

# **Deep Fields**

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*'There are those who cling to the world and never break free; there are those who enter the wilds and never come back.'*

*Hsi K'ang: 223-262AD: Letter to Shan T'ao*

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## Deep Fields

Where are the wilds?  
In the depths of the Mind.  
And the heart  
In the depths of the fields.

Through the dark trees  
In the white clouds  
Between stars  
On the bright sand.

Where are the depths?  
In the wilds of the Spirit.  
And the soul  
In the wilds of the Mind.

In the barbed seed,  
On the pale stem,  
Among grasses,  
Down the deep fields.

## Out of the Dark

Brushing dark webs from under the covering glass,  
Inanimate, motionless, ancient, soft dead things.  
Suddenly, in my face, a flash and flutter of fire,  
A startle and strangeness of being, the tremor  
Of heart and mind and breath, taken unawares,  
Patch of white, milk-white, ghostly pale quivering,  
Beating against wood, and transparent roof, and flesh,  
Till I realised I had freed a spirit, a nub of flame  
Trapped in a knot of time, released it again to flight,  
This what? This moth, this fabric of moving air  
Flinging itself through darkness, light and the void?  
Too large for moth, too angled, its wings, too frail,  
White butterfly, then, escaped from its prison, dazed,  
Frantic with something purer than mere delight,  
The great flare and surge of freedom, the drunken  
Madness of freedom, transformation of inner self  
When walls shrink and the roofs fly out and space,  
Become time, becomes once more eternity, open:  
It beat against me, its deliverer, and then won free,  
Soared beyond glassy-edge to wide empty blue,  
And lilacs' flowerless green, deep skies of summer,  
But left behind a fluttering in my spirit, the shudder  
Of how heart's prison feels, death's primal offering,  
The shrouded gift it thrusts towards us, relentlessly,  
The spider lure of sleep without pain, the winding silk  
Where we began, twice cocooned in the heart of mystery;  
Left behind wrench of pathos, and anguish felt there,  
For a moment, for that fragile thing, its tragic quiver lost,  
Found, and lost again, in each quick flicker of motion;  
Left behind, the pale captive still fluttering in my mind,  
Transmuted to light, known far better far beyond words,  
Neuter when turned to symbol, but now alive, palpitating,  
In throat and hands, in the danger of pure thought,  
Under the skin and in the eyelids, butterfly of the soul's  
Desire for flight far from the flesh and in life's only body.



## Digging in

Chainsaws and drills, the motors in the mind  
Drown out our poetry,  
We drill down into the core of the world  
Extract its fruits,  
Glitter of the machines, free of malice,  
All the inanimate mud-spattered shells  
Not even waiting for their masters,  
Never-yet-restless, ever-silent metal  
Littering the fields, and reaches of the Earth.

Honest, the men and women who work them,  
Labouring in our image,  
Killing and saying prayers  
To the kill, as if  
Our rituals could ever make things right,  
Sometimes watching in the pause, Nature,  
In all its integrity of blood and dirt,  
Show forth a fawn; or wave a leaf,  
Green, quivering, mind's image on its twig.

I too have seen the darkness, seen the maw,  
Under the songs and laughter in the bars,  
Have seen the creatures slip through the dark  
Evading our eyes, silently,  
The cougar under the pipe, the night-heron,  
No flash-photography to show them there,  
Only the infinite starlight, the deep fields shining,  
From Pole to Amazon, from sea to sea,  
No, there is nothing here to make things right.

Trucks plough the naked surface, crush the stones,  
Career, groaning, whining, over hills,  
Lay low the beauty, proxies for our pain,  
The steel and the perfection  
Functional clarity imitating control,  
The great wheels turn, but not now in the heavens,  
This is the book of Earth fouled with our poems,  
Scarred by our detritus, and the agony  
Never in Nature, but deeper, in our Selves.

## Into the Fiery Darkness

Down the dry hedgerows go the nameless flowers,  
The wild ones, not the identified selves of gardens,  
But outcomes of Nature, the forms that were there  
When we were not, on the empty land, no fields,  
Here, in the hawthorn's intricate green frame  
Glistening pure at the heart of jet-black thorn,  
Unknown voices, blue, gleaming resonances,  
Down there deep in the ditch, and in dying light,  
The blazing pyre of intentionless separate lives,  
Careless of all our phantom tremors and sighing.

All along edges of things, in the centre of things,  
On the mountain ledges and under the lane-sides,  
Sprinkled by gates, scattered below stone walls,  
They light me, if they don't light you what matter,  
We are the passing breath of this more delicate world,  
And each in each finds or loses threads of eternity,  
None can show other what burns alive in the heart,  
And what should be, and be done, flowers out of us,  
In the creative flow or never at all, regardless of all  
Gone before, all the lives, words, rules of the dead,

Or the long absurd games of the living, so much more  
Harmful, so much less lovely, than flowers, the wild  
Witnesses singing from hillsides, cliff falls, layering  
On gravel and clinging to sand, over mud and darkness,  
Through the star-nights and dog-days, in times, hours  
When we cannot see them, neither showing nor hiding,  
Existing, almost the bodiless body, the faceless face,  
Seen in some other lifetime, once, and eternally known,  
Flowers no tears, only dewfall like strange benediction,  
Bowed to the ground or equally, silently, turned to the sky.

I consider the timelessness of what is bounded by time,  
The infinite depth of what glows in simple transience,  
The hole of light we fall through as if into a well,  
That moves like water swirling far down in the rose,  
With the same awe of the calyx and bud as the fall far  
Into the wheel of the galaxy, ten billion stars in the eye,  
And the light within, what flows out of mind, and defines  
Not this poor moment of watery flesh, but grasps  
The whole Earth, the done past, hurls them like seeds  
From the blown husk of stalk, into the fiery darkness.

## Passing

It's the gentleness we've lost, the tenderness,  
The water over gravel and the grey flycatcher,  
If you know where those images come from:  
It's the shyness we've lost, the introspection,  
Too quiet to win the world but quiet enough  
To see down nearer to the heart of Nature.

It's the true sadness we've lost and the ache  
Of hurt at the space of fallen tree, or the flower  
Gone under, the tract of land, sky, sullied, time  
That belonged to each, belonging now to all,  
The agony, intensity, that is heart's crucifixion,  
But beyond religion, in the mind's chamber.

It's the childlike simplicity of light we've lost,  
That washes over the spirit and redeems us  
From all the cries in the hostile desert, the dark  
Of thought that spawns the sad world's deities.  
Sitting by the stream, or regarding pure rain,  
Knowing the light falls here, and never again.

## Listening to Transience

Giorgione or Perugino – in a far clear sky,  
A sinuous landscape, tiny trees and towers,  
The gravity of being, the pure flute, a sexual  
And natural resonance, gleams of silvery air,  
Those ideal images, contours of excellence,  
Savoured because there's steel behind the light,  
Where mind and word are still in concentration.

How will such beauty ever be made again?  
Perfection fails, and there's the weariness  
Of the done fashion, and repeated thought,  
Plato in some green garden, La Gioconda  
Emerging in delicacy under silent fingers,  
A touch of being beyond the comprehension,  
Loosed from our grasp in this un-serious age,

Beauty of world or woman, music of time,  
Cruelty of passion metamorphosed to line,  
That thoughtless thought, a fleshless flesh  
A force-less energy, and a breathless sigh,  
That contrapuntal contradiction of itself,  
All life seen clearly only against its death,  
And meaning late, and love in dissolution.

And there's the perfect Cinquecento gaze,  
Shadowed intimacy or falls of frozen light,  
Pure twisting form, a landscape, innuendo,  
A note still echoing, strange ethereal chord,  
Some implicit understanding gone beyond,  
And now unreachable, its technique gone,  
The lifetime's call, that ache of dedication.

## Seeing, Not Capturing

It's the precise contour of that sheaf of grasses  
I can't catch,  
The green, the pale, and the mass of vegetation,  
And the face behind, your face, in memory's deep,  
That keep's escaping,  
I'm not good  
At capturing exact detail, a poor eye,  
A slipshod gaze through which the earth escapes,  
Spinning off into centuries, hanging blue,  
Or is it blue? against four billion years  
Of compounded light,  
In a universe of fourteen billion,  
Years, light years, what else travels  
Far or fast enough to even reach here,  
From everywhere, and ours goes everywhere,  
Our light that is, the sun's or this reflection,  
Every star a centre, every centre circumference,  
Like bubbles blown receiving bubbles  
Of light and fire.

There's a greenness to those blades of leaf  
That I can't capture,  
The word green is black here on my screen,  
And your face behind I see in black and white  
Like a photograph of some great painting,  
It's colour bled away, but itself more real,  
And binding,  
As unrequited love binds in the lover,  
As imagination hovers round the lost,  
Like the magenta tone that sheds  
Its colour on the knight's silver armour,  
Only for show,  
If passion's foolish then we are here  
To be fools,  
Studying that delight, all we can give  
To the Galaxy spinning, to the Void beyond,  
To whatever orthogonal dimensions lurk  
Behind the quantum weirdness,  
The ungraspable *Is* inside the equations,  
Delight of love, art, intellectual form  
That we call truth, our blessed gifts  
That any deity might be proud of.

That green against the stone, those seeds,  
And feathery spokes, and that white  
That creamy white  
Where the unrestrained flower bursts itself  
Into the cloud-grey day,  
Are things I cannot catch  
In my net of flame,  
Nor you, nor ever you,  
This net hung on the light,  
This apposition of electrons –  
And sombre wisdom's not this age's forte –  
I've not the gift,  
To transcribe you, or with a silver lead  
Immortalise a single modulation  
Of everything that defines you,  
A person in the masque  
Like that man's design,  
The one whose drawings  
Seem like bits of nature,  
Dazing the eye,  
No not like him,  
Neither your eye nor smile,  
Nor the contour of the little knot of grasses,  
Nor their green.



## The Meeting Pool

Deep down far in the earth,  
And cool your fingers,  
This the connection  
That once we came for,

And we go talking of Self  
But silence forever  
Sings in the everlasting  
Light of invisible earth.

Deep down below the mind,  
The stars and time,  
And every phantom  
And every flare.

Long cool sleep  
Of ash and loam  
And tender clay  
And sweet mire.

Deep down under here,  
Where fingers greet,  
In Earth's reticence,  
In the meeting pool.

## Out Here

Fields where the creatures go bowing their heads,  
Why do they do that, why are they  
Circumscribed  
And why are we?

The savage earth sighs with colour, visions  
Of colour flow all night through  
My dreams, magenta,  
Lilac, umber, and viridian,

The rider bends to the horse, the green horse  
Bends its head to the grasses,  
Over the stream,  
We bend to a quiet,

That is in the world itself,  
It's all this flow, our parting slow  
Or quick, this land  
Its woods, its fields so self-contained,

Where green horse bows, and the cattle,  
The sheep and fox and deer,  
All on four legs bow  
To Great Mother Earth, her singing.

## After Long Concentration

Suddenly the words seem larger  
The feelings deeper, a moment,  
(I learn to live in my thoughts),  
To watch the city in its reality  
Blossom in strangest mind  
Of this civilisation, its creation,  
Know the tears of joy and sadness  
The closures and revelations:  
Reality has all these faces, like  
The old gods' everywhere-masks.

They swell through the glasses on  
The page, the screen, wherever  
Time expresses itself in language,  
Ah language, tongue of sleeping  
Earth, licking with snake-flicker  
The ear of attention, and folding  
Coil and jut over the core of us,  
To bend and flow through mind  
With its spirals, whorls, and pools,  
And bless this cage in which we rest.

Do you know it, the time when words  
Glow and each one holds a sweet  
Kernel of meaning and a glitter  
Of living light spun from its presence  
The clustered connections like stars  
Whirled in one galaxy or caught  
Like an ovoid, ball or orb of fires,  
Drawn out of space, sunk in the eye,  
Like a field of green bracken where  
Vision is lost, but also intensified?

I learn to sink deeper in thought,  
And resist what this world strives  
For: not for certain translation of  
Its dreams, forgiveness, or to flower,  
But rather the process of captivity  
What the creature, defeated, gazes  
At, the hapless child, bars between,  
Each in its prison, gazes, uncreated  
And un-creating, the dark fire of  
Un-being, strange heart-country.

Because everything we look at  
Closely fills us with new fears,  
Everything we gaze and enter  
Into becomes the alien quiver  
That hurts the sensitive mind,  
Its flesh, and everything stares  
Back at us from the light, so  
The more we know the less  
We feel at ease with anything,  
Not even language, not the word

That bubbles, oozes from deeps  
Carries, within, centuries, and all  
The constant 'Now' long breathed-in,  
Sucks life from the living, grants  
Life to the dead, and then again  
Creates over again world and time  
For we who live in each others' ears,  
Cry from each others' mouths, call  
From the billboards, signposts, walls,  
Ache to connect, complete, contain.

## Beautiful, Shifting Light

It's the solidity we love  
But in reality  
Everything's shifting  
Beautiful transience,  
The painting's stillness  
Never Nature but Dream –  
Time stilled, space formal,  
Zero wind in the trees,  
Rustling quivering trembling  
No thought in the mind, gone  
There, no feeling, joy, fear –  
Everything rocking under our feet.

Beware of symbols, images;  
Mystery and weighty  
Calm, it moves,  
The rocks slip down  
The slopes; the wavering grass-blade  
Blowing, not 'there', and never  
A thing in space, is always  
Arc and shift of movement;  
And you, no sooner understood  
Than gone in other mind,  
Nothing that I can grasp,  
But wing, but feathery sighing.

Haunted by form, the heart,  
It beats, dumb in the flesh,  
While yellows and reds  
Shine in half-found shadows  
Light goes by  
Falls on this world  
Reflects out into the void,  
Flows past Pluto,  
No Mind out there,  
But ones like ours  
Maybe, we think,  
Flickering, signalling.

Knowledge makes mystery greater,  
The universe is not shallower  
By being simple, nor  
Are you. Anger, guilt,  
Regret are not solid,  
But don't melt either  
Just by wishing.  
It's all a tremor  
Down to the last vibrating  
Elementary wisp  
Of imminent energy,  
Violent harmony.

I plant my feet on soil-stripped ground,  
On stone, on ice, it rings  
With space, but time  
Sets me adrift on seas  
That flowed above  
And lava in the eye  
Scarlet-black and seething.  
I thought I saw my thought,  
Called Self, and it was gone  
Clever those Buddhists,  
Beautiful shifting light,  
I too go by.

## The Midnight Eye

The aboriginal elder standing  
On one leg  
Behind him the nuclear flash  
And rising pall  
Of crazy fury,  
That kind of dream:  
Rising in sweat at night  
To drink fuzzed glass of water  
And watch the moon  
Almost calms the spirit.

Wolves howl, spit blood in snow,  
Those steel traps,  
The golf-ball domes,  
And splintered trees,  
Deliberate arts of war:  
Don't tell your dreams:  
Parted curtains show  
A whitened world down there  
Above, a silver disc  
Floats through dark-blue skies.

Old campfires deep, our ashes  
Stirred each dawn to light  
Mother and child, food,  
Shelter, peace  
Between friend and friend,  
The artist's dream, forever:  
By clouds, a star, it glides,  
Pocked by machinery  
Will there be wars there too  
No sanctuary  
Kept, for the midnight eye?

## Sounds and Branches

The wind is blowing on granite earth,  
Dull muffled tone  
Leaf-waves shiver,  
And turn the wrong way up  
In my mind, pale bellies,  
The firs shine in green sky,  
Layer on layer they shine:  
It's not what you hear or know,  
In the end, it's what you believe.

It's what you express in jets of fire,  
Or gentle softness  
Of moving grasses,  
That rub their husks of light  
Together, and sigh together,  
What you assert, create,  
Not how you reason,  
The values your heart dictates,  
The faith of your deepest season.

Which is not a recipe for believing  
In any old superstition,  
Or every old superstition:  
The wind is blowing  
On granite earth tonight,  
Here in the half-light,  
Love, truth, beauty intertwined  
Or there's no use for the human mind,  
No humanity in our re-creation.

In the dark of ice and stars  
Beyond the wars, this side of Mars,  
Where the wild Moon glitters,  
Mother and child in the grass,  
Two lovers, in dream, a dog bounds past:  
Though the wind blows over granite earth,  
Dull and muffled, the soul gives birth  
To what gleams through all eternity,  
I forgive you, you forgive me.



## Neither One of Us

For the Future's demon machine  
Is out to confuse us,  
The past and what's to come  
Are totally without depth,  
The moment alone is a pit,  
A well, an abyss, a hole  
With your lifetime in it,  
And lifetimes, coiled  
There infinite and concealing.

You can fall through the instant,  
And vanish from the World,  
In time now:  
There! No one was watching, you  
Disappeared and another  
Took your place, wearing your face,  
Life shone through a crystal, mirror,  
Lens, distorting, to spread  
Itself under your feet.

Everything past is all one time,  
And so is everything future,  
Neither is real, except in what exists  
As lingering or determining presence,  
So only Now has dimensions,  
Time is a scalar, and change  
The mover we actually measure,  
Not hours, which are simply the echoes  
Of action, in ourselves.

Beauty comes out of the abyss of time,  
Transience sings in us, and the older  
The more complex the half-heard singing,  
The deeper the song,  
And love wells up and sinks away  
In the rock-pools of the moment,  
How we would like it to linger!  
Why Poesy is always an ache,  
And blood in the throat of the singer.

And Truth, the elusive, if we are listening:  
Hear the true song,  
Masked by violence of body or mind,  
Creative truth, where we belong,  
Beyond the wars and transactions,  
In the un-buyable moment, this one, Now,  
Where your Self in your eyes,  
And your mind in the word, move on,  
And neither one of us dies.

## Maker

He saw nothing normal in all this,  
The world needs people like that.  
He saw the echoing angled flight  
Of Nature's shine cutting across  
The tractable world, saw phantom  
Buildings fall, and children cry  
In the midst of our transactions,  
But not 'surrealism', not a way of seeing,  
Simply the alternative way of Being.

Irreal, if you like, un-persuaded  
By concepts hitherto conceived,  
And dangerously open to expression,  
Not of self (always unexpressed) but fire,  
Water, stone, soil, light, and ideas  
Not of any-place-other's first making,  
An original true, but not for your  
Observing, un-biddable, not sharing  
Any platform of yours, ironic, smiling,

Like Buddha or a Snake-God on a rock,  
But knowing; no ignoramus, no divine  
Idiot-savant clinging to mystery or to  
Metaphysics; time-traveller, as only time  
Can be traversed, down there in the spirit,  
And not by mortification or inner calm,  
His deepest value laughter, and delight,  
More like the Taoist deep in the mountain  
Stream, or the brush-stroke of spontaneity.

I felt him in New Orleans black in the moon's  
Wet light, watching the river, dreaming notes  
On his imaginary Chinese flute. In Granada too,  
Breathing the rain-spray out of Lorca's well,  
The pool of the graven heart and the bare stylus:  
I felt him in Paris alone in the twin empty gardens,  
At the child's memorial; then by the mirrored glass.  
I saw him stare through our world and look away,  
Neither ghost nor angel, those non-existent beings,

But one of us: only seeing lightning in clear skies,  
And without Selfhood, carrying his image before him,  
Therefore with no creed, history, except that of Man,  
And Woman, of every sex and none and every race,  
Himself a question, 'ah, why' to the rhythms of living,  
At once deep in the moment, mind and the stars,  
Turning the universe inside-out to show on its surface  
Values, the ones that without us would never have been,  
That we forget; stooping then, shaping dust in his hands.

## Emotions Move

Dark-veined butterfly floats  
On the path of existence,  
Zig-zag mind in its flash,  
Wild I loved you.

What spaces, what fates!  
Pain of the Self  
That never can say  
What it intends.

A ray of light  
Abolishes governments,  
The heroes of our lives  
And heroines are masks

Of the darkness, light,  
Singing from the child,  
Arms out to the spirit  
Of intolerable fire.

The scalding tears,  
The lonely sadness,  
Of dark apartments  
And empty houses,

Where moon dead dance  
And images images  
Observe us dying,  
And things and companies

Outlast us, churning  
Dark dross of reality  
Strata of blessed Earth  
Spun through the Void.

Dark-veined butterfly flaps  
In the stifling air,  
Too much seeing  
Kills every being.

Take all the love  
And take it further,  
Because the past  
Is done, and perfect

But we begin again  
Without technique,  
In a mad world  
Of too much habit.

It's freeing the Mind  
Is hard, not believing,  
In order to have faith  
And love without fear.

Dark-veined butterfly  
Wisp-footed other reality,  
Trembles in blue flower,  
Emotions move.

## Longings

I want my mind to be dark  
As the Earth tonight.  
I want my heart to grasp  
The four million year breath.

I want my body to be still  
And not ache for you,  
And the heart in my chest  
To beat for all the rest.

I want to see the lightning flash  
That tears down phantoms  
And makes meanings  
Stand up in the blue.

I want to bathe my head  
And mouth and ears and eyes  
In the spontaneous fall  
Of ice-cool water.

I want to be free of who  
And what and where I am  
And be everyman-woman  
In the womb-tomb of time.

I want to scream with the train,  
And howl with the plane,  
And sigh with the drunken boat,  
And float on the dark pool.

The irrealist song is the only  
Drama left to us,  
The bitter truth  
Before love begins.

Returning to the Earth  
Is hard. The pang of  
Flowers, the hurt of  
Life's eternal.

## No More

No more ghost visits,  
Unless it's the ghost  
Of the Sunflower.

No more angels,  
Unless it's the angel  
Of Unbelief.

No more phantoms,  
Unless it's the phantom  
Of the Underground

Always haunted  
Between trains  
On dark platforms.

No more priests  
Not even the priest  
Of the Endless Void.

No more nations  
Except the nation  
Of one Humanity.

No more power  
Unless it's the power  
Of Silence.

No more America  
But States of Grace  
Chinese Blue,

Gulfs of Joy  
Faltering Steppes,  
The lost Sierras.

No more pain  
Except the pain  
Of giving, freeing, being.

No more.



## Keeping It In Mind

Looking for something  
Quiet as a granite ridge  
A creek of green water  
Or a gold grass slope.

Something untouched  
By you or by me,  
Full of insects, creatures,  
Burrows, ground-nests.

No use leaving the Earth  
If we can't take it with us,  
We already haunt the stars,  
We're already there.

Better to save what we have,  
Or think we have,  
Full of illusions  
We passers-through.

Better the moonlight  
Falling on silent eyes  
The shelves of ranged  
Mountains, forest-trees.

Looking for something  
Clear as the dawn,  
Free as the fire,  
True as the twilight wind.

## News-Time

I turn on the news and think that more  
Should be happening. Beauty and love  
Should be changing the core of the Earth,  
The elevators flowering, the dark side-streets,  
Under the moon, filling with slow water,  
Hearts opening and hands emptying quiet,  
Intellectual thought lighting the fountains.

I read the words, see the images, and find  
How little is happening. Studying instead  
Of living, fallacies of the lawless wild,  
The good hero who seems to leave behind  
A trail of dead innocents, as bad as the bad,  
No one caring too much what's said so long  
As it's neatly said, and with lots of laughter.

I turn off the news and gaze out of the window,  
Trees are happening. Birds and rain and flowers,  
Are taking place in another arc of reality,  
In the other universes orthogonal to ours,  
Bright multi-verses written by multi-poets,  
As a child, I could almost walk into one of those,  
Like meeting Chaucer, or entering a Van Eyck.

I close my eyes to the words and images, both,  
And all is happening. Place and time vanish,  
A coil of stars presenting the snake of matter,  
Every place in the vast cosmos equally central,  
Equally valid, and no point in spacecraft, no  
Where to go, we carry infinity eternity within us,  
And everything happening, if the heart is right.

## Nameless-River Falls

Like a stream of light  
From a high cliff,  
Nameless River  
Falls.

In my head  
The sound of rain,  
The coolness  
Of other silence.

Carves the rocks,  
Cuts the green  
Trailing fronds  
Of silent fern.

Makes islands  
In the dark,  
Lingers in coiled  
Slow pools.

All night hangs there  
Where no one  
Watches,  
No mind sees.

Flows its own way,  
Bright unknown,  
Changeless depths,  
Clear in time.

Like a stream of light  
From an endless cliff  
Nameless River  
Falls.

## Now The Rain Has Gone

*(After Wang Wei)*

The mountain empty  
The rain is light,  
In mind's  
Cool autumn.

Moonlight falling  
On pines.  
Bright stream sliding  
On stones.

Bamboos hiss  
As rain goes by,  
Reeds bend.  
The lonely boat

Floats forever  
In fading spring,  
Though you  
Are gone.

## Three Poems of the Hills

*'Precise about the thing, reticent about the feeling.'*

*W'ei T'ai*

1.

Dark deep tracks  
Wind-noise, water,  
Lines of sunlight,  
Thick mosses,

Here  
Only beautiful  
Emptiness, calms  
Relentless Mind.

2.

Paths of pine needles,  
Dust, pollen, yellow paths  
To the quiet clearing,  
Far off, the bright mountain

Shining after rain.

3.

On sun-wet paths  
I think of you,  
On soundless slopes  
Endless flowers,

White butterflies  
Fill your dream  
Quivering under  
Shifting cloud.

## Memory

In the long grass below the dark trees  
At the edge of that deep bright cornfield  
I remember us, watching the world opened,  
Torn apart, presented to us still beating.  
Our concern was with Eternity and so  
Unlikely to find sharers. And then?  
We were about the business of Being,  
Taking no hostages. Time in our eyes.

In gentle talk of the uneasy dead, how  
Mind in time could follow miles in space,  
As my thoughts now follow you beyond,  
Meditative though, as England is, not fiery  
Like the States, or dark with Russian pain,  
We too saw the light on the mountain slopes  
Burning slowly through the generations, saw  
Intellect stripping away the ages, laying bare

The reality, we heirs of Enlightenment, yet  
To come to terms with Romanticism, seeing,  
Though the symbol uniting both, the species  
One movement in time though many in space,  
A single communion, beyond the single life  
Values created in history given to the stars,  
And the universe empty because intentionless,  
'No hearts in the ponds, no gods in the woods.'

Dealt with each other in famous speech and eyes  
Of meaning, how humankind, compassionate souls,  
Might find courage to conquer anger, hatred, war,  
Go beyond nations, end religion, learn the quiet,  
Embrace the one Earth, extend sympathies, hope,  
Pierce the unseen world which separates us all,  
Nurture delight where love, truth, beauty meet,  
Be kind to the other, and make it last forever.

In the long grass, at the corner of the field, burning,  
Burning, in the perishable days of youth everlasting,  
Filled with the mysterious thrill of intellectual seeing,  
How nothing simply is for us but always deeper, more.  
And so all things echoing in endless vision-dimension  
With the vividness of grasping and the arc of perception,  
Which is the last deep stage always before the letting-go,  
The clearing-down to the void, the viewing all as pattern.

And if we failed to break through to relationship too great  
For our understanding, then we too were burgeoning corn,  
Heads of the wheat, burning gold bright in the morning,  
And the agony of our delight like the run of the breeze  
In dark shadows over the surface of fields, the joy of our  
Pain like the flash of the branches of pine, the fast clouds  
Scouring far hills, and all worlds in transient movement,  
So that the moments were fused in memory mind forever.

In the long grass under the dark trees  
At the edge of the deep bright cornfield  
I remember us, seeing the world open,  
Torn apart, presented to us still beating.  
Naked heart-to-heart truth, and knowing  
Too little for concealment, dazed with beauty  
Communicating with ages, with Eternity,  
How we bind each other into the work of ages.

## Everything On Fire

They linger on inside our heads  
The people and the times  
Bright with fire,  
Challenging as in reality,  
Pointing our failures,  
Blurring our vision,  
Echoing in our silences,  
And shadowing the moon  
When we stare out  
In the cold dawn hours.

Reality is not fact for us,  
Perhaps it will be for the machines,  
But for us it turns to feeling,  
Every instant charged with emotion,  
And maturity the skill to suppress  
What burns the soul,  
Or to express it,  
How do we keep on the rails,  
Some don't, in this absurd universe,  
How do we stand in the Void?

They linger on inside our heads,  
That's what ghosts are,  
The imaginary projections  
Of our inner knowledge,  
How everything has its symbolic strength,  
And the greater the knowing  
The greater the connections,  
Until all things are symbol,  
Leaf, moon, or eye,  
Burning, burning, burning.



## All the Forms of the World

All free, all to no purpose,  
All intentionless empty  
All Universe, all light,  
Passing in the Void.

The Middle Way by all means,  
But in this no compromise,  
The true, the sensitive, kind  
Are extremists, in their way.

Intentionless therefore empty,  
Transient therefore empty,  
All the forms of the world  
Which really do exist,

But self-created meaning  
For us and mind's intention,  
Love, truth and beauty  
That we, no gods, have made,

Or rather out of the creatures  
In the long chain of being  
The parcel handed on  
Opened yet unopened.

Universe did not make love,  
Sentient creatures did.  
The hopeful, sorrowful  
Species, joyous Mind.

Enough of the idle dream,  
All beyond or all emptiness,  
In which is nothing Human,  
Truth is always the matter,

Love, is delight in the matter,  
Beauty, form of the matter,  
Communion of the creature  
Lost in love with the world.

## Now the Light is Shining

Now the light is shining  
And I should go out walking  
Not sit making words glimmer  
Till there's darkness before rain.

Now the light is shining  
Many people cast no shadow,  
Peace for the body  
Awareness for the mind.

Now the light is shining  
Between Void and Illusion,  
Bent on the grasses  
Clinging to the pine.

Now the light is shining  
World and Mind vibrating  
With the quivering leaves  
And every time is now.

Now the light is shining  
Be wary of the phantoms  
The ones with angel wings  
Most demons of illusion.

Now the light is shining  
The lost and broken ones  
Are singing in the twilight,  
Now the light is shining.

Now the light is shining,  
I should go out walking,  
To see the woods of summer,  
Turn their endless leaves.

## **Heart-Stopped**

Drifting with the cloud  
Blowing with the grass,  
Clinging to the earth,  
Under bending pine,

Suddenly, see the moon.

## Awake and Aware

Neither haven nor void  
To deliver or enter  
Only resonant  
Being in Mind.

Nature's not nature  
If once created,  
The uncreated  
Alone is free.

Freedom greater  
Than consolation  
Giant ego abandoned,  
Vast World as it is.

The seethe, the seethe  
Consumes the silence,  
But never the silence  
Gone deeper within.

Life is the answer  
Without a question,  
Don't use, don't be used,  
It's awake and aware.

## World of Dust

Treading the world of dust,  
Feet deep in the grass,  
Cars and trucks go by.

Things at the edge of the road  
Dawdle in green hollows,  
Slow as clouds.

I'd like to vanish there  
Into the distant shadows  
Edging the open land

Crossing silent fields  
Dive down into groves,  
Dreaming by creeks.

Changeless the spirit,  
What was: still, there  
Pure, disengaged.

Eye following hills,  
Freedom greater,  
No allegiance.

Don't let fools tell you  
What to do –  
The world is dust.

## The Fact

Hardly a sound, but stream falling,  
Clicking of pebbles,  
Dark water  
Trickling down through night.

Something about the darkness,  
Something about  
The quiet, said there.  
Not leaf-noise.

One thought in the head,  
Where self begins,  
And a star, no moon  
On the sleepless eye.

Where no foot passes  
Something slides,  
The fact of the universe,  
Exists, exultant.

## Unforgiving

Dark upward lift of flight over grey rock,  
Hawk heaven,  
High over pine tips, white space  
Sand and fields below –  
Sweep down long grasses,  
Then up on currents of swirling light,  
Wheeling, crying.

Into the eye of the wind, predator flying,  
Creature cowering below.  
A life of consuming  
In bits and pieces,  
No guarantees.  
Nature harsh at its centre:  
Grey hard stone and sky-blue air.

## Agenda

My agenda is freedom,  
Yours the liberty to think what you wish,  
Question everything, accept nothing,  
Vanish if you like into silence,  
Express your values,  
And ignore the whole world  
Of human cries, in delight at nature.

My agenda is freedom,  
Why should I believe what you believe,  
Or respect your conclusions, though  
I respect your being?  
And no, morality isn't relative,  
Destruction is not creation,  
Love is not hatred.

My agenda is freedom,  
Even better than birds or fish,  
Mind is less bound even more fluid,  
Though we speak the one  
Language inside called Human,  
I shall speak Poesy if I choose  
And if not, not.

My agenda is freedom,  
Not to interfere with you or intrude  
On you, but freedom of worlds  
Beyond us and inside us,  
The intentionless, the transient  
Is always empty, and our  
Society dust.

My agenda is freedom,  
To walk into the gloom among  
Trees, to be different to you  
Though I may look the same,  
Oh, we can think what we like  
If we don't speak it,  
Silence deepest beauty.



## The Visitor

Comfortable poetry came to sit with me,  
Drink tea, and watch the flowers.  
She spoke to me of comfortable hours.

Pleasant human confessional poetry  
Came and sat by me  
In a comfortable chair and framed a self.

The seductive poetry of childhood days  
And adult longing and vibrant scenes  
Of relationship, and interaction's maze,

Came to me to prove her worth and reassure:  
Truth is not beauty, not worth aching for,  
Beauty is truth, and we know all her ways.

The poetry that people love, that makes  
Them sigh, with half-felt understanding, tenderness,  
Came to me, and soothed my loneliness.

## Tranquil Days

It is beautiful silence,  
Great trees sitting in fog,  
Bright hillsides with sharp edges  
Tiers of green,  
Lots of space and place  
For creatures to be,  
The kind of misted  
Level grassy floor  
Our ancestors once lived on,  
Huge boughs against the light,  
Tatters of sun,  
Profound peace.

In this landscape you can dream  
Of being human,  
Tenderness is easy, nothing  
Strains at idle achievement.  
We're going nowhere,  
Except into greater complexity,  
But here you wouldn't know it,  
And nothing spoils  
Consistent scene.  
The deep fields simmer,  
Objects meet our gaze,  
On tranquil days.

## Thin Air

Path to path and slowly more complex  
The network of routes, the divides,  
Until there is no going back,  
What's happened has happened,  
And this place is where we are.

The trees, the streams we remember  
May be there still, in re-incarnation,  
But are not the places we were or saw,  
All ways seem equal but in the end  
We reach the place we could, no more.

Path after path, track after track, road  
On road, and the blue of distance,  
That captures us with a sweet insistence,  
But all places are mind, one and the same,  
Every place we were, tagged with our name,

But for others different, no minds alike,  
And no histories. Though what we share  
Is certainly the presence, the being there,  
The witnesses can only testify to thin air,  
The way is gone, despite its turnings taken.

## **Sleek Birds, Desperate People**

Chance nature is our solace for randomness,  
The disparate fates, watching the beggar child,  
Trying to comprehend what it would be  
To be her, and failing.

Watching the blue-throated birds instead,  
Scattered here and trying to scratch a living  
In a landscape where everything human's poor,  
Succeeding.

## **In the Mountains I Feel Free**

Glass ropes of water down the granite slide  
End in dragon-foam.

Da Vinci tried to draw the whorls and curls,  
Uncannily sighted.

Form and Function never die, the Process  
Swiftest in the unmoving stillness,

Hypnotised the eye, these bright scales flare  
As in the ink-on-paper of Ch'en Yung,

His vortices of wave and spray,  
The singing gliding of immortal forces.

## **In the Presence of Natural Beauty**

The silence of the tree and the valley,  
The silence of the mountain and the hill,  
The silence of the mind, and the spirit,  
The tremor of the universe grown still.

The silence of the moonlight and the cloud,  
The silence of the stone and the stream,  
The silence of emotion and the will,  
The presence of the glory and the dream.

**'The Mountains of themselves are Mountains'**

Where grey rock hovers on green precipices  
My mind grows clear.

Where water glides over shelves of stone  
The heart grows silent.

Clouds and mountains: intentionless.  
Hills and valleys: slowly changing.

Passing by, all things seem light.  
Flowing through, the self has gone.

## **This Side of Lethe**

For the sensitive, Life is those shameful moments  
Re-lived again, now, in the memory,  
The dark, scored, burned-in tracks of fire and metal  
Thought travels, locked to its infernal landscape.

For the sensitive, Life is to re-work the past,  
Those events that others have forgotten,  
To drown again in the well, spurt in the fountain,  
Fall to the bowl, disperse in the bitter stream.



## Winnowing

The dark moth, un-designed, blunders through  
A silvered web gleaming with evening light,  
Spun by the long-legged spider in the night,  
Whose skills, born of Nature's net, wove true:  
Their ancient genetic sieve sifts generations,  
Leading to all unwished-for destinations;  
The complex moth, antennae, soft furred wings  
Beating against the perversity in things;  
Intention, spidery species now rehearse,  
Expressed in silk, strung from the flower's stem,  
Produced by this intentionless universe,  
Catching the moth's wing by its fragile hem,  
Tangling life and death, emblems of sorrow,  
Of all strange combats with no clear tomorrow.

Breaks through: chance bliss, as chance despair,  
If such deep feelings may be attributed  
To smallest creatures, who must only care  
To fulfil their function where flight has led,  
As the moth ploughs through threads of destiny;  
Though *we* cheat Nature's sieve in the free mind,  
No more choosing to live among the blind  
Than fulfil the process that brought us here;  
Conscious, watching the sieved moth deceive  
The waiting predator in the un-decreed,  
Though inter-meshing, lives that insects lead;  
Tear through the web; and skim away to leave  
The dark spider scurrying inwards to repair  
Its inner plan that lays fate's meaning bare.

## Freedom

Freedom in deep fields and the darkest glades;  
Those starry spaces, and galactic other times  
Whose light from the past falls in our present;  
The beds of watery silence; the far cascades.

Freedom in wandering outside the bounds,  
Into the darkness where all tracks have faded,  
Far blue distance, and mind's remotest lands,  
The absence, void of language and of sound.

Freedom to be alone, in that remoteness,  
Beyond the communication of the living,  
Tired of giving, weary of heart's translation  
Of night's pure solitude to togetherness.

Freedom to feel the ice congeal on lips,  
Fill the mouth, touch the unmoving face,  
Devoid of any concept of love or grace,  
To feel the universe cold at the fingertips.

Freedom to forgo comfort and the flowers,  
Freedom to ask no more of I or you,  
But do as, in deep snow, the bright winds do,  
Carve out and smooth the wilderness, for hours.

## Line of Sight

Step by step through the wood: the trees move,  
Pure parallax in gold-green of early autumn,  
As Proust's church towers shifted, line of sight  
Making them dance: is the world then truly solid?

A dance of trees, like the dance of language, letters,  
The Celts' tree-alphabet, birch, rowan, ash, but here  
The smooth columns of beech, the great grey pillars,  
And the endless bending leaf-rows a child might ride.

And later, in wood's edge, by night, beneath the stars,  
Dreaming of Earth-parallax, our circling orbit, lines  
Drawn to what's out there, measuring near distance;  
Though what's near for light's so far for the species.

Perspectives shift, yet the head, the Self, remain still  
Our trick to stabilise the world: all born egocentric.  
Walk; watch it long enough, this wood, deep space,  
As we move; and all the depths go circling round us.

## The Invisible One

The deer, invisible, was there in the lens,  
Framed in the shot, flat back and slope of neck,  
A tan suitcase with legs, and magician's head,  
One of those dancing shamans on cavern walls.

It had looked towards me, though I never saw  
That strange triangular face, those vast eyes,  
Mysterious with sublime ignorance of all this,  
Our mechanics, the clutter of our tame lives.

It was there as emblem of the world beyond,  
Reflection of other being to this lost species,  
Caught in the lens, digitised, frozen in seeing,  
Not an answer, but an echo, a world-response.

And nothing alien, crashing through the trees,  
But a reassurance, the meeting in parity there,  
As unbeknown to each, stare meets stare,  
Only in after-moment, this conjoined life.

## All Change Now

It glitters, the poetry of the past,  
A stage-set where the characters,  
Who share emotions similar to ours,  
In the end are utterly other, nothing  
Of theirs ours: nor the meaning one.

The assumptions fail, external purpose;  
Codes from outside; or lives with sense;  
For us the whole thing's mysterious,  
Watching ourselves, our processes,  
Turning inside-out, now, like a glove.

It delights, the poetry of the past,  
Clear now, like a Mozart concerto,  
Seventeen, or nineteen, say; the flow  
Of feeling, bright as a distant river,  
And its inbound streams; we sigh

At miraculous form, Rembrandt's  
Polish rider, speeding through dusk  
Carrying a message from eternity  
To this mortal life; see his pale horse,  
Its bony presence; and the skyline there

That, like all landscape, all horizon,  
Calls to us an interminable question;  
Our answer stranger, darker: we are  
Twilight, we cannot ride like you, but  
We understand. Thanks for your blessing.

## Clearing

And then, the world was there,  
Opening in beauty,  
The forests dark, bare  
Like silence after battle,  
And we were not dead  
But strangely still alive,

As though we lived on  
After our intellectual  
Being had ended,  
Still turning over leaves  
Marking the place,  
Smoothing out the ground.

And then, the feeling  
Of freedom, wild, alone  
Seeing it is always  
Like this, how light falls  
On to a cleared space  
Where knowing is living.

All that time wasted  
All the grand diversion  
Despite delights of form  
Triumphs of illusion,  
Ending where we began  
In the empty clearing.

## Reclaim

We can't go back to the lake-shores  
Or the rock-caves,  
We can only go forward to the stars.  
Mortal victims, or is it heirs,  
Of mind, we can only  
Reclaim, in Nature, what is ours,

Morality, and spirit, from religion;  
Freedom from power; beauty  
From heart-exhaustion and despair;  
In discovering the intentionless  
Which was always ours,  
And always there, shining.

We can't go back to the first fires,  
The first beginning, the flowers  
Of moons, the stars and suns opening,  
Inheritors of the dream, burning  
With outward-ness, while inside  
Centuries coiled; thoughts unseen.

We can only unfold these strange  
Blue voids, these shores of being,  
The myriad halos of those other worlds  
Inhabited perhaps by startling things, wild  
Wildernesses of lights, eternal gleams,  
Un-created depths, some far lost Earth.

## A Flow of Dream

Those leaves designed like light.  
Weighing them  
Against all this human world,

And the deer-prints,  
Slowly filling with water,  
Deep in black mud, in the rain.

And later, under the stars,  
The cobweb  
Constellations gleaming,

The wind from the cold side  
Of the hill,  
Dark pine-trees breathing,

Reduce us down,  
To what's worth keeping  
Of this,

Free run of the Mind,  
A discontent,  
A flow of Dream.



## Fracture

Beautiful, this deep Nature  
So why the anxiety?  
Perhaps our suspicion  
Of a flaw in the weave,

A dissonance  
Behind the singing line,  
An anguish given  
Over to the spirit,

That the child feels  
And the adult  
Can't escape  
Through living;

The flowering meadow  
Too good to be true,  
The creatures  
Not all friends,

Walls love can't climb,  
Places we can't see,  
Or be in,  
Laughing;

Dark cloud, the storm  
In distance gathering,  
Or death,  
The pure cessation

That has no other side,  
Is not a force  
Or state of anything,  
Unlike the absence

After the quarrel;  
The pain  
Beyond separation;  
Mutilation –

Why this rift  
In the harmony,  
This shudder,  
This intensity,

Sudden lightning  
In the silence  
Before dawn,  
A call

Stirring ancestry  
Pulling  
At our thread  
Of generation,

All the rhythms  
That resonate  
Inside  
Our being,

The rapture  
That conceals  
The darkness,  
Piercing

Our simple platitudes  
Our calm control,  
This ease,  
This facile understanding.

## Ariel

Reading about the relationship  
Of Mozart to his father,  
I hear an echo of Rilke's lines  
To Ariel.

That terrible desire to *possess*  
The miracle,  
Granting less freedom still,  
Jealous in pain,

To grasp, forever  
What validates the self,  
The failing to let go,  
Prospero's role:

'I made you: serve me.'  
*He* the delightful presence  
Given to all of us  
For ever, selflessly,

Singing, in the cupola,  
Through the keys,  
In lips and hands,  
The child's tenderness

Echoing through adulthood  
And overflowing,  
Crying the one humanity  
All empathy.

We are mere commentators  
Slight creators,  
But still we feel the power  
That flows through,

Must learn its dispossession,  
Its perfect lack  
Of all authority,  
Of every tie but love.

## Interiority

Our lament, inside now,  
Turns to void, to echo.  
Oh, how to express  
The burning or the sorrow,

Any longer. We only freeze  
In the outer darkness  
Or are seized,  
And shaken by inner violence,

We cannot laugh or weep,  
Because this world of ours  
Penetrates too deeply,  
Too many voices,

Too much suffering, too far  
The needle enters,  
Too many wars, deaths,  
Tragedies, too much

Ache in our consolation,  
Till we scream  
Endlessly inwards:  
Not outwardly,

No, there we smile,  
There expressionless  
We transact,  
We entertain,

We use confession  
Or it uses us  
To pretend humanity,  
Until the Self

Can sink back into silence,  
Nurse the hurt,  
A child in the dark,  
Or quiet at the window,

One with the stillness;  
Or lost in the crowd  
Of other faces, mute,  
Or deaf with feeling;

Pained by those places  
Where on primitive soil  
Women still wail,  
And men still shriek

To violate our calm;  
A sky of stars  
Bright with neutrality  
Free of all expression,

Although not so,  
Since they lack feeling,  
And our intention,  
Values and therefore

Meaning, which are ours,  
Alone, our weight  
Of interiority  
Our life-burden

Which is life itself,  
This consciousness,  
This tremor at the root,  
This ecstatic poison.

## The Trees Are Honest

The trees are honest, there's no deceit  
In the water, the leaves don't lie,  
Clouds contain revolutionary truth,  
The rooks going home at twilight  
Enjoy the dark gusts of directness  
Caw their delight at the real,  
The world's alive,  
And veracious,  
Red light  
Inhabits the evening cedars,  
The field of thistles,  
The grass bowed over  
The silhouetted firs,  
With no misstatement,  
Nothing is naming  
Anything else,  
Pretending to anything more,  
Kowtowing to fond illusions  
Subservient to dream,  
Obeying, proclaiming,  
Buying or selling,  
No imperfections in the breeze,  
It goes wherever without intention,  
And no authority.

The trees are honest,  
They don't wear clothes,  
Only lichen,  
Insects, bark, and dust  
Of immaculate pollen  
That is what it is,  
Just generation,  
Going on, unasked,  
Without craving,  
The self-less gene,  
And not unconscious  
Because that's our concept,  
Whatever possesses no language  
Is mute before words,  
And lacks all referents:  
The air is candid, silent, open,  
The world is alive  
And veracious light  
Guileless,  
Reddens the evening cedars.

## Looking Outward, Seeing Valley

Trails of mist caught on the ledges,  
Tiny gold larch,  
Why can't the eye restless  
Hold still on beauty,  
The ache in the heart (mind)  
Flickers,  
The yearning is pain,  
And the light  
Hovers over the grey heron  
In an angle of river.

Trees sigh at the stir of the wind,  
Branches rise and fall  
A leaf ticks on the twig,  
A pebble lifts and drops  
In the depths of the flow,  
A long blade of grass  
Hanging there flicks  
From side to side,  
The mind too quivers,  
Beauty there passing by

Into the fall and fragment  
Remorseless destruction,  
Despite the endless creation,  
And no standing still,  
We must move  
Ahead to catch this present  
As past,  
Unrecoverable,  
Only place  
We can find it.



A billion bright leaves  
On a long hillside,  
Weigh in the mind  
Against the human pain,  
Our repetitive agony  
So futile tedious  
When only this one life  
On intentionless Earth  
Should make us all  
One urge of compassion.

Come get beyond gods  
All the wrong process  
Suffered from childhood,  
Self, delusion, mortal kind,  
Too much celebration  
Of the marvellous dead,  
Too much celebration  
Of the trivial living,  
Here trails of mist  
And the solitary heron.

Coiling white river  
And dark, from up here  
A ribbon, and logs like sticks  
And far off somewhere  
Are roads and houses,  
Make from fewest words  
The tiniest poem.  
How can I fix  
The mind on beauty,  
Stop the restless

Ever-moving;  
Empty thought;  
Kill the craving;  
Western man;  
Re-find beauty  
Pastoral elegance  
Transient freshness  
All warmth, humanity,  
All of our tenderness  
Those things that fade?

There are things inside us  
We never escape,  
Space beyond us  
We never cross,  
Identities we never capture;  
Everything, if we're not careful,  
Is only how to pass time,  
The mind a skein  
Of awkward misinformation,  
Facts, wishes, visions,  
Speculation, dreams,

All jumbled together  
Connected by wires,  
Branches of trees hold their leaves  
In the air,  
The highways are full  
Elsewhere. Oh, where  
Are you rolling,  
Earth sighing  
Through deepest dark  
In the light of stars,

Yourself un-illuminating?  
I want to hear affirmation  
Of music, read tender verse,  
See glowing colours of light,  
Feel what we have given  
To the cold Universe  
Science examines;  
Those voids  
With veils of energy  
Shining matter,

A god would create if it could;  
One step beyond us,  
So difficult to breathe  
Yet not so for others,  
Some born with a stupid  
Sensitivity  
To the chill of pale stone,  
And the hurt of being  
Simply this creature confused  
From the womb of space

And the sieve of Nature,  
Mind without role,  
Heart without aim,  
Love without destination,  
Beauty without the means  
To fix this in time,  
Make all time present,  
And moment the stillness  
Of art, or art's repetition,  
To catch the white mist, the gold larch.

## Path at Night between Trees

White rim of cloud opens  
To a show of stars  
And a soft dimness  
A half-glow  
Under rustling oak,  
No Moon,  
A breeze  
Crosses the grasses,  
Bird in its leaf-cave cries,  
Cold, out of its hour,  
Restless air and the night  
A beautiful roving  
With forms half-seen  
And lights that can't be expressed,  
Shudders of being,  
Shivers of apprehension,  
Dark in this womb.

Chill wood smells,  
Heavy leaves  
Dew-wet, leaning,  
Thoughts that fall  
Under gravity,  
Constellations high north  
Far east in profusion,  
Plates of intangible colour,  
Over fir, beyond birch  
Pine, inter-stellar  
Distance, size of a thumb  
In the arc of the eye,  
Faint glow between trees,  
Who'd ever sleep,  
Un-tired by such beauty  
Creatures roam  
Make this their being.

Now scratching of branch  
On other,  
Tick and creak over  
The floor, dust, bark,  
Of the wood,  
Stand silent,  
Breathe universe in,  
Become the smallness  
Of life on this Earth,  
The live spirit joined  
Either end to the dead  
And unborn,  
Put hand on bole,  
This roughness of things,  
Remember all sweetness  
Past, imagine all futures,  
Be, in the sougning.

## Birds of Thought

No, we're not merely instinct,  
But birds of thought  
And the lakes we land on  
Are not in nature,  
But in the unreal  
Between nature and mind  
Or rather, of both.

Not drowned swan trapped in the ice,  
Or gasping in dust,  
Wing-beat of raptor,  
Or flicker of wren,  
Over shining trails  
In the air,  
Or deep in the trees.

No, we're beyond the seasons  
Or rather create  
Winters, springs, summers, autumns  
Of spirit,  
Between all landscapes  
Alight  
Between atom and star.

## It's Shared

What's in their Mind, the creatures, something  
Like ours, but harder it seems to know  
Than difference between human beings  
(Though consider impairment, addiction,  
Consider the distance between us also,  
Living and dead, the expression  
That's left behind in form's achievement  
As well as the here and now complexity)  
Still it's hard to reach across to animal mind,

Which is delicate, subtle, lovely, and deep  
As ours: whales and coyotes sing, the  
Hawk flickers over the wind-blown grass  
And the fragile mouse has tremors below,  
Nor is theirs simply eternal present without  
Memory or future, only watch as they dream,  
Look at their stratagems, view their habits,  
Understand insects, gaze at dragonflies,  
Wonder how wasp ticks, what the bee sees.

The universe of feelings is common, is shared,  
Don't you see the tracks of those they have left,  
And leave: the weight and ease of their passage?  
Deer step carefully, sheep so adept at edge of cliff,  
Hummingbirds flashing in crimson, azure, green,  
Navigate their eternity with more grace than we  
Who are always stumbling; struggling to rise;  
Tongue-tied trembling to express; wanting to be;  
Following down their trail; gone seeking ourselves.

## **Quiet, Diamond Bright**

Heron sees: liquid grey surface, below glitter  
Azure over, nothing to fear quite, snow smell  
In the air, wind far out from eastern hills: bows,  
Bends slow neck to eternal Earth considers light  
Waits, not far the gravel beds and quarry waste,  
Buzzard-calls, pigeon-clatter, don't disturb this  
Move-less concentration, sometime there's fish,  
Mostly deep glass inwardness of grey-green flow,  
A breeze that blows from miles of shadowy trees,  
World solid, fluid, feathered; quiet, diamond bright.



## **Crisis! What Crisis?**

Look, if you want something like Dante,  
Read Dante; Eliot, Eliot; every poet writes  
The presence of her or his age: here's the hill  
From which we see all eras' fond illusions,  
And feel the chill of abandoning our own.  
Poetry changes, to catch the altering human:  
The world of science won't tolerate religion,  
In the end: enlightenment and games are over,  
But not the dance of values, our moral choices,  
Not the spirit reclaimed, nor aesthetic beauty,  
Nor tenderness for the fragile, pitiful flesh,  
Nor visions of the ethereal fire of our world,  
This sweet blue planet's solitary flowering.

## Tonight, I Dream of You

Tonight I dream of you, and the fire  
And ice of our vision returns. Desire  
Is not always desire of the flesh, more  
The need of the mind for true acceptance,  
The spirit for warmth: where winds blow  
Cold on the tundra, wolves howl, and neon  
Lights in empty stores chill the wandering  
Mind, is where we feel Earth's loneliness  
In the arc of glittering galaxies, dark matter,  
What binds and what repels the intentionless.

Tonight I dream of you, fatigued and silent,  
One with the lonely ones, solitary  
Caught in the extreme tangle of your ideas  
I never understood, emotions I failed  
To follow. Are you happy with children  
Or sad with failed fantasies, or crying out  
In the orgasm of body-the-well-beloved,  
Or passing like me between the houses  
Suspicious of auto dark glass stillness,  
In silent America, under the burning stars?

Tonight I dream of you and the fire of love  
That turns its slow flame to ash, our Earth  
To eternity, flower floating, eye of our warmth  
Our values, what we, human, created to offer  
This panoply of energies everywhere glowing,  
Purpose-free and enwrapped in its own being,  
All symbols, all images, what we truly know  
And fiercely remember, the flares hovering  
High over life, beacons rotating in darkness.  
Tonight I dream of you, with every feeling.

Tonight I dream of you. We are vulnerable,  
And we posture, both are real: brace ourselves  
To perform on the stage of this world, but rain  
On water's more what we are, smoke in the storm.  
Do you watch trees like these from a closed  
Window; see squirrels running the power-lines;  
Derelicts trawling the garbage, hogging the benches;  
The rich sliding by on greased tracks to oblivion,  
By the stores, the halls, the domes, the hydrants;  
Frozen or flowing inside; melting or burning?

Tonight I dream of your meaning and your being,  
Both mysteries and far, in my place of departure,  
Since everything is alive, nothing lost, though we  
Drift apart for all time like swift-separating stars,  
Trailing a mist of words, or the colours of anger,  
Reds, blue-greens of regret, yellows of jealousy,  
Turn white with the void of gone laughter crying.  
Sometimes I feel ready to leave, the dark enticing,  
But I have things to hold me, arcs of light, trees  
Throw tender patterns of shade on the roadway,  
Making intentionless beauty, stilling the mind.

## Creating Space

At times I want the poem where nothing happens,  
No objects move, there's no activity, no frenetic  
Desire to capture the life of the world and proclaim  
The place of the separate mind in the great gathering.

Silence occupies shadows, emptiness all horizons,  
There are cities, voids of Baudelairean vision,  
A grey wind off the Atlantic, with seals bobbing  
Their heads in the salt-spray, or maybe they're buoys.

There are woods that boom and echo; shores that dry;  
Hills where trees split unseen streams fall in shadow;  
Vast plains of swaying gold grasses deer run through,  
And lions prowl, or cheetahs; and lakes under stars.

At times, at daybreak, winds rise and stir a few leaves,  
Or, at twilight, a spider retreats from its glistening web  
To the stem of a flower; light spins white constellations;  
Waves beat; winds sigh; the valley clears its dark throat;

And no prophet comes to disturb the futureless present,  
Which contains the motionless past, or ask my attention.  
At times I become the poem in which nothing begins, or  
Progresses, but turns around its own axis, creating space.

## Beached

Sitting on dark rock reading a text  
On Quantum Dynamics, the beat  
Of waves on the flat sand, swirl  
Of bright water scours the tideway,  
Mind running on in the creature  
Here, thought enabled in tissue,  
All these strange tricks of Nature.  
Sandpiper, dunlin, and knot step  
On stilts through the sighing wash.

Boom of surf on the cliff, spread  
Delta of silt, shale, shell and foam  
Covering the debris of ages. Light  
Shines on the page, these equations  
Our functions that grasp at phantoms,  
The shadowy symbols of energy's fire,  
Though its flame can be dark gravity,  
Or gasps from a star, black shoreline,  
Where the eye is process, like wave.

We sat here by driftwood salt smoke  
When our galaxy was ash in the sky,  
Learning to see each other long before  
We learned to see self, the inwardness.  
Now cars wait, metal and glass, above,  
While the book of the future wipes out  
The book of the past, gull's necklace  
Of tracks, skeleton print of unknowing.  
A sea of molecules breaks, world quivers.

## He Leaves Us Behind

Soft night walking November woodland  
Glints of half-light in silhouette leaves,  
Tender shine, from the remains of a star,  
Out there below the rise of a constellation,  
Orion, heroic gleams in random lines, oh,  
Too much staring at world makes us blind;  
What foolish people confused by morality  
Do to each other, this planet, unwitting;  
And no use berating the fools, it's us all.  
Far cloud glows, black cold grips the ground,  
Feet slip on logs, shadows cover the stones,  
Charon departs in the mist, leaves us behind.

Sweet night walking November grassland  
Distant fires, sparks blow high at windfall,  
Universe sinks to rest now here in the valley,  
And a skein of smoke slants towards Algol.  
No room for us on the stream, too freighted  
With thought, emotion, the lather of living,  
As the poled skiff departs, there's a moan  
Of souls, these spirits embedded in flesh,  
Desperate for Lethe, and then to start over,  
Clean as the midnight air, as sparkles of ice  
Where the water laps stones, perfect night  
Of November shining on all of us left behind.

## Uncreated Space

No poetry tonight,  
Throw away the giant Ego,  
Examine the world that is,  
One vast glitter of Tao  
Stretched in the dark over Europe;  
Fountain of light  
Seethe that consumes the silence,  
Though not the silence within.  
No poetry tonight,  
Not Pound's long lament  
For a vanished civilisation,  
Nor Rilke's stream of dark joy,  
Nor Eliot's sermon,  
Neither unconditional love  
Nor infinite compassion,  
But only the coming and going  
Of thought that leaves  
No print in the air, or over snow.

On Cold Mountain  
In the house without walls,  
No poetry tonight,  
The glittering silence  
And the silvered palette  
Of shimmering presence.  
Dark deep moss under pines.  
All power is empty.  
No poetry tonight,  
No way except  
Relinquishment of all ways,  
All roles are false  
All acts untruth,  
Hopeless sorrowful species,  
Joyous mind,  
Uncreated space,  
Intentionless Void.

## Browsing

A photograph today  
Of a thirteen year old girl  
With a gun  
Astride a sad horse  
With a slain deer  
Over her saddle,  
The deer dead,  
The horse ashamed,  
And the girl...

'Vulnerability with  
Strength' the caption said,  
Rather a terrible  
Weakness,  
Landscape behind her,  
Being used, or consuming  
The self inside,  
Both sacrificed  
On an evil altar.

Either you understand  
We are creatures  
In this together,  
Are bared by pathos  
Naked to every weather,  
Or you fail to see  
Yourself slung over the saddle  
The bloody muzzle,  
Feel pain of broken beauty,

And dead as an adult  
Complete the death  
Of the child.



## Baudelaire's Symbols

Civilisation distorts  
Nature simply presents.  
So preserve this planet  
Before we destroy some other.

Civilisation creates symbols  
It's true, through which  
The subtle mind sees  
The world, never new

But always by that means,  
Symbolic, and so beginning  
Not from where we are  
But from where we may be;

Mind is process and symbol  
And neither this present  
Place nor its past,  
But the Irreal between them,

Yet Mind is always the symbol  
That Nature presents,  
So preserve this planet  
Before we destroy some other,

What we make is not given:  
How can it deliver  
New symbols not there  
Already, deep in the core?

## Science Fiction: Light Relief

Science Fiction never reflects  
The depth of our being,  
Since it mirrors society  
Though some way ahead.  
Whenever did society  
Encompass our being?

Aliens, monsters, physics  
Of other-worlds, dreams  
Of advanced (technological)  
Civilisations so wise we drool  
At their marvellous powers  
Which usually are exerted

Against 'inferiors', even if they do  
Lead them to paradisial shores,  
Colour them blue-green, send them  
Down Hollywood tunnels of fire,  
Plant them in mystical spaces,  
Or flavour them sometime else.

Science Fiction is light relief  
From the weirdness and pain  
Of moral decisions, the choices  
Between our realities; those  
We must make, still, to be  
More than society, but Individuals.

The spirit is no place, no matter  
How many stars and planets  
We find or how many creatures  
We meet, unlike ourselves.  
Values are in the Mind, and  
Always here, here our challenge,

To be what we might become  
To shape out our destiny, learn  
As a species how to be greater  
Than this or that piece of void,  
Social process, or web of matter;  
How to make the Individual future,

Create the space around us,  
And not be defined by time,  
The co-ordinates of being.  
Mind, the process in time,  
Take us always beyond time,  
And into those depths beyond space.

## Not by Shouts Cries Violence

The way to wage war on power, is to  
Show the dark world its own emptiness.

A war without weapons cannot cut  
Or kill, its bullets are pure ideas

Where the shrill voices fade to quiet  
Go build the great tower of values

What else have we to give to the universe?  
These have been formed through us alone.

Beyond race, religion, sexuality, nation  
Embrace the silence, go build the tower.

This is the way to wage war on power,  
Show the dark world its own emptiness

## Undulant Night

No I don't understand our civilisation  
Frenetic activity or the roar of process  
Matter mastered we mastered by matter  
Alone in the dark with such transactions

I understand various deep pains in the heart  
Our humanity lost somewhere on the way  
The rationalisation of cruelty violence hate  
How freedom is killed no limit to slavery

No I don't understand what others cling to  
Nation religion sexuality ideology race  
Being a lover of silence self natural forms  
Alone in the universe mind filled with value

I understand the territorial imperative the fire  
Engendered in baffled minds by battle-cries,  
And that two almost identical human beings  
Distinguish each other revile by hidden signs

No I don't understand why we kill the creatures  
Who are ourselves deep down the dark we know  
Who enter and leave life devoid of our language  
And yet reveal better than us what being entails

I understand how power sucks everything dry  
In all its masks including the solacing tender  
How we abuse others how we too are abused  
How we enshrine this in our social structures

No I don't understand what we hope to gain  
Launching ourselves further deeper in time  
Crossing space between planets stars perhaps  
Wrecking saving our earth fighting eating dying

I understand how hard it is to love beyond self  
Beauty gone by how to fail to capture its fading  
Truth and the difficulty of ever saying revealing  
I understand darkness pity sadness undulant night

## The Removal

Slow cloud volumes moving over the air  
Slow thought eternities creatures forms  
Lumbering quiet through shadows of sky  
Depths in which I find you lose you shiver  
In endless tracts of the history of the heart  
Valleys and hills of cloud piled up erased  
Drifts braided channels of light and silence  
Mirror lakes of grass turbulent seas of trees  
Ponderous weighty over the dark lake silver  
Specked with the lingering stains of swans  
Slow cloud moving eternities wreathing sky  
Ripples of space-time knots of existent mass  
Energies bound unbound promethean shoals  
Sombre prisons of flame ice crumpled matter  
Vast landscapes dark storm gullies the abysses  
Absorbing mind a drowned man flails sighing  
And dives with the whales deep rises with stars  
Wraps around earth returning on waves of fire  
I am process am I there or not there churned  
By the living vapour steam of witness ravelling  
Slow cloud shape-shifting mounded May thorn  
Snow of volcanoes tremor of seamount towers  
Turned faster than Earth flowing out far ahead  
Yet hanging curtained veiled from eye's summit  
Spilling grey-black over the shadow-green leaves  
And here and there a glint of whiter of almost blue  
While below I thrust my hand deep into the gold  
Crisp remnants of autumn into the glistening core  
That somehow holds me is one is the throb of life  
This same intentionless glide from root to crown  
From west to east or north to south this removal.

## Irreducible

When you dig down deep  
Or stare at the world enough  
Each thing has integrity  
Each thing so strong  
It defies eludes  
Even the things  
You disagree with  
Even the actions  
That disturb your spirit:  
To the universe  
All process is equal  
But not to us.

When you're sensitised  
Everything impacts  
Forces meaning on you  
Demands to be set  
In the poem  
Lingers in dreams  
Haunts your bed at night,  
Even what no longer shames you,  
Or hurts your heart:  
Beauty comes stealing  
Through all forms  
Light or dark.

There's a bird  
Green woodpecker maybe  
Its dipping flight  
Through your eye,  
Or a place a time words said  
Sounding flutes or drums  
Falling in inner space  
Descending inside you  
To the ground of being  
Like the floor of a wood:  
Being's demands  
Are far from subtle.

If you dig down deep  
All these things have life  
Something irreducible  
The tough root  
Of existence,  
Gnarled, hostile,  
Other, vague, perverse.  
Over the truth we spread  
A veil of our knowing  
A veil of affection  
Our tenderness,  
Our vulnerable light.



## Today

I wrote too much I grew  
Contaminated by writing,  
I gave away my freedom  
To the tyranny of words.

Instead of breathing air  
Hitting the simple trail  
Remembering emotion  
Or indulging in beauty.

Today I was entangled  
Bemused by the Muse  
Tempted by civilisation  
Hot to exhibit Self.

I wrote too much I died  
Into too deep a silence  
Closed from every eye  
Including that of love.

Today I saw something  
In the Mind's eye, star  
Or flower or creature,  
The weft of a feeling

And let it go, let it pass,  
Went by, wrong choice,  
It's how we are caught  
In the world, possessed:

Not to be caught is best.

## So Many Faces

My copy of *Modern European Poetry*  
Is no longer modern, all centuries age,  
The detail blurs like Earth from space,  
Till only a mottled impression remains.

A familiar cover conceals the cries  
The pain the madness of a generation,  
More than one: how close to the dark  
They were, and how open to feeling.

For *modern* read Twentieth Century  
That wasteland of hatred and wars  
Interspersed with bursts of being,  
Lost century in which I was born.

For days the book sits on its shelf,  
Then is chosen, in some hour held  
Tight, opened, and there are all these  
Cries, sighs, calls, do you hear them?

Some names you know others you  
Have forgotten, all served the Muse,  
That is, the human spirit, on the edge  
Of life and death, all died fighting

The worse than death, the erasure  
Of the human, all touched beauty  
So many faces at the crossings  
Some hands choosing a flower.

A book's a thing, language seems  
A thing yet is a process, the music  
The signs unfold in time the echoes  
Rise in the hollow heart, the arteries,

Though nothing it seems was learned  
There is the learning, so many lives  
In all their complexity reduced to this  
Or are they exalted, only you can judge.

I turn the book slowly in my hands  
Feeling the strength not of success  
(Often these poems fail the translation  
Fails or the reader fails to comprehend)

But here is the heart-world of images,  
Here is the hoard of gold that gleams  
Over dead faces and contorted limbs  
Over the wire, the craters, the disaster

Though we're here for nothing, void  
Is beauty: it is not enough not to love:  
Out of my window light falls on leaves  
Voices are murmuring, living, calling.

## Distant TV Shots

Vast displays of heavy armament:  
Trying idly to guess which country.

The rictus smile of the politician:  
The amazing ubiquity of the suit.

Children expressing delightful joy:  
Pondering a hundred million fates.

Young eyes in love, always the same:  
Something about something leaping.

Vast and intricate mine-head juxtaposed  
With a scarred landscape, leafless trees.

Chinese women poling a boat upstream:  
One century bows remotely to another.

No sign of the void, the soul, the afterlife,  
But a deep collider smashing things together.

Wondering what goes on behind the screen,  
Knowing I couldn't rebuild my civilisation:

Flags, rivers, cities, buildings, always more flags:  
Waiting for something small and human, sighing.

## Genius

They wonder what he looked like.  
He looked like many people.  
The photos caught some of them,  
Ghosts of his passing through.

They wonder how he felt and dreamed.  
Like me or you.  
Each day he left his genius behind  
Each day regained it.

They wonder at the things he used,  
The places that he walked,  
He used what we use,  
Walked a fraction faster than we walk,

No more understood his skill  
Than the spectators  
No more than the creature  
Comprehends its leaping.

They wonder if he felt their pain  
Their joy their love  
Was greater braver.  
He only ached a little deeper.

They search his portraits  
For the one true face.  
Like ourselves,  
He was many people.

## **Red Fox**

Red fox leaping in the deep snow,  
Transient, eternal, beauty,  
Who can grasp your mystery?  
Who can prove hide or hair of you;

Red fox leaping in the deep snow,  
Forked light running in the silence;  
Or sense the beating of your heart,  
Pure, there: beyond our language?

## Never Underestimate the Flowers

Though we die, though the lovers  
Go into the air, there will be others,  
And every instance of pain  
Can turn to beauty, the glimpse,  
The flare, that face, among shadows,  
Will be replaced by a face, other,  
Still, beauty will glow in the air,  
And Helen live, young, and fair.

Though all is lost, nothing is lost,  
Not your face, not we as we were,  
That is true, but each moment we turn  
Towards woods that burn, bright fields,  
And the sea once, beyond us, there,  
Your face by other face, other,  
Yet beauty shines in the air,  
And Helen lives, young and fair.

## The Coldest for Years

Hunkering down under snow  
We leave off wandering around,  
With the creatures,  
In holes and burrows,  
Watch reflected light's glow  
On the book and the table,  
The garden white,  
The shrubs bowed down  
Like Zen masters  
Acknowledging each other  
In coldness.

Mind concentrates brightly  
In ultra-low-temperature silence,  
Calm of unnatural quiet  
Cars and people sleep,  
Our world is still.  
We sigh we listen to music  
Watch films talk read  
Dream, of life, the dream;  
I'll go out to feed the birds  
Give them water,  
Blackbird and thrush gleam  
Black and freckled brown  
In the lightness.

The beauty of our world still  
That is never our world  
But Nature's of which  
We are so small  
And pitiful a fragment.  
Roar of plough and truck  
On distant hillside,  
Hardly affects this peace.  
Eternity like this  
The soundless stars  
That snow the Void.



## The Space of the Void

Mind is more than you think:  
Though every determinant  
Were known of its process,  
Its output still would move  
Beyond us. Content is deep,  
The world is never its laws,  
Being is more than we are.

There have been other  
Societies, history is not  
These re-creations of ours  
But a life of its own,  
And there are many ways  
To live, not even envisaged,  
Meanings beyond this mind.

Don't believe emotions  
Are constant, though we  
Exist from the ground  
Of implicit genetics,  
Nothing is fixed. Refine,  
Refine, make it over,  
Never be bound by your time.

For we are no longer  
The characters in novels  
We are no longer the word  
As it once was uttered,  
We are the Tao of endless  
Beginnings, and the wild  
Space of the Void.

## Comprehension

We grow weary of being  
Always in the wrong  
We seek a place where  
We are comprehended

A limestone space perhaps  
Bare and cloud-shadowed  
Or quarried place one silent  
Now, uncivilised and sweet

Or the scooped out hollow  
Pool of a river, where a rose  
Curves from a broken wall  
To drown in the grey coolness

Or a dark path between trees  
At twilight after the long walk  
A faint trace of rain in the air  
The mind irrationally beating

Or better still sink into eyes  
Into the gentleness of a face  
That is not looking beyond us  
That sees and comprehends us

We grow weary of always being  
What is so much less than we are  
In the alien space of becoming  
Always failing; always wrong.

## Larger Than You Think

The Mind is large the Universe  
Is small. A repetition of space,  
Unlike the space of your body  
Where Mind in silence drowns.

Slowly the Mind grows deeper  
The Universe smaller. Gravity  
Draws us upward, the proton  
Stays a proton, beauty its dance.

The Universe pocket-sized fits  
Inside your dream. It never  
Advances, the clouds go round  
Ahead is the back of your head

You need a whole civilisation  
Of Mind to create one poem  
That's as large as the universe,  
Size being a matter of meaning

The Universe has the shape  
Of whatever you wish it  
To signify: the tree, the fish,  
The music, the machine.

## Strange Country

Travellers in an always strange country,  
We were free without earning freedom.  
By our courtyard in time the great river  
Rolled its slow flood greenly through us:  
Boats veered, the ferry plied. As tenants  
Of dark squares waiting, streets brooding  
We watched the rain wet the glass, or sigh  
In distance. We admired the pomegranate,  
Alien holding its solitary fruit to the light;  
Our land of joy was preparing to disappear,  
Sunk in its landscape of love and suffering.

Softly the huge butterflies, sinister, settling,  
Fluttered, largely, in violent vegetation.  
The solidity of ages, our stubborn flame,  
Made life seem superficial as the morning,  
Slight as the trickle of water over stones.  
The world consumed our bodies tenderly  
Lit you, alive, at the end of my perspective,  
Narrowed all things to a space beyond us.  
Careless of fate and ignorant of its being  
Time, toying gently with us for a moment,  
Laid its memories, silt-like, over our eyes.

## Everything Of Us Can Be Seen

Slowly there was colour on an empty beach,  
Though there were objects in the emptiness,  
Each was an aspect of mind turned inside-out:  
The glutinous slowness of retentive being,  
The slight distaste, or the extreme revulsion,  
The tremor of self, now tiny now enormous,  
Disjointed creatures, ravelled limbs and eyes,  
Hollows where body hides, stains of knowing,  
Extended tentacular limbs, blood and faecal  
Matter, nails, hair, flesh, cartilage, the bones  
Of white existence, soft eyelashes of despair.

Tenderly there was yellow on a burning sand,  
Ghost figures wafting towards rock-filled horizons,  
Headlands of time, waves of frozen space agitating,  
Melted forms, lava of congealed dreams, of sordid  
Hates, ludicrous fears, wild passions at the margins,  
Edging towards indifferent stones, or green stillness.  
There were rock-pools for our existential terrors, pale  
Clear, where small crustaceans played with grains;  
There was disgust looming, or creeping from the sea,  
Over a viscous foreshore, a real no less real because  
Imagined; birds falling, dense clouds gathering pace.

## It's A World We Yearn For

Out of the caves and over the meadows  
In an ancient world we found beauty,  
Long before language: you think  
The creatures don't know beauty?

See how the San and the Aboriginal  
Peoples laughed at us, our trickeries –  
What purpose our civilisation, it's  
An accretion, outcome of restlessness.

Great beauty of the Universe moving,  
The stars flowing, children dancing  
Playing in the ferns, wings gleaming  
Overhead, red fire at night and stories.

Mouse sits watching as we hoe the field,  
The creatures in the stars are insects too  
And furred and feathered scaled and sing  
In another music, each plant all flowers

We know in their inner beauty, singing  
Colour and scent to us, singing forms,  
Finer than we can make, and subtler,  
All sleep in the Milky Way dream dawn.

Bare feet on the sills of being, pelts, tails,  
Masks of animal nature, deep origins  
Expressed in what we are, in our flesh,  
All tools natural, all ornaments pieces

Of a found world, humility makes sacred,  
Not gods or demons, connected lives  
Out of the caves and over the meadows,  
Each action, then a thousand million times.

## Herefordshire

We dreamed along empty roads in deep quiet landscape.  
By that abandoned railway bridge, I felt the barbed-wire  
Parting our selves from silence, from an enchanted land.  
There was the territory of gone poetry: we knew its traces,  
Lines of relationship, of others, we cannot enter: voyeurs,  
How we long to do so, though the mystery would all fade  
And reveal the far ghosts as faces empty and still as ours.

We went through all the places that they traversed together,  
We followed the trail, those fields through nameless plants  
Seeding themselves in air, crumbling fragrant to the touch,  
Through all those transient and lovely things, the flames  
And lights of their peculiar ground, the resonant pathways,  
Down the deep channels of meadows, by motionless farms,  
Until we reached at twilight in fine rain that darkened wood,

First seen over timber gate, nettle-thick entrance brooding,  
The rides vanishing far off into greenness, settling blacker,  
The stifled firs, dead-branched in the lower margins, rising  
Out of a mat of needles, pads of dust, a litter of soft neglect,  
Felt, as we strayed hushed through its caverns, melancholy  
And the nervousness of night; the loneliness of our universe,  
Though all its spaces fit inside the mind; life's pass at death.

Emerged to a green field, warren'd, hollowed and unused,  
Felt the rain profound on our faces, marched with the dead,  
But through a softer dark, where the words still congregate  
Over a field, like birds; down the hedgerow, like bramble,  
One pale rose still ecstatically singing; in clinging shadows,  
Voicing the first world, softly declaring self among selves,  
A communion of our meaning, the sole unique thing in us.

## Stone Song

Silence and Freedom is the house  
Where I am most at home,  
In the deep cold of winter  
Night, snow in the bone.

Spellbound, where the darkness  
Transmutes the frozen grass  
To iron; ghost skies above me;  
Waste and winds at last.

Silence and Freedom is the house  
Where I am most alone,  
And most myself: whispering  
Songs of stone.



## Mind Is A Garden

It's a matter of glittering mind.  
Your prison is only a prison  
If you make it so, bound  
By the tyranny of history.

Our magic power's our ability  
To process the past into some  
New future, imagined many  
Times, realised never before

In the intricate detail that is  
The actual. Words are only  
Words, images only images,  
But each breath's a universe.

If you trap yourself in conflict,  
Ask yourself, why not walk  
Away, into inner freedom.  
Nothing un-thinks a thought,

Peace has a thousand ways,  
And myriad voices, violence  
Only one. Mind is a garden  
Tend your gleaming flowers.

Darkest of forces, resentment;  
Heaviest of fetters, hatred.  
In an instant, turn away,  
Be free. Mind is freedom.

Foolishly we chain mind,  
Defeat ourselves by memory.  
So many causes unreal,  
So much bitterness self-imposed.

The external things bind us,  
Tribes, nations, religions,  
The detritus of history.  
But Mind is always free.

## Masks

There are many kinds of untruth,  
Some are easy,  
Some feel like a deep corruption  
Of the inner mind,  
Despite their lightness;  
The story told, seems no lie when read  
Merely fiction,  
Yet to tell a story is to lie;  
The role well-acted, seems real emotion,  
Simply life,  
Yet to act a role is to lie;  
Some feel the lie too deeply to do either.

There are many kinds of deception,  
Some are masks,  
Others are the corruption Plato feared  
From art, see it from his angle,  
Despite its strangeness;  
The myth enacted, seems a sacred dance  
And no fantasy,  
Yet to live a myth is self-deceit;  
To see the vision, seems eternal truth,  
A light on being;  
Yet to see visions is to plunge into illusions;  
Some fear the mask too deeply, to do either.

## Reminding Mind

That flickering of the creature,  
Lawrence understood:  
How its darkness  
The darkness of lack  
Of language sends us  
Headfirst down the slope  
Of being into first times;  
Into a curious underworld,  
An intimate realm of feeling,  
No longer accessible  
To the civilised mind.  
And even the primitive  
Human is civilised,  
Since word is always light.

That forgiveness we should ask,  
For our betrayal:  
Our destruction  
Of the world creature inhabits,  
Our disregard of the deep sacred  
Which is absolutely nothing  
To do with religion,  
And which must be redeemed  
And recovered from religion,  
In order that we might  
Understand, the intentionless  
And irreligious earth.  
The creature sees us more  
Clearly than we see ourselves.

Why are we so honoured  
By the creature's visitations,  
By its mute disregard  
For our appurtenances,  
Its intense focus,  
Without intensity,  
On its familiar being?  
Because in its darkness,  
That is, its silence  
Of merciless mind,  
The bond is still  
Unbroken, the unlike  
Is still like?

We know the origin,  
Which is devoid of gods  
And demons,  
Devoid of external forces,  
And strange commands:  
It's our origin too,  
It's the luminous deep  
From which we rise,  
The inception of life  
And its dark return,  
Its power the simple  
Power of the symbol,  
Reminding mind.

## Who Are You Calling Brother?

Somewhere in one of those tall trees  
The owl is crying the death of species,  
On this planet never the same again,  
Under the slow stars, the flying mist.

Celebrate the resilience of a myriad  
Of creatures, and life's wild excess;  
The human is precious only to us;  
Each insect's ready to take our place.

And our pretence of loving everything,  
Stops short of love, is delight, awe,  
Admiration, not in the final analysis  
Love, for the ant, wasp, beetle, spider.

We should be careful of calling those  
Brothers, sisters, who would despise  
Us if they knew; if they could feel  
What we call disdain. Speak for them!

We can scarcely speak intelligently  
For ourselves, burdened with feeling,  
Sharing the blame. No cleaner than  
Each other; all entangled in the mist.

I watch a silent moon, slide hazily  
Across a stream of stars. In tall trees,  
The owl is crying the death of species;  
My mind and heart, guilt's mysteries.

## Humility Is Endless

I love that beautiful instant, swiftly gone,  
That time, as a century ended and began,  
In which poets were sensitised to this place,  
With a new concentration on the thing itself,  
And not the associations it evoked, on world  
And not the self, a gazing, staring, focussing  
On what was only then realised to be passing.  
We learn to know what we love its vanishing.

Hopkins has it, the sensitivity, and Stevenson,  
Being as being, and not how it might be used,  
A deeper humility, and recognition, to which  
Like Edward Thomas later, they were attuned,  
By a sensibility conscious of a world waning;  
By knowing their limitations; and its mortality;  
By a prescient inwardness. It's the death of one  
Kind of metaphor: the birth of another, deeper.

Some say they're minor voices, believing that  
Stridency, maybe a more universal application,  
Make for greatness, they make for greater fame  
Perhaps. Their voices sing beyond such things:  
And we must learn to go with them into the less  
Significant places; to watch, but more carefully,  
Inscapes of dawn or spring; those simple grasses;  
Some intrinsic moment the dumb eye looks past.

## Love Completed

The soft green levels of water rippling outwards  
Absorbed the mind, slow bursts of white foam,  
Those wild-flowered cliffs, or moonscape sands,  
Pale shore, dark rocks, deeper imploding waves,  
Transient light, the drumbeat of ephemeral being,

And an eternal flowing. There was a secret flavour  
To the mind, a sweetness of the hidden inner core.  
The universe outside us, unmade by human things,  
Was a land without language, lacking love, but not  
Without signs and signals, information: past hours,

The future, not yet wound aching into our present,  
A sea of futures brimming beyond the bay, glitter  
Of seal-heads in the swell, the far buoy booming,  
And something there that moved, flashed, showed  
A wing in the air, and swooped to retrieve – what?

Or a fin arcing lazily from silence to silence, spray  
Down a hidden blade, carving mysterious distance.  
Did we feel the sadness, landscapes of melancholy,  
Of what outlasts, inhuman, or only the clasp of the  
Precise, the delicate crab, the dark green anemone?

The returning is strange. The thoughts, the feelings  
Of a life, too rapid, unformed for words, dialogues  
Of the senses, emotions here and remembered, pain,  
Desire, idea, entangled reflections, forming the roar  
Still of becoming, dying down, to a seethe of waters.

The promise no longer there, but another meaning  
Undertaken, done, gifted by all luck, every chance;  
The crash of the wave, the glitter of its wash, the fire;  
An unravelling of childhood, a reconciliation with all  
Freedom. Life poured into its place is love completed.

## A Life Is Not Defined By Time

Do you like my quiet voice  
That speaks  
Of the other reality,  
And the greater,  
Those pale streaming clouds  
And the thin smoke of fires  
Far off over shoals of pine  
Or reaching cypress;  
That talks  
Of the green hills and the sea  
To which we came  
Young and possessed?

Do you like my soft call,  
Soft as the sigh  
Of the waves beyond the hill,  
Where our romantic  
Flame burned in the hearth  
Of flesh and bone,  
Where far off  
The mournful bell  
Called to the deep drowned,  
Moaned in the mist  
Through which we moved,  
The lovers?

Do you hear my keening,  
Which ignores  
The details of landscape  
Expects you'll know  
The feel of the slope  
The grasses  
Flowers I couldn't name  
You gazed at  
The individual lives of flowers  
Folds and furls of leaf  
Tiny starred emotionless  
Bringers of feeling?



Do you know the granite  
Its aeons  
Of air, of silence  
Which is never soundless  
Of time  
Which is never passing  
(How the symbolic moment  
Floats in mind's slanting beam  
Like a leaf caught  
As it falls  
And held suspended  
Turning)?

Do you recognise the place  
This space  
Which no longer exists  
That we inhabit  
In the memories fused by the clasp  
Of a moment  
And thrown to the winds  
Like dust,  
Do you feel how it blazes  
Deep in the being  
We never understand,  
That we must abandon?

## Dead Touch

No I won't compromise with your  
View of how the world works,  
No I won't comply,  
Because you think  
All things can be bought  
And every mind;  
That gain is a god  
And the word no more  
Than a trick of the light.

No, I give you a toast  
To freedom  
To love without violence  
To kindness, concern  
For the nurturing of life  
Not for the profit;  
I give you the world  
Before woman or man,  
There it spins in the night!

## **Dawn**

For there are no Mysteries, we see,  
The World's intentionless, we're free:  
And all Mythologies unwind,  
And end here in the Human Mind.

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