

# Poetry, Charity

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

*Allen Ginsburg: Ignu*

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## Sweetly in the Silence

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

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

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

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

**For –**

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

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

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

## March Wind

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

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

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

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

## Cascades

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

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

## Life

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

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

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

## **The Being Part**

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

## Discipline

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

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

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

## Barely

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

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

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

## **Respite**

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

## Out West

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

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

## **One Mind Making**

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

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

## Small-Scale

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

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

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

## Communion

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

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

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

## Covenant

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Nothing but Love

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Encounter

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

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

## **Poetry, Charity**

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

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

## White Mare

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

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

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

## Too Many People

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

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

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

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

## Age of Images

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

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

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

## **Climbing in Spirit on Endless Hills**

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

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

## Thoughts of Genji

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

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

## Entanglement

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

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

## Dream

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

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

## Little Words for Tao Ch'ien

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

## Sleeping Nowhere

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

## Wavering

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

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

## The Only One

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

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

## Viewing Burne-Jones' Perseus Series

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

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

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

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

## No More

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

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

This fundamental life  
to which there's no return.

## Keep It Fluid

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

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

## Scale

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

## Scrap-Yard Diatribe

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

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

## In the Gallery

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

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

## Dimensionless

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

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

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

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

## A High Singing

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

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

## East-West, All Over Earth

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

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

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

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

## Murasaki

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

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

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

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

## Small Hours

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

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

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

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

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

## Mysterious Minds

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

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

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

## Of Light

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

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

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

## **But Your Reality**

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

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

## Star-Flower

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

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

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

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

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

## Self-Admonition

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

Be inaccessible except  
to humility, love, night.

Wary of insidious feeling,  
test each tremor of meaning,

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

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

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

Cherish the new, naïve,  
marvellous unknowing,

the unsullied endless generations  
all over Earth.

## Subterranean Rivers

I always found it hard to resist  
imaginative creations,

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

and therefore endlessly  
seductive, challenging, deep.

They teach the malleability of mind,  
the fragile nature

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

project ourselves on being,  
create each universe,

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

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

## Out Over

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

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

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

## **Strangest Flower**

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

## Fecit

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

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

## **Deep in the Long Grass**

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

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

## Lullaby

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

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

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

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

## **The Joy-Givers**

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

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

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

## **How Wholly How Little**

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

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

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

## Time Is

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

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

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

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

## Plants and Stone

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Altitude

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

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

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

Beauty and truth  
slip through too,  
reason to celebrate.

## Simple Fires

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

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

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

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

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

## Coitu

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

free of leverage, coercion  
sprung from love.

Neither mystery nor order  
but harmony, life.

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

How we reconcile ourselves  
to our beginnings.

How we break through  
the net that binds us to

the madness of society,  
and make flesh sing.

## True Notes

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

The rest the machines  
will do, not yet emotion.

My Turing test would be  
subtleties of feeling not reason,

and language, true poetry  
and its translation,

where one false note jars  
like a broken string.

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

## Deer Trails

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

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

## White Bamboo I

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

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

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

Close the mind in  
perfect awareness.

## White Bamboo II

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

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

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

## Not For Sale

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

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

## Celebrate

*(With acknowledgement to Gerard Manley Hopkins)*

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

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

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

## Considering

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

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

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

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

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

## Tao for Beginners

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

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

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

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

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

## Delta

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

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

Blue metal water  
wells each day  
over the hot earth.

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

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

## Only One

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

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

Violence against  
freedom, against  
integrity of being.

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

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

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

## The Task of Art

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

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

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

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

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

but why we can't accept.

## Mountain Sighing

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

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

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

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

## Sign for the Human Race

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

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

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

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

## A Toast to Monsieur Mallarmé

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

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

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

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

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

## Solitude, My Beauty

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

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

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

## Dark Main

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

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

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

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

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

**'In the interstices of your spirit'**

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

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

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

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

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

## Intimacies

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

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

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

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

## Lake

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Whatever Creates

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

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

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

## From the Rock

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

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

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

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

## Gnomic Couplets

The endless manifestations of Power are all alike:

Responsible, mature, and insane.

Blessed be the Individual:

Over-turner of all religions.

The Individual is the Universe echoing:

It is undirected, perfect, alien Self.

Only the Process brought us to this place:

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

Everything is immortalised, everything:

Because everything is adrift in Eternity.

The starving, crawling, dying World,

Is not our fault: it is our disconnect.

There is nothing more beautiful than the Given,

And Shared: Beauty only has to be.

Being and Feeling have no obligations:

There is simply nothing to achieve.

Spontaneous Thought draws on experience:

By your first thought I see what you are.

An Ideal is the transient's permanent dream:

Compromise the art of failing our ideals.

The contents of the private Mind would shock the world:

All clear Minds are screaming inwardly.

Prophecy the Past:

It is re-created in every generation.

The Objective is Subjective:

The Subjective is Projective.

If I thought the human species was important,

I would weep.

Deep in Perception, the Other that we are:

The Other is only a heart-beat away.

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

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

In Paradise all things are shared:

That is what we mean by Paradise.

The conjunction of the Subjective and the Objective,

Is paradox: Each exists wholly inside the other.

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

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

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

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

The Truth is always irresponsible:

The Beautiful is always True.

## Fault Lines

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

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

## Oh Gold Autumn

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

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

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

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

## Over the Lip

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

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

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

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

## What Space?

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

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

## Who Know Who I Mean

Blessed the true spirits  
still singing  
hail the companions!

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

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

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

Yes, that moloch.  
Though unconnected  
The angels share

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Dissolve the Aeons.

## Voiceless Banners Waving

This is the true beauty now,  
to create.

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

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

## Through Which We See

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

all this spirit  
and our  
appearance,  
waning.

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

This world  
roaring emptiness.  
through which  
we see.

## **Nothing Is What We Thought It**

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

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

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

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

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

## What For?

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

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

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

## Be Careful

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Not Hostile, Perplexed

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

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

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

## Please Re-Build

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

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

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

## The True Immortals

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

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

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

## The Meaning of Emptiness

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

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

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

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

Endless mind,  
go fill the empty world.

## No Gods, No Saints

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

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

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

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

## Been There

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

Turn, and depart.

## Small Birds and Children

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

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

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

## The Best We Can

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

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

## Ancient Tower

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

All better if you were here.

## The Deepest Love

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

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

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

## Microscopic

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

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

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

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

## The Tree Collection

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

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

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

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

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

## We Make Tracks

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

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

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

## No Time

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## The Sweet Echo

The sweet echo  
of your voice  
makes all  
the difference.

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

The loving  
whisper  
makes all  
the difference,

not tenderness sad  
and weeping  
buildings  
of mortal time,

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

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

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

We understand.  
Foolish too  
but understand.  
Transient Eternity!

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

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

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

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

## Gone Masters

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

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

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

## A Lot of Yourself

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

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

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

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

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

## Soft Metaphor

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

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

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

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

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

## Scene by Moonlight

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

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

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

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

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

## Dusk

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

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

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

## Track-Cutting

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

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

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

## On Reading Philip Hoare's *Leviathan*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Oh No, Not Neutral

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **Keep Abolishing Space and Time in Your Heart**

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

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

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

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

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

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

Oh, keep abolishing  
time and space  
in your heart.

## Word-List

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

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

desecrator, defender,  
know, make? Heal.

## Why Be Silent?

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

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

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

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

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

beyond us, thank Nature, all time.

## And Tell Me...

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **No Politics for Poets!**

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

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

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

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

## I Sing To You Of Peace

I sing to you of peace

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

In the space of centuries I speak of peace

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

I sing to you of beauty and love

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

In the empty cities I tell you of peace

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

O body of our desires

O colour of absence!

## Nothing Is Owned

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

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

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

## I Follow Where

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

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

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

## In My Mind Hearing the Songs of the Few

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

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

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

## The Flowers of the World

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

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

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

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

## A Day

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

## The Mercies of Truth

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

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

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

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

## Kin

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Seal

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

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

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

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

## The Voiceless Flute

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

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

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

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

## Swaying

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

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

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

## And Bring Comfort

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

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

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

## Go Flee Pain

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **The Dark Vision In Empty Light**

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

## Embracing Empty Peaks

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

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

## No Problem, Needs No Answer

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Empty, and Awake

Empty, and awake.

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

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

Empty and awake.

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

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

## **Potentiality**

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

## Its Surface Is Its Depth

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

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

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

All hail!

## The Road Is Not The Way

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Not Ours

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

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

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

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

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

## Mind In World In Mind

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

## Stock-Taking

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

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

## Bamboo

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

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

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

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

## **Fishing in a Mountain Stream**

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

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

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

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