,
Is gathered and spilt
Into the winding dark
Like the dust of the dead.

Good and bad, two ways
Of moving about your death
By the grinding sea,
King of your heart in the blind
 days,
Blow away like breath,
Go crying through you and me
And the souls of all men
Into the innocent
Dark, and the guilty dark, and
 good

THIS SIDE OF THE TRUTH

Death, and bad death, and then
In the last element
Fly like the stars' blood
Like the sun's tears,
Like the moon's seed, rubbish
And fire, the flying rant
Of the sky, king of your six years.
And the wicked wish,
Down the beginning of plants
And animals and birds,
Water and light, the earth and sky,
Is cast before you move,
And all your deeds and words,
Each truth, each lie,
Die in unjudging love.

TO OTHERS THAN YOU

Friend by enemy I call you out.
You with a bad coin in your socket,
You my friend there with a win-
ning air
Who palmed the lie on me when
you looked
Brassily at my shyest secret,

TO OTHERS THAN YOU

Enticed with twinkling bits of the
eye
Till the sweet tooth of my love bit
dry,
Rasped at last, and I stumbled and
sucked,
Whom now I conjure to stand as
thief
In the memory worked by mirrors,
With unforgettably smiling act,
Quickness of hand in the velvet
glove
And my whole heart under your
hammer,
Were once such a creature, so gay
and frank
A desireless familiar
I never thought to utter or think
While you displaced a truth in the

TO OTHERS THAN YOU

air,

That though I loved them for their
faults

As much as for their good,

My friends were enemies on stilts
With their heads in a cunning
cloud.

LOVE IN THE ASYLUM

A stranger has come
To share my room in the house not
right in the head,
A girl mad as birds
Bolting the night of the door with
her arm her plume.
Strait in the mazed bed

LOVE IN THE ASYLUM

She deludes the heaven-proof
house with entering clouds

Yet she deludes with walking the
nightmarish room,

At large as the dead,

Or rides the imagined oceans of the
male wards.

She has come possessed
Who admits the delusive light
through the bouncing wall,
Possessed by the skies

She sleeps in the narrow trough yet
she walks the dust

Yet raves at her will

On the madhouse boards worn
thin by my walking tears.

And taken by light in her arms at

LOVE IN THE ASYLUM

long and dear last
I may without fail
Suffer the first vision that set fire to
the stars.

UNLUCKILY FOR A DEATH

Unluckily for a death
Waiting with phoenix under
The pyre yet to be lighted of my
 sins and days,
And for the woman in shades
Saint carved and sensual among
 the scudding

UNLUCKILY FOR A DEATH

Dead and gone, dedicate forever to
my self

Though the brawl of the kiss has
not occurred

On the clay cold mouth, on the fire
Branded forehead, that could bind
Her constant, nor the winds of love
broken wide

To the wind the choir and cloister
Of the wintry nunnery of the order
of lust

Beneath my life, that sighs for the
seducer's coming

In the sun strokes of summer,

Loving on this sea banded guilt

My holy lucky body

Under the cloud against love is
caught and held and kissed

UNLUCKILY FOR A DEATH

In the mill of the midst
Of the descending day, the dark
 our folly,
Cut to the still star in the order of
 the quick
But blessed by such heroic hosts in
 your every
Inch and glance that the wound
Is certain god, and the ceremony of
 souls
Is celebrated there, and commu-
 nion between suns.
Never shall my self chant
About the saint in shades while the
 endless breviary
Turns of your prayed flesh, nor
 shall I shoo the bird below me:
The death bidding two lie lonely.

UNLUCKILY FOR A DEATH

I see the tigrion in tears
In the androgynous dark,
His striped and noon maned tribe
 striding to holocaust,
The she mules bear their mino-
 taurs,
The duck-billed platypus broody
 in a milk of birds.
I see the wanting nun saint carved
 in a garb
Of shades, symbol of desire be-
 yond my hours
And guilts, great crotch and giant
Continnence. I see the unfired
 phoenix, herald
And heaven crier, arrow now of as-
 piring
And the renouncing of islands.
All love but for the full assemblage

UNLUCKILY FOR A DEATH

in flower
Of the living flesh is monstrous or
immortal,
And the grave its daughters.

Love, my fate got luckily,
Teaches with no telling
That the phoenix' bid for heaven
and the desire after
Death in the carved nunnery
Both shall fail if I bow not to your
blessing
Nor walk in the cool of your mortal
garden
With immortality at my side like
Christ the sky.
This I know from the native
Tongue of your translating eyes.
The young stars told me,

UNLUCKILY FOR A DEATH

Hurling into beginning like Christ
the child.

Lucklessly she must lie patient
And the vaulting bird be still. O
my true love, hold me.

In your every inch and glance is the
globe of genesis spun,
And the living earth your sons.

THE HUNCHBACK IN THE PARK

The hunchback in the park
A solitary mister
Propped between trees and water
From the opening of the garden
 lock
That lets the trees and water enter
Until the Sunday sombre bell at

THE HUNCHBACK IN THE PARK

dark

Eating bread from a newspaper
Drinking water from the chained
cup

That the children filled with gravel
In the fountain basin where I sailed
my ship

Slept at night in a dog kennel
But nobody chained him up.

Like the park birds he came early
Like the water he sat down
And Mister they called Hey mister
The truant boys from the town
Running when he had heard them
clearly

On out of sound

Past lake and rockery
Laughing when he shook his paper

THE HUNCHBACK IN THE PARK

Hunchbacked in mockery
Through the loud zoo of the willow
 groves
Dodging the park keeper
With his stick that picked up
 leaves.

And the old dog sleeper
Alone between nurses and swans
While the boys among willows
Made the tigers jump out of their
 eyes
To roar on the rockery stones
And the groves were blue with
 sailors

Made all day until bell time
A woman figure without fault
Straight as a young elm
Straight and tall from his crooked

THE HUNCHBACK IN THE PARK

bones
That she might stand in the night
After the locks and chains
All night in the unmade park
After the railings and shrubberies
The birds the grass the trees the
lake
And the wild boys innocent as
strawberries
Had followed the hunchback
To his kennel in the dark.

INTO HER LYING DOWN HEAD

I

Into her lying down head
His enemies entered bed,
Under the encumbered eyelid,
Through the rippled drum of the
hair-buried ear;
And Noah's rekindled now unkind

INTO HER LYING DOWN HEAD

dove
Flew man-bearing there.
Last night in a raping wave
Whales unreined from the green
grave
In fountains of origin gave up their
love,
Along her innocence glided
Jaun aflame and savagely young
King Lear,
Queen Catherine howling
bare
And Samson drowned in his
hair,
The colossal intimacies of silent
Once seen strangers or shades
on a stair;
There the dark blade and wanton
sighing her down

INTO HER LYING DOWN HEAD

To a haycock couch and the scythes
of his arms

Rode and whistled a hundred
times

Before the crowing morning
climbed;

Man was the burning England she
was sleep-walking, and the en-
amouring island

Made her limbs blind by lumi-
nous charms,

Sleep to a newborn sleep in a swad-
dling loin-leaf stroked and sang
And his runaway beloved child-
like laid in the acorned sand.

II

There where a numberless
tongue

INTO HER LYING DOWN HEAD

Wound their room with a
male moan,
His faith around her flew un-
done
And darkness hung the walls with
baskets of snakes,
A furnace-nostrilled column-
membered
Super-or-near man
Resembling to her dulled sense
The thief of adolescence,
Early imaginary half remembered
Oceanic lover alone
Jealousy cannot forget for all her
sakes,
Made his bad bed in her good
Night, and enjoyed as he
would.
Crying, white gowned, from the

INTO HER LYING DOWN HEAD

middle moonlit stages
Out to the tiered and hearing
tide,
Close and far she announced the
theft of the heart
In the taken body at many ages,
Trespasser and broken bride
Celebrating at her side
All blood-signed assailing and
vanished marriages in which he
had no lovely part
Nor could share, for his pride,
to the least
Mutter and foul wingbeat of the
solemnizing nightpriest
Her holy unholy hours with the al-
ways anonymous beast.

III

INTO HER LYING DOWN HEAD

Two sand grains together in
bed,

Head to heaven-circling head,
Singly lie with the whole wide
shore,

The covering sea their nightfall
with no names;

And out of every domed and soil-
based shell

One voice in chains declaims
The female, deadly, and male
Libidinous betrayal,
Golden dissolving under the water
veil.

A she bird sleeping brittle by
Her lover's wings that fold to-
morrow's flight,

Within the nested treefork
Sings to the treading hawk

INTO HER LYING DOWN HEAD

Carrion, paradise, chirrup my
bright yolk.

A blade of grass longs with the
meadow,

A stone lies lost and locked in the
lark-high hill.

Open as to the air to the naked
shadow

O she lies alone and still,

Innocent between two wars,

With the incestuous secret brother
in the seconds to perpetuate the
stars,

A man torn up mourns in the
sole night.

And the second comers, the sever-
ers, the enemies from the deep

Forgotten dark, rest their pulse and
bury their dead in her faithless

INTO HER LYING DOWN HEAD

sleep.

DO NOT GO GENTLE INTO THAT
GOOD NIGHT

Do not go gentle into that good
night,
Old age should burn and rave at
close of day;
Rage, rage against the dying of the
light.

DO NOT GO GENTLE INTO THAT GOOD NIGHT

Though wise men at their end
know dark is right,
Because their words had forked no
lightning they
Do not go gentle into that good
night.

Good men, the last wave by, crying
how bright
Their frail deeds might have
danced in a green bay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the
light.

Wild men who caught and sang the
sun in flight,
And learn, too late, they grieved it
on its way,
Do not go gentle into that good
night.

DO NOT GO GENTLE INTO THAT GOOD NIGHT

Grave men, near death, who see
with blinding sight
Blind eyes could blaze like meteors
and be gay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the
light.

And you, my father, there on the
sad height,
Curse, bless, me now with your
fierce tears, I pray.
Do not go gentle into that good
night.
Rage, rage against the dying of the
light.

DEATHS AND ENTRANCES

On almost the incendiary eve
Of several near deaths,
When one at the great least of your
 best loved
And always known must leave
Lions and fires of his flying breath,
Of your immortal friends

DEATHS AND ENTRANCES

Who'd raise the organs of the
counted dust
To shoot and sing your praise,
One who called deepest down
shall hold his peace
That cannot sink or cease
Endlessly to his wound
In many married London's es-
tranging grief.

On almost the incendiary eve
When at your lips and keys,
Locking, unlocking, the murdered
strangers weave,
One who is most unknown,
Your polestar neighbour, sun of an-
other street,
Will dive up to his tears.
He'll bathe his raining blood in the

DEATHS AND ENTRANCES

male sea
Who strode for your own dead
And wind his globe out of your
water thread
And load the throats of shells
With every cry since light
Flashed first across his thunder-
clapping eyes.

On almost the incendiary eve
Of deaths and entrances,
When near and strange wounded
on London's waves
Have sought your single grave,
One enemy, of many, who knows
well
Your heart is luminous
In the watched dark, quivering
through locks and caves,

DEATHS AND ENTRANCES

Will pull the thunderbolts
To shut the sun, plunge, mount
 your darkened keys
And sear just riders back,
Until that one loved least
Looms the last Samson of your zo-
 diac.

A WINTER'S TALE

It is a winter's tale
That the snow blind twilight ferries
 over the lakes
And floating fields from the farm
 in the cup of the vales,
Gliding windless through the hand
 folded flakes,

A WINTER'S TALE

The pale breath of cattle at the
stealthy sail,

And the stars falling cold,
And the smell of hay in the snow,
and the far owl

Warning among the folds, and the
frozen hold

Flocked with the sheep white
smoke of the farm house cowl
In the river wended vales where
the tale was told.

Once when the world turned
old

On a star of faith pure as the drift-
ing bread,

As the food and flames of the snow,
a man unrolled

The scrolls of fire that burned in his

A WINTER'S TALE

heart and head,
Torn and alone in a farm house in a
fold

Of fields. And burning then
In his firelit island ringed by the
winged snow
And the dung hills white as wool
and the hen
Roosts sleeping chill till the flame
of the cock crow
Combs through the mantled yards
and the morning men

Stumble out with their spades,
The cattle stirring, the mousing cat
stepping shy,
The puffed birds hopping and
hunting, the milkmaids
Gentle in their clogs over the fallen

A WINTER'S TALE

sky,
And all the woken farm at its white
trades,

He knelt, he wept, he prayed,
By the spit and the black pot in the
log bright light
And the cup and the cut bread in
the dancing shade,
In the muffled house, in the quick
of night,
At the point of love, forsaken and
afraid.

He knelt on the cold stones,
He wept from the crest of grief, he
prayed to the veiled sky
May his hunger go howling on
bare white bones
Past the statues of the stables and

A WINTER'S TALE

the sky roofed sties
And the duck pond glass and the
blinding byres alone

Into the home of prayers
And fires where he should prowl
down the cloud
Of his snow blind love and rush in
the white lairs.

His naked need struck him howl-
ing and bowed
Though no sound flowed down the
hand folded air

But only the wind strung
Hunger of birds in the fields of the
bread of water, tossed
In high corn and the harvest melt-
ing on their tongues.
And his nameless need bound him

A WINTER'S TALE

burning and lost
When cold as snow he should run
the wended vales among

The rivers mouthed in night,
And drown in the drifts of his
need, and lie curled caught
In the always desiring centre of the
white
Inhuman cradle and the bride bed
forever sought
By the believer lost and the hurled
outcast of light.

Deliver him, he cried,
By losing him all in love, and cast
his need
Alone and naked in the engulfing
bride,
Never to flourish in the fields of the

A WINTER'S TALE

white seed
Or flower under the time dying
flesh astride.

Listen. The minstrels sing
In the departed villages. The
nightingale,
Dust in the buried wood, flies on
the grains of her wings
And spells on the winds of the
dead his winter's tale.
The voice of the dust of water from
the withered spring

Is telling. The wizened
Stream with bells and baying water
bounds. The dew rings
On the gristed leaves and the long
gone glistening
Parish of snow. The carved mouths

A WINTER'S TALE

in the rock are wind swept
strings.

Time sings through the intricately
dead snow drop. Listen.

It was a hand or sound
In the long ago land that glided the
dark door wide
And there outside on the bread of
the ground
A she bird rose and rayed like a
burning bride.
A she bird dawned, and her breast
with snow and scarlet downed.

Look. And the dancers move
On the departed, snow bushed
green, wanton in moon light
As a dust of pigeons. Exulting, the
grave hooved

A WINTER'S TALE

Horses, centaur dead, turn and
tread the drenched white
Paddocks in the farms of birds. The
dead oak walks for love.

The carved limbs in the rock
Leap, as to trumpets. Calligraphy
of the old
Leaves is dancing. Lines of age on
the stones weave in a flock.
And the harp shaped voice of the
water's dust plucks in a fold
Of fields. For love, the long ago she
bird rises. Look.

And the wild wings were
raised
Above her folded head, and the
soft feathered voice
Was flying through the house as

A WINTER'S TALE

though the she bird praised
And all the elements of the slow
fall rejoiced
That a man knelt alone in the cup
of the vales,

In the mantle and calm,
By the spit and the black pot in the
log bright light.
And the sky of birds in the plumed
voice charmed
Him up and he ran like a wind af-
ter the kindling flight
Past the blind barns and byres of
the windless farm.

In the poles of the year
When black birds died like priests
in the cloaked hedge row
And over the cloth of counties the

A WINTER'S TALE

far hills rode near,
Under the one leaved trees ran a
scarecrow of snow
And fast through the drifts of the
thickets antlered like deer,

Rags and prayers down the
knee-
Deep hillocks and loud on the
numbed lakes,
All night lost and long wading in
the wake of the she-
Bird through the times and lands
and tribes of the slow flakes.
Listen and look where she sails the
goose plucked sea,

The sky, the bird, the bride,
The cloud, the need, the planted
stars, the joy beyond

A WINTER'S TALE

The fields of seed and the time dy-
ing flesh astride,
The heavens, the heaven, the
grave, the burning font.
In the far ago land the door of his
death glided wide,

And the bird descended.
On a bread white hill over the
cupped farm
And the lakes and floating fields
and the river wended
Vales where he prayed to come to
the last harm
And the home of prayers and fires,
the tale ended.

The dancing perishes
On the white, no longer growing
green, and, minstrel dead,

A WINTER'S TALE

The singing breaks in the snow
shoed villages of wishes
That once cut the figures of birds
on the deep bread
And over the glazed lakes skated
the shapes of fishes

Flying. The rite is shorn
Of nightingale and centaur dead
horse. The springs wither
Back. Lines of age sleep on the
stones till trumpeting dawn.
Exultation lies down. Time buries
the spring weather
That belled and bounded with the
fossil and the dew reborn.

For the bird lay bedded
In a choir of wings, as though she
slept or died,

A WINTER'S TALE

And the wings glided wide and he
was hymned and wedded,
And through the thighs of the en-
gulfing bride,
The woman breasted and the
heaven headed

Bird, he was brought low,
Burning in the bride bed of love, in
the whirl-
Pool at the wanting centre, in the
folds
Of paradise, in the spun bud of the
world.
And she rose with him flowering in
her melting snow.

ON A WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

The sky is torn across
This ragged anniversary of two
Who moved for three years in tune
Down the long walks of their
 vows.

Now their love lies a loss

ON A WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

And Love and his patients roar on
a chain;
From every tune or crater
Carrying cloud, Death strikes their
house.

Too late in the wrong rain
They come together whom their
love parted:
The windows pour into their heart
And the doors burn in their brain.

THERE WAS A SAVIOUR

There was a saviour
Rarer than radium,
Commoner than water, crueller
than truth;
Children kept from the sun
Assembled at his tongue
To hear the golden note turn in

THERE WAS A SAVIOUR

a groove,
Prisoners of wishes locked their
eyes
In the jails and studies of his key-
less smiles.

The voice of children says
From a lost wilderness
There was calm to be done in his
safe unrest,
When hindering man hurt
Man, animal, or bird
We hid our fears in that murder-
ing breath,
Silence, silence to do, when earth
grew loud,
In lairs and asylums of the tremen-
dous shout.

There was glory to hear

THERE WAS A SAVIOUR

In the churches of his tears,
Under his downy arm you
sighed as he struck,
O you who could not cry
On to the ground when a man
died
Put a tear for joy in the un-
earthly flood
And laid your cheek against a
cloud-formed shell:
Now in the dark there is only your-
self and myself.

Two proud, blacked brothers
cry,
Winter-locked side by side,
To this inhospitable hollow year,
O we who could not stir
One lean sigh when we heard

THERE WAS A SAVIOUR

Greed on man beating near and
fire neighbour

But wailed and nested in the
sky-blue wall

Now break a giant tear for the little
known fall,

For the drooping of homes
That did not nurse our bones,
Brave deaths of only ones but
never found,

Now see, alone in us,
Our own true strangers' dust
Ride through the doors of our
unentered house.

Exiled in us we arouse the soft,
Unclenched, armless, silk and
rough love that breaks all rocks.

ON THE MARRIAGE OF A VIRGIN

Waking alone in a multitude of
loves when morning's light
Surprised in the opening of her
nightlong eyes
His golden yesterday asleep upon
the iris
And this day's sun leapt up the sky

ON THE MARRIAGE OF A VIRGIN

out of her thighs
Was miraculous virginity old as
loaves and fishes,
Though the moment of a miracle is
unending lightning
And the shipyards of Galilee's
footprints hide a navy of doves.

No longer will the vibrations of the
sun desire on
Her deepsea pillow where once she
married alone,
Her heart all ears and eyes, lips
catching the avalanche
Of the golden ghost who ringed
with his streams her mercury
bone,
Who under the lids of her windows
hoisted his golden luggage,

ON THE MARRIAGE OF A VIRGIN

For a man sleeps where fire leapt
down and she learns through
his arm

That other sun, the jealous cours-
ing of the unrivalled blood.

IN MY CRAFT OR SULLEN ART

In my craft or sullen art
Exercised in the still night
When only the moon rages
And the lovers lie abed
With all their griefs in their arms,
I labour by singing light
Not for ambition or bread

IN MY CRAFT OR SULLEN ART

Or the strut and trade of charms
On the ivory stages
But for the common wages
Of their most secret heart.

Not for the proud man apart
From the raging moon I write
On these spindrift pages
Nor for the towering dead
With their nightingales and psalms
But for the lovers, their arms
Round the griefs of the ages,
Who pay no praise or wages
Nor heed my craft or art.

CEREMONY AFTER A FIRE RAID

I

Myselfes

The grievers

Grieve

Among the street burned to tireless
death

A child of a few hours

CEREMONY AFTER A FIRE RAID

With its kneading mouth
Charred on the black breast of the
grave
The mother dug, and its arms full
of fires.

Begin
With singing
Sing
Darkness kindled back into begin-
ning
When the caught tongue nodded
blind,
A star was broken
Into the centuries of the child
Myselfs grieve now, and miracles
cannot atone.

Forgive
Us forgive

CEREMONY AFTER A FIRE RAID

Us your death that myselfes the
believers
May hold it in a great flood
Till the blood shall spurt,
And the dust shall sing like a bird
As the grains blow, as your death
grows, through our heart.

Crying
Your dying
Cry,
Child beyond cockcrow, by the
fire-dwarfed
Street we chant the flying sea
In the body bereft.
Love is the last light spoken. Oh
Seed of sons in the loin of the black
husk left.

II

CEREMONY AFTER A FIRE RAID

I know not whether
Adam or Eve, the adorned holy
 bullock
Or the white ewe lamb
Or the chosen virgin
Laid in her snow
On the altar of London,
Was the first to die
In the cinder of the little skull,
O bride and bride groom
O Adam and Eve together
Lying in the lull
Under the sad breast of the head
 stone
White as the skeleton
Of the garden of Eden.

I know the legend
Of Adam and Eve is never for a

CEREMONY AFTER A FIRE RAID

second

Silent in my service
Over the dead infants
Over the one
Child who was priest and servants,
Word, singers, and tongue
In the cinder of the little skull,
Who was the serpent's
Night fall and the fruit like a sun,
Man and woman undone,
Beginning crumbled back to dark-
ness
Bare as nurseries
Of the garden of wilderness.

III

Into the organpipes and steeples
Of the luminous cathedrals,
Into the weathercocks' molten

CEREMONY AFTER A FIRE RAID

mouths
Rippling in twelve-winded circles,
Into the dead clock burning the
hour
Over the urn of sabbaths
Over the whirling ditch of day-
break
Over the sun's hovel and the slum
of fire
And the golden pavements laid in
requiems,
Into the bread in a wheatfield of
flames,
Into the wine burning like brandy,
The masses of the sea
The masses of the sea under
The masses of the infant-bearing
sea
Erupt, fountain, and enter to utter

CEREMONY AFTER A FIRE RAID

for ever
Glory glory glory
The sundering ultimate kingdom
of genesis' thunder.

ONCE BELOW A TIME

I

Once below a time,
When my pinned-around-the-
spirit
Cut-to-measure flesh bit,
Suit for a serial sum
On the first of each hardship,

ONCE BELOW A TIME

My paid-for slaved-for own too
late
In love torn breeches and blistered
jacket
On the snapping rims of the ashpit,
In grottoes I worked with birds,
Spiked with a mastiff collar,
Tasselled in cellar and snipping
shop
Or decked on a cloud swallower,

Then swift from a bursting sea
with bottlecork boats
And out-of-perspective sailors,
In common clay clothes disguised
as scales,
As a he-god's paddling water
skirts,
I astounded the sitting tailors,

ONCE BELOW A TIME

I set back the clock faced tailors,
Then, bushily swanked in bear wig
and tails,
Hopping hot leaved and feathered
From the kangaroo foot of the
earth,
From the chill, silent centre
Trailing the frost bitten cloth,
Up through the lubber crust of
Wales
I rocketed to astonish
The flashing needle rock of squat-
ters,
The criers of Shabby and Shorten,
The famous stitch droppers.

II

My silly suit, hardly yet suffered
for,

ONCE BELOW A TIME

Around some coffin carrying
Birdman or told ghost I hung.
And the owl hood, the heel hider,
Claw fold and hole for the rotten
Head, deceived, I believed, my
maker,

The cloud perched tailors' master
with nerves for cotton.
On the old seas from stories,
thrashing my wings,
Combing with antlers, Columbus
on fire,
I was pierced by the idol tailor's
eyes,
Glared through shark mask and
navigating head,
Cold Nansen's beak on a boat full
of gongs,

ONCE BELOW A TIME

To the boy of common thread,
The bright pretender, the ridicu-
lous sea dandy
With dry flesh and earth for adorn-
ing and bed.
It was sweet to drown in the ready-
made handy water
With my cherry capped dangler
green as seaweed
Summoning a child's voice from a
webfoot stone,
Never never oh never to regret the
bugle I wore
On my cleaving arm as I blasted in
a wave.
Now shown and mostly bare I
would lie down,
Lie down, lie down and live
As quiet as a bone.

WHEN I WOKE

When I woke, the town spoke.
Birds and clocks and cross bells
Dinned aside the coiling crowd,
The reptile profligates in a flame,
Spoilers and pokers of sleep,
The next-door sea dispelled
Frogs and satans and woman-luck,

WHEN I WOKE

While a man outside with a bill-
hook,
Up to his head in his blood,
Cutting the morning off,
The warm-veined double of Time
And his scarving beard from a
book,
Slashed down the last snake as
though
It were a wand or subtle bough,
Its tongue peeled in the wrap of a
leaf.

Every morning I make,
God in bed, good and bad,
After a water-face walk,
The death-stagged scatter-breath
Mammoth and sparrowfall
Everybody's earth.

WHEN I WOKE

Where birds ride like leaves and
boats like ducks
I heard, this morning, waking,
Crossly out of the town noises
A voice in the erected air,
No prophet-progeny of mine,
Cry my sea town was breaking.
No Time, spoke the clocks, no God,
rang the bells,
I drew the white sheet over the is-
lands
And the coins on my eyelids sang
like shells.

AMONG THOSE KILLED IN THE
DAWN RAID WAS A MAN AGED
A HUNDRED

When the morning was waking
over the war
He put on his clothes and stepped
out and he died,

AMONG THOSE KILLED IN THE DAWN
RAID WAS A MAN AGED A HUNDRED

The locks yawned loose and a blast
blew them wide,
He dropped where he loved on the
burst pavement stone
And the funeral grains of the
slaughtered floor.
Tell his street on its back he
stopped a sun
And the craters of his eyes grew
springshots and fire
When all the keys shot from the
locks, and rang.
Dig no more for the chains of his
grey-haired heart.
The heavenly ambulance drawn by
a wound
Assembling waits for the spade's
ring on the cage.
O keep his bones away from the

AMONG THOSE KILLED IN THE DAWN
RAID WAS A MAN AGED A HUNDRED

common cart,
The morning is flying on the wings
of his age
And a hundred storks perch on the
sun's right hand.

LIE STILL, SLEEP BECALMED

Lie still, sleep becalmed,
sufferer with the
wound
In the throat, burning
and turning. All
night afloat
On the silent sea we

LIE STILL, SLEEP BECALMED

have heard the
sound
That came from the
wound wrapped in
the salt sheet.

Under the mile off moon
we trembled listen-
ing
To the sea sound flow-
ing like blood from
the loud wound
And when the salt sheet
broke in a storm of
singing
The voices of all the
drowned swam on
the wind.

Open a pathway

LIE STILL, SLEEP BECALMED

through the slow
sad sail,
Throw wide to the wind
the gates of the wan-
dering boat
For my voyage to be-
gin to the end of my
wound,
We heard the sea sound
sing, we saw the salt
sheet tell.
Lie still, sleep becalmed,
hide the mouth in
the throat,
Or we shall obey,
and ride with
you through the
drowned.

VISION AND PRAYER

I
Who
Are you
Who is born
In the next room
So loud to my own
That I can hear the womb

VISION AND PRAYER

Opening and the dark run
Over the ghost and the dropped son
Behind the wall thin as a wren's bone?
In the birth bloody room unknown
To the burn and turn of time
And the heart print of man
Bows no baptism
But dark alone
Blessing on
The wild
Child.

I
Must lie
Still as stone
By the wren bone
Wall hearing the moan
Of the mother hidden
And the shadowed head of pain

VISION AND PRAYER

Casting to-morrow like a thorn
And the midwives of miracle sing
 Until the turbulent new born
Burns me his name and his flame
 And the winged wall is torn
 By his torrid crown
 And the dark thrown
 From his loin
 To bright
 Light.

 When
 The wren
 Bone writhes down
 And the first dawn
 Furied by his stream
Swarms on the kingdom come
 Of the dazzler of heaven
And the splashed mothering maiden

VISION AND PRAYER

Who bore him with a bonfire in
His mouth and rocked him like a storm
I shall run lost in sudden
Terror and shining from
The once hooded room
Crying in vain
In the caldron
Of his
Kiss

In
The spin
Of the sun
In the spuming
Cyclone of his wing
For I was lost who am
Crying at the man drenched throne
In the first fury of his stream
And the lightnings of adoration

VISION AND PRAYER

Back to black silence melt and mourn
For I was lost who have come
To dumbfounding haven
And the finding one
And the high noon
Of his wound
Blinds my
Cry.

There
Crouched bare
In the shrine
Of his blazing
Breast I shall waken
To the judge blown bedlam
Of the uncaged sea bottom
The cloud climb of the exhaling tomb
And the bidden dust upsailing
With his flame in every grain.

VISION AND PRAYER

O spiral of ascension
From the vultured urn
Of the morning
Of man when
The land
And

The
Born sea
Praised the sun
The finding one
And upright Adam
Sang upon origin!
O the wings of the children!
The woundward flight of the ancient
Young from the canyons of oblivion!
The sky stride of the always slain
In battle! the happening
Of saints to their vision!

VISION AND PRAYER

The world winding home!
And the whole pain
Flows open
And I
Die.

II

In the name of the lost who glory in
The swinish plains of carrion
Under the burial song
Of the birds of burden
Heavy with the drowned
And the green dust
And bearing
The ghost
From
The ground
Like pollen
On the black plume

VISION AND PRAYER

And the beak of slime
I pray though I belong
Not wholly to that lamenting
Brethren for joy has moved within
The inmost marrow of my heart bone

That he who learns now the sun and moon
Of his mother's milk may return
Before the lips blaze and bloom
To the birth bloody room
Behind the wall's wren
Bone and be dumb
And the womb
That bore
For
All men
The adored
Infant light or
The dazzling prison

VISION AND PRAYER

Yawn to his upcoming.
In the name of the wanton
Lost on the unchristened mountain
In the centre of dark I pray him

That he let the dead lie though they moan
For his briared hands to hoist them
To the shrine of his world's wound
And the blood drop's garden
Endure the stone
Blind host to sleep
In the dark
And deep
Rock
Awake
No heart bone
But let it break
On the mountain crown
Unbidden by the sun

VISION AND PRAYER

And the beating dust be blown
Down to the river rooting plain
Under the night forever falling.

Forever falling night is a known
Star and country to the legion
Of sleepers whose tongue I toll
 To mourn his deluging
Light through sea and soil
 And we have come
 To know all
 Places
 Ways
 Mazes
 Passages
 Quarters and graves
 Of the endless fall.
 Now common lazarus
Of the charting sleepers prays

VISION AND PRAYER

Never to awake and arise
For the country of death is the heart's size

And the star of the lost the shape of the eyes.

In the name of the fatherless

In the name of the unborn

And the undesirers

Of midwiving morning's

Hands or instruments

O in the name

Of no one

Now or

No

One to

Be I pray

May the crimson

Sun spin a grave grey

And the colour of clay

Stream upon his martyrdom

VISION AND PRAYER

In the interpreted evening
And the known dark of the earth amen.

I turn the corner of prayer and burn
In a blessing of the sudden
Sun. In the name of the damned
I would turn back and run
To the hidden land
But the loud sun
Christens down
The sky.

I
Am found.
O let him
Scald me and drown
Me in his world's wound.
His lightning answers my
Cry. My voice burns in his hand.
Now I am lost in the blinding

VISION AND PRAYER

One. The sun roars at the prayer's end.

BALLAD OF THE LONG-LEGGED BAIT

The bows glided down, and the
coast
Blackened with birds took a last
look
At his thrashing hair and whale-
blue eye;

BALLAD OF THE LONG-LEGGED BAIT

The trodden town rang its cobbles
for luck.

Then good-bye to the fisher-
manned

Boat with its anchor free and fast
As a bird hooking over the sea,
High and dry by the top of the
mast,

Whispered the affectionate sand
And the bulwarks of the dazzled
quay.

For my sake sail, and never look
back,

Said the looking land.

Sails drank the wind, and white as
milk

He sped into the drinking dark;
The sun shipwrecked west on a

BALLAD OF THE LONG-LEGGED BAIT

 pearl
And the moon swam out of its
 hulk.

Funnels and masts went by in a
 whirl.

Good-bye to the man on the sea-
 legged deck

To the gold gut that sings on his
 reel

To the bait that stalked out of the
 sack,

For we saw him throw to the swift
 flood

A girl alive with his hooks through
 her lips;

All the fishes were rayed in blood,
Said the dwindling ships.

Good-bye to chimneys and fun-

BALLAD OF THE LONG-LEGGED BAIT

nels,
Old wives that spin in the smoke,
He was blind to the eyes of candles
In the praying windows of waves
But heard his bait buck in the wake
And tussle in a shoal of loves.
Now cast down your rod, for the
whole
Of the sea is hilly with whales,
She longs among horses and an-
gels,
The rainbow-fish bend in her joys,
Floated the lost cathedral
Chimes of the rocked buoys.
Where the anchor rode like a gull
Miles over the moonstruck boat
A squall of birds bellowed and fell,
A cloud blew the rain from its

BALLAD OF THE LONG-LEGGED BAIT

throat;

He saw the storm smoke out to kill
With fuming bows and ram of ice,
Fire on starlight, rake Jesu's
stream;
And nothing shone on the water's
face

But the oil and bubble of the moon,
Plunging and piercing in his course
The lured fish under the foam
Witnessed with a kiss.

Whales in the wake like capes and
Alps
Quaked the sick sea and snouted
deep,
Deep the great bushed bait with
raining lips

BALLAD OF THE LONG-LEGGED BAIT

Slipped the fins of those hump-
backed tons

And fled their love in a weaving
dip.

Oh, Jericho was falling in their
lungs!

She nipped and dived in the nick
of love,

Spun on a spout like a long-legged
ball

Till every beast blared down in a
swerve

Till every turtle crushed from his
shell

Till every bone in the rushing grave
Rose and crowed and fell!

Good luck to the hand on the rod,
There is thunder under its thumbs;

BALLAD OF THE LONG-LEGGED BAIT

Gold gut is a lightning thread,
His fiery reel sings off its flames,
The whirled boat in the burn of his
 blood
Is crying from nets to knives,
Oh the shearwater birds and their
 boatsized brood
Oh the bulls of Biscay and their
 calves
Are making under the green, laid
 veil
The long-legged beautiful bait
 their wives.
Break the black news and paint on
 a sail
Huge weddings in the waves,
Over the wakeward-flashing spray
Over the gardens of the floor

BALLAD OF THE LONG-LEGGED BAIT

Clash out the mounting dolphin's
day,
My mast is a bell-spire,
Strike and smoothe, for my decks
are drums,
Sing through the water-spoken
prow
The octopus walking into her limbs
The polar eagle with his tread of
snow.

From salt-lipped beak to the kick of
the stern
Sing how the seal has kissed her
dead!
The long, laid minute's bride drifts
on
Old in her cruel bed.
Over the graveyard in the water

BALLAD OF THE LONG-LEGGED BAIT

Mountains and galleries beneath
Nightingale and hyena
Rejoicing for that drifting death
Sing and howl through sand and
 anemone
Valley and sahara in a shell,
Oh all the wanting flesh his enemy
Thrown to the sea in the shell of a
 girl
Is old as water and plain as an eel;
Always good-bye to the long-
 legged bread
Scattered in the paths of his heels
For the salty birds fluttered and fed
And the tall grains foamed in their
 bills;
Always good-bye to the fires of the
 face,

BALLAD OF THE LONG-LEGGED BAIT

For the crab-backed dead on the
sea-bed rose

And scuttled over her eyes,

The blind, clawed stare is cold as
sleet.

The tempter under the eyelid

Who shows to the selves asleep

Mast-high moon-white women
naked

Walking in wishes and lovely for
shame

Is dumb and gone with his flame of
brides.

Sussanah's drowned in the
bearded stream

And no-one stirs at Sheba's side

But the hungry kings of the tides;

Sin who had a woman's shape

BALLAD OF THE LONG-LEGGED BAIT

Sleeps till Silence blows on a cloud
And all the lifted waters walk and
 leap.

Lucifer that bird's dropping
Out of the sides of the north
Has melted away and is lost
Is always lost in her vaulted breath,

Venus lies star-struck in her wound
And the sensual ruins make
Seasons over the liquid world,
White springs in the dark.

Always good-bye, cried the voices
 through the shell,
Good-bye always, for the flesh is
 cast
And the fisherman winds his reel
With no more desire than a ghost.

BALLAD OF THE LONG-LEGGED BAIT

Always good luck, praised the
finned in the feather
Bird after dark and the laughing
fish
As the sails drank up the hail of
thunder
And the long-tailed lightning lit his
catch.

The boat swims into the six-year
weather,
A wind throws a shadow and it
freezes fast.
See what the gold gut drags from
under
Mountains and galleries to the
crest!

See what clings to hair and skull
As the boat skims on with drinking

BALLAD OF THE LONG-LEGGED BAIT

wings!

The statues of great rain stand still,
And the flakes fall like hills.

Sing and strike his heavy haul
Toppling up the boatside in a snow
of light!

His decks are drenched with mira-
cles.

Oh miracle of fishes! The long
dead bite!

Out of the urn a size of a man
Out of the room the weight of his
trouble

Out of the house that holds a town
In the continent of a fossil

One by one in dust and shawl,
Dry as echoes and insect-faced,
His fathers cling to the hand of the

BALLAD OF THE LONG-LEGGED BAIT

girl
And the dead hand leads the past,
Leads them as children and as air
On to the blindly tossing tops;
The centuries throw back their hair
And the old men sing from new-
born lips:

_Time is bearing another son.
Kill Time! She turns in her pain!
The oak is felled in the acorn
And the hawk in the egg kills the
wren._

He who blew the great fire in
And died on a hiss of flames
Or walked the earth in the evening
Counting the denials of the grains
Clings to her drifting hair, and

BALLAD OF THE LONG-LEGGED BAIT

climbs;
And he who taught their lips to
sing
Weeps like the risen sun among
The liquid choirs of his tribes.
The rod bends low, divining land,
And through the sundered water
crawls
A garden holding to her hand
With birds and animals
With men and women and water-
falls
Trees cool and dry in the whirlpool
of ships
And stunned and still on the green,
laid veil
Sand with legends in its virgin laps
And prophets loud on the burned

BALLAD OF THE LONG-LEGGED BAIT

dunes;
Insects and valleys hold her thighs
hard,
Times and places grip her breast
bone,
She is breaking with seasons and
clouds;

Round her trailed wrist fresh water
weaves,
with moving fish and rounded
stones

Up and down the greater waves
A separate river breathes and runs;

Strike and sing his catch of fields
For the surge is sown with barley,
The cattle graze on the covered
foam,

The hills have footed the waves

BALLAD OF THE LONG-LEGGED BAIT

away,
With wild sea fillies and soaking
bridles
With salty colts and gales in their
limbs
All the horses of his haul of mira-
cles
Gallop through the arched, green
farms,
Trot and gallop with gulls upon
them
And thunderbolts in their manes.
O Rome and Sodom To-morrow
and London
The country tide is cobbled with
towns
And steeples pierce the cloud on
her shoulder

BALLAD OF THE LONG-LEGGED BAIT

And the streets that the fisherman
combed

When his long-legged flesh was a
wind on fire

And his loin was a hunting flame

Coil from the thoroughfares of her
hair

And terribly lead him home alive

Lead her prodigal home to his ter-
ror,

The furious ox-killing house of
love.

Down, down, down, under the
ground,

Under the floating villages,

Turns the moon-chained and
water-wound

Metropolis of fishes,

BALLAD OF THE LONG-LEGGED BAIT

There is nothing left of the sea but
its sound,
Under the earth the loud sea walks,
In deathbeds of orchards the boat
dies down
And the bait is drowned among
hayricks,

Land, land, land, nothing remains
Of the pacing, famous sea but its
speech,
And into its talkative seven tombs
The anchor dives through the
floors of a church.

Good-bye, good luck, struck the
sun and the moon,
To the fisherman lost on the land.
He stands alone in the door of his
home,

BALLAD OF THE LONG-LEGGED BAIT

With his long-legged heart in his
hand.

HOLY SPRING

O
Out of a bed of love
When that immortal hospital made
one more move to soothe
The cureless counted body,
And ruin and his causes
Over the barbed and shooting sea

HOLY SPRING

assumed an army
And swept into our wounds
and houses,
I climb to greet the war in which I
have no heart but only
That one dark I owe my light,
Call for confessor and wiser mirror
but there is none
To glow after the god stoning
night
And I am struck as lonely as a holy
marker by the sun.

No
Praise that the spring time is
all
Gabriel and radiant shrubbery as
the morning grows joyful
Out of the woebegone pyre

HOLY SPRING

And the multitude's sultry tear
turns cool on the weeping wall,
My arising prodigal
Sun the father his quiver full of the
infants of pure fire,
But blessed be hail and up-
heaval
That uncalm still it is sure alone to
stand and sing
Alone in the husk of man's
home
And the mother and toppling
house of the holy spring,
If only for a last time.

FERN HILL

Now as I was young and easy un-
der the apple boughs
About the lilting house and happy
as the grass was green,
The night above the dingle
starry,
Time let me hail and climb

FERN HILL

Golden in the heydays of his
eyes,
And honoured among wagons I
was prince of the apple towns
And once below a time I lordly had
the trees and leaves
Trail with daisies and barley
Down the rivers of the windfall
light.

And as I was green and carefree, fa-
mous among the barns
About the happy yard and singing
as the farm was home,
In the sun that is young once
only,
Time let me play and be
Golden in the mercy of his
means,

FERN HILL

And green and golden I was hunts-
man and herdsman, the calves
Sang to my horn, the foxes on the
hills barked clear and cold,
And the sabbath rang slowly
In the pebbles of the holy
streams.

All the sun long it was running, it
was lovely, the hay
Fields high as the house, the tunes
from the chimneys, it was air
And playing, lovely and watery
And fire green as grass.
And nightly under the simple
stars
As I rode to sleep the owls were
bearing the farm away,
All the moon long I heard, blessed

FERN HILL

among stables, the nightjars
Flying with the ricks, and the
horses
Flashing into the dark.

And then to awake, and the farm,
like a wanderer white
With the dew, come back, the cock
on his shoulder: it was all
Shining, it was Adam and
maiden,
The sky gathered again
And the sun grew round that
very day.
So it must have been after the birth
of the simple light
In the first, spinning place, the
spellbound horses walking
warm

FERN HILL

Out of the whinnying green stable
On to the fields of praise.

And honoured among foxes and
pheasants by the gay house
Under the new made clouds and
happy as the heart was long,
In the sun born over and over,
I ran my heedless ways,
My wishes raced through the
house high hay
And nothing I cared, at my sky
blue trades, that time allows
In all his tuneful turning so few
and such morning songs
Before the children green and
golden
Follow him out of grace.

FERN HILL

Nothing I cared, in the lamb white
days, that time would take me
Up to the swallow thronged loft by
the shadow of my hand,
In the moon that is always rising,
Nor that riding to sleep
I should hear him fly with the
high fields
And wake to the farm forever fled
from the childless land.
Oh as I was young and easy in the
mercy of his means,
Time held me green and dying
Though I sang in my chains like
the sea.

IN COUNTRY SLEEP

I

Never and never, my girl riding far
and near
In the land of the hearthstone tales,
and spelled asleep,
Fear or believe that the wolf in a
sheepwhite hood

IN COUNTRY SLEEP

Loping and bleating roughly and
blithely shall leap,

My dear, my
dear,

Out of a lair in the flocked leaves in
the dew dipped year

To eat your heart in the house in
the rosy wood.

Sleep, good, for ever, slow and
deep, spelled rare and wise,

My girl ranging the night in the
rose and shire

Of the hobnail tales: no gooseherd
or swine will turn

Into a homestall king or hamlet of
fire

And prince of ice
To court the honeyed heart from

IN COUNTRY SLEEP

your side before sunrise
In a spinney of ringed boys and
ganders, spike and burn,
Nor the innocent lie in the rooting
dingle wooed
And staved, and riven among
plumes my rider weep.
From the broomed witch's spume
you are shielded by fern
And flower of country sleep and
the greenwood keep.
Lie fast and
soothed,
Safe be and smooth from the bel-
lows of the rushy brood.
Never, my girl, until tolled to sleep
by the stern
Bell believe or fear that the rustic

IN COUNTRY SLEEP

shade or spell
Shall harrow and snow the blood
while you ride wide and near,
For who unmanningly haunts the
mountain ravened eaves
Or skulks in the dell moon but
moonshine echoing clear
From the starred
well?
A hill touches an angel. Out of a
saint's cell
The nightbird lauds through nun-
neries and domes of leaves
Her robin breasted tree, three
Marys in the rays.
Sanctum sanctorum the animal eye
of the wood
In the rain telling its beads, and the

IN COUNTRY SLEEP

gravest ghost
The owl at its knelling. Fox and
holt kneel before blood.

Now the tales
praise
The star rise at pasture and night-
long the fables graze
On the lord's-table of the bowing
grass. Fear most

For ever of all not the wolf in his
baaing hood
Nor the tusked prince, in the rut-
tish farm, at the rind
And mire of love, but the Thief as
meek as the dew.
The country is holy: O bide in that
country kind,
Know the green

IN COUNTRY SLEEP

good,
Under the prayer wheeling moon
in the rosy wood
Be shielded by chant and flower
and gay may you

Lie in grace. Sleep spelled at rest in
the lowly house
In the squirrel nimble grove, under
linen and thatch
And star: held and blessed, though
you scour the high four
Winds, from the dousing shade
and the roarer at the latch,
Cool in your
vows.

Yet out of the beaked, web dark
and the pouncing boughs
Be you sure the Thief will seek a

IN COUNTRY SLEEP

way sly and sure

And sly as snow and meek as dew
blown to the thorn,

This night and each vast night until
the stern bell talks

In the tower and tolls to sleep over
the stalls

Of the hearthstone tales my own,
lost love; and the soul walks

The waters shorn.

This night and each night since the
falling star you were born,

Ever and ever he finds a way, as the
snow falls,

As the rain falls, hail on the fleece,
as the vale mist rides

Through the haygold stalls, as the
dew falls on the wind-

IN COUNTRY SLEEP

Milled dust of the apple tree and
the pounded islands
Of the morning leaves, as the star
falls, as the winged
Apple seed
glides,
And falls, and flowers in the yawn-
ing wound at our sides,
As the world falls, silent as the cy-
clone of silence.

II

Night and the reindeer on the
clouds above the haycocks
And the wings of the great roc rib-
boned for the fair!
The leaping saga of prayer! And
high, there, on the hare-
Heeled winds the

IN COUNTRY SLEEP

rooks

Cawing from their black bethels
soaring, the holy books
Of birds! Among the cocks like fire
the red fox

Burning! Night and the vein of
birds in the winged, sloe wrist
Of the wood! Pastoral beat of
blood through the laced leaves!
The stream from the priest black
wristed spinney and sleeves
Of thistling frost
Of the nightingale's din and tale!
The upgiven ghost
Of the dingle torn to singing and
the surpliced

Hill of cypresses! The din and tale
in the skimmed

IN COUNTRY SLEEP

Music of elements, that a miracle
makes!

Earth, air, water, fire, singing into
the white act,

The haygold haired, my love
asleep, and the rift blue

Eyed, in the haloed house, in her
rareness and hilly

High riding, held and blessed and
true, and so stillly

Lying the sky

Might cross its planets, the bell
weep, night gather her eyes,

The Thief fall on the dead like the
willy nilly dew,

Only for the turning of the earth in
her holy

Heart! Slyly, slowly, hearing the

IN COUNTRY SLEEP

wound in her side go
Round the sun, he comes to my
love like the designed snow,
And truly he
Flows to the strand of flowers like
the dew's ruly sea,
And surely he sails like the ship
shape clouds. Oh he

Comes designed to my love to steal
not her tide raking
Wound, nor her riding high, nor
her eyes, nor kindled hair,
But her faith that each vast night
and the saga of prayer
He comes to take
Her faith that this last night for his
unsacred sake
He comes to leave her in the law-

IN COUNTRY SLEEP

less sun awaking

Naked and forsaken to grieve he
will not come.

Ever and ever by all your vows be-
lieve and fear

My dear this night he comes and
night without end my dear

Since you were
born:

And you shall wake, from country
sleep, this dawn and each first
dawn,

Your faith as deathless as the out-
cry of the ruled sun.

OVER SIR JOHN'S HILL

Over Sir John's hill,
The hawk on fire hangs still;
In a hoisted cloud, at drop of dusk,
 he pulls to his claws
And gallows, up the rays of his
 eyes the small birds of the bay
And the shrill child's play

OVER SIR JOHN'S HILL

Wars

Of the sparrows and such who
swansing, dusk, in wrangling
hedges.

And blithely they squawk
To fiery tyburn over the wrestle of
elms until

The flash the noosed hawk
Crashes, and slowly the fishing
holly stalking heron

In the river Towy below bows his
tilted headstone.

Flash, and the plumes crack,
And a black cap of jack-
Daws Sir John's just hill dons, and
again the gulled birds hare
To the hawk on fire, the halter
height, over Towy's fins,

OVER SIR JOHN'S HILL

In a whack of wind.
There
Where the elegiac fisherbird stabs
and paddles
In the pebbly dab-filled
Shallow and sedge, and 'dilly
dilly,' calls the loft hawk,
'Come and be killed,'
I open the leaves of the water at a
passage
Of psalms and shadows among the
pincer sandcrabs prancing

And read, in a shell
Death clear as a bouy's bell:
All praise of the hawk on fire in
hawk-eyed dusk be sung,
When his viperish fuse hangs
looped with flames under the

OVER SIR JOHN'S HILL

brand
Wing, and blest shall
Young
Green chickens of the bay and
bushes cluck, 'dilly dilly,
Come let us die.'
We grieve as the blithe birds, never
again, leave shingle and elm,
The heron and I,
I young Aesop fabling to the near
night by the dingle
Of eels, saint heron hymning in the
shell-hung distant

Crystal harbour vale
Where the sea cobbles sail,
And wharves of water where the
walls dance and the white
cranes stilt.

OVER SIR JOHN'S HILL

It is the heron and I, under judging
 Sir John's elmed
Hill, tell-tale the knelled
Guilt
Of the led-astray birds whom God,
 for their breast of whistles,
Have Mercy on,
God in his whirlwind silence save,
 who marks the sparrows hail,
For their souls' song.
Now the heron grieves in the
 weeded verge. Through win-
dows
Of dusk and water I see the tilting
 whispering

Heron, mirrored, go,
As the snapt feathers snow,
Fishing in the tear of the Towy.

OVER SIR JOHN'S HILL

Only a hoot owl
Hollows, a grassblade blown in
 cupped hands, in the looted
 elms
And no green cocks or hens
Shout
Now on Sir John's hill. The heron,
 ankling the scaly
Lowlands of the waves,
Makes all the music; and I who
 hear the tune of the slow,
Wear-willow river, grave,
Before the lunge of the night, the
 notes on this time-shaken
Stone for the sake of the souls of
 the slain birds sailing.

POEM ON HIS BIRTHDAY

In the mustardseed sun,
By full tilt river and switchback sea
Where the cormorants scud,
In his house on stilts high among
 beaks
And palavers of birds
This sandgrain day in the bent

POEM ON HIS BIRTHDAY

bay's grave
He celebrates and spurns
His driftwood thirty-fifth wind
turned age;
Herons spire and spear.

Under and round him go
Flounders, gulls, on their cold, dy-
ing trails,
Doing what they are told,
Curlews aloud in the congered
waves
Work at their ways to death,
And the rhymer in the long
tongued room,
Who tolls his birthday bell,
Toils towards the ambush of his
wounds;
Herons, steeple stemmed, bless.

POEM ON HIS BIRTHDAY

In the thistledown fall,
He sings towards anguish; finches
fly

In the claw tracks of hawks
On a seizing sky; small fishes glide
Through wynds and shells of
drowned

Ship towns to pastures of otters.
He

In his slant, racking house
And the hewn coils of his trade
perceives

Hérons walk in their shroud,

The livelong river's robe
Of minnows wreathing around
their prayer;

And far at sea he knows,
Who slaves to his crouched, eternal

POEM ON HIS BIRTHDAY

end

Under a serpent cloud,
Dolphins dive in their turnturtle
dust,
The rippled seals streak down
To kill and their own tide daubing
blood
Slides good in the sleek mouth.

In a cavernous, swung
Wave's silence, wept white angelus
knells.
Thirty-five bells sing struck
On skull and scar where his loves
lie wrecked,
Steered by the falling stars.
And to-morrow weeps in a blind
cage
Terror will rage apart

POEM ON HIS BIRTHDAY

Before chains break to a hammer
flame

And love unbolts the dark

And freely he goes lost

In the unknown, famous light of
great

And fabulous, dear God.

Dark is a way and light is a place,
Heaven that never was

Nor will be ever is always true,

And, in that brambled void,

Plenty as blackberries in the woods
The dead grow for His joy.

There he might wander bare

With the spirits of the horseshoe
bay

Or the stars' seashore dead,

Marrow of eagles, the roots of

POEM ON HIS BIRTHDAY

whales
And wishbones of wild geese,
With blessed, unborn God and His
Ghost,
And every soul His priest,
Gulled and chanter in young
Heaven's fold
Be at cloud quaking peace,

But dark is a long way.
He, on the earth of the night, alone
With all the living, prays,
Who knows the rocketing wind
will blow
The bones out of the hills,
And the scythed boulders bleed,
and the last
Rage shattered waters kick
Masts and fishes to the still quick

POEM ON HIS BIRTHDAY

stars,
Faithlessly unto Him
Who is the light of old
And air shaped Heaven where
souls grow wild
As horses in the foam:
Oh, let me midlife mourn by the
shrined
And druid herons' vows
The voyage to ruin I must run,
Dawn ships clouted aground,
Yet, though I cry with tumbledown
tongue,
Count my blessings aloud:
Four elements and five
Senses, and man a spirit in love
Tangling through this spun slime
To his nimbus bell cool kingdom

POEM ON HIS BIRTHDAY

come
And the lost, moonshine domes,
And the sea that hides his secret
selves
Deep in its black, base bones,
Lulling of spheres in the seashell
flesh,
And this last blessing most,

That the closer I move
To death, one man through his sun-
dered hulks,
The louder the sun blooms
And the tusked, ramshackling sea
exults;
And every wave of the way
And gale I tackle, the whole world
then,
With more triumphant faith

POEM ON HIS BIRTHDAY

Than ever was since the world was
said,
Spins its morning of praise,
I hear the bouncing hills
Grow larked and greener at berry
brown
Fall and the dew larks sing
Taller this thunderclap spring, and
how
More spanned with angles ride
The mansouled fiery islands! Oh,
Holier then their eyes,
And my shining men no more
alone
As I sail out to die.

LAMENT

When I was a windy boy and a bit
And the black spit of the chapel
fold,
(Sighed the old ram rod, dying of
women),
I tiptoed shy in the gooseberry
wood,

LAMENT

The rude owl cried like a telltale tit,
I skipped in a blush as the big girls
 rolled
Ninepin down on donkey's com-
 mon,
And on seesaw sunday nights I
 wooed
Whoever I would with my wicked
 eyes,
The whole of the moon I could love
 and leave
All the green leaved little wed-
 dings' wives
In the coal black bush and let them
 grieve.

When I was a gusty man and a half
And the black beast of the beetles'
 pews,

LAMENT

(Sighed the old ram rod, dying of
bitches),
Not a boy and a bit in the wick-
Dipping moon and drunk as a new
dropped calf,
I whistled all night in the twisted
flues,
Midwives grew in the midnight
ditches,
And the sizzling beds of the town
cried, Quick!-
Whenever I dove in a breast high
shoal,
Wherever I ramped in the clover
quilts,
Whatsoever I did in the coal-
Black night, I left my quivering
prints.

LAMENT

When I was a man you could call a
man
And the black cross of the holy
house,
(Sighed the old ram rod, dying of
welcome),
Brandy and ripe in my bright, bass
prime,
No springtailed tom in the red hot
town
With every simmering woman his
mouse
But a hillocky bull in the swelter
Of summer come in his great good
time
To the sultry, biding herds, I said,
Oh, time enough when the blood
creeps cold,
And I lie down but to sleep in bed,

LAMENT

For my sulking, skulking, coal
black soul!

When I was half the man I was
And serve me right as the preach-
ers warn,
(Sighed the old ram rod, dying of
downfall),
No flailing calf or cat in a flame
Or hickory bull in milky grass
But a black sheep with a crumpled
horn,
At last the soul from its foul
mousehole
Slunk pouting out when the limp
time came;
And I gave my soul a blind,
slashed eye,
Gristle and rind, and a roarers' life,

LAMENT

And I shoved it into the coal black
sky
To find a woman's soul for a wife.

Now I am a man no more no more
And a black reward for a roaring
life,
(Sighed the old ram rod, dying of
strangers),
Tidy and cursed in my dove cooed
room
I lie down thin and hear the good
bells jaw-
For, oh, my soul found a sunday
wife
In the coal black sky and she bore
angels!
Harpies around me out of her
womb!

LAMENT

Chastity prays for me, piety sings,
Innocence sweetens my last black
 breath,
Modesty hides my thighs in her
 wings,
And all the deadly virtues plague
 my death!

IN THE WHITE GIANT'S THIGH

Through throats where many
rivers meet, the curlews cry,
Under the conceiving moon, on the
high chalk hill,
And there this night I walk in the
white giant's thigh
Where barren as boulders women

IN THE WHITE GIANT'S THIGH

lie longing still

To labour and love though they lay
down long ago.

Through throats where many
many rivers meet, the women
pray,

Pleading in the waded bay for the
seed to flow

Though the names on their weed
grown stones are rained away,

And alone in the night's eternal,
curving act

They yearn with tongues of
curls for the unconceived

And immemorial sons of the cud-
gelling, hacked

Hill. Who once in gooseskin winter

IN THE WHITE GIANT'S THIGH

loved all ice leaved
In the courters' lanes, or twined in
the ox roasting sun
In the wains tonned so high that
the wisps of the hay
Clung to the pitching clouds, or
gay with any one
Young as they in the after milking
moonlight lay
Under the lighted shapes of faith
and their moonshade
Petticoats galed high, or shy with
the rough riding boys,
Now clasp me to their grains in the
gigantic glade,
Who once, green countries since,
were a hedgerow of joys.
Time by, their dust was flesh the

IN THE WHITE GIANT'S THIGH

swineherd rooted sly,
Flared in the reek of the wiving sty
with the rush
Light of his thighs, spreadeagle to
the dunghill sky,
Or with their orchard man in the
core of the sun's bush
Rough as cows' tongues and
thrashed with brambles their
buttermilk
Manes, under the quenchless sum-
mer barbed gold to the bone,
Or rippling soft in the spinney
moon as the silk
And ducked and draked white
lake that harps to a hail stone.
Who once were a bloom of wayside
brides in the hawed house

IN THE WHITE GIANT'S THIGH

And heard the lewd, wooed field
 flow to the coming frost,
The scurrying, furred small friars
 squeal, in the dowse
Of day, in the thistle aisles, till the
 white owl crossed

Their breast, the vaulting does roister,
 the horned bucks climb
Quick in the wood at love, where a
 torch of foxes foams,
All birds and beasts of the linked
 night uproar and chime

And the mole snout blunt under
 his pilgrimage of domes,
Or, butter fat goosegirls, bounced
 in a gambo bed,
Their breasts full of honey, under
 their gander king

IN THE WHITE GIANT'S THIGH

Trounced by his wings in the hissing
shippen, long dead
And gone that barley dark where
their clogs danced in the spring,
And their firefly hairpins flew, and
the ricks ran round—

(But nothing bore, no mouthing
babe to the veined hives
Hugged, and barren and bare on
Mother Goose's ground
They with the simple Jacks were a
boulder of wives)—

Now curlew cry me down to kiss
the mouths of their dust.

The dust of their kettles and clocks
swings to and fro
Where the hay rides now or the
bracken kitchens rust

IN THE WHITE GIANT'S THIGH

As the arc of the billhooks that
flashed the hedges low
And cut the birds' boughs that the
minstrel sap ran red.
They from houses where the har-
vest kneels, hold me hard,
Who heard the tall bell sail down
the Sundays of the dead
And the rain wring out its tongues
on the faded yard,
Teach me the love that is evergreen
after the fall leaved
Grave, after Belovéd on the grass
gulfed cross is scrubbed
Off by the sun and Daughters no
longer grieved
Save by their long desires in the fox
cubbed
Streets or hungering in the crum-

IN THE WHITE GIANT'S THIGH

bled wood: to these
Hale dead and deathless do the
women of the hill
Love for ever meridian through the
courters' trees
And the daughters of darkness
flame like Fawkes fires still.

Ebook producer's note:

At this point, most editions of Collected Poems, 1934-1952 include a posthumously published poem titled "Elegy." It has been omitted here because of its uncertain copyright status.

THE END