

No Mind



Smitty - Unsplash

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Contents

No Mind	4
The Poet of the Irreal.....	5
Blue Azure	6
The Mountain Stream	7
This Unique Day.....	8
Leaving the Self Behind.....	9
And Beauty?	10
Chaos and Order on the Mountain.....	11
Old Granite	12
The Wrong Way.....	13
Night-Walking.....	14
The Movements of the Mind	15
Wherever You Are	16
This Moment.....	17
Credo Recalled.....	18
This Nature	18
Clear Evening.....	19
The Mountain Path	20
Strangeness	21
The Hawk in the Sky.....	23
Lighter, Still	23
At The Full	24
Silent as the Stream	25
The Individual.....	26
The Process – Evening.....	27
Aspen and Ash.....	27
Hisen (<i>Waterfall</i>)	28
Metamorphosis	28
Conversing Among Flowers	29
The Flicker of Birds	29
What Odds?.....	30
A Little Song for the Poets.....	31
The Deer Dance	31
Nearer to Home.....	32
On the Edge.....	32
The Restless Spirit	33
Flesh is the ‘Mother’ of Mind,	33
You and I in the Darkness	35
What I Have Lived	36
The Glowing Day.....	37
Last Night.....	38
The Death of Why.....	39

Once.....	41
At Blue Creek.....	43
Archaic Eyes, No Violence	44
The Bones of the Hare	46
Index Of First Lines.....	50

No Mind

A whisper of light, from a distant galaxy,
Intrigues the eye. Here for no purpose, I
Consider the dark, its solace, its far ease.

Emptying mind is harder than one thinks,
Which is never a space, more liquid flow.
To void the fountain, is to kill the source?

Consider the greater fount, the universe,
Gone falling into itself in every moment,
Now, to remain, the all that it becomes.

Consider the trees, black on the horizon,
Over which summits rise, as in far China,
Consider the grass, worth consideration.

Can you preserve the dying, or the dead?
Better not to embrace the Buddha's bones.
Better to simply contemplate the mirror,

Our night-glass, bright, our interpretation
Of signals from the air as sound and light.
My age is quiet; yet I love its beauty, yet.

I love the contours, and their subtleties
Of bright and dark, the chiaroscuro,
And the contrapposto, hard to learn,

As emptying the mind is hard, the self
Rendered down to not-self, to a hiss
Of stars the aboriginal, native hunters

Listened for, at the hearth of survival.
Condemning nothing, love, hatred, is
Our nature; what is this that condemns?

Bring it to light, show it to me, ah!
Mind is a slippery motion, silver-quick,
Mercury's substance, ever messenger,

Never the message, ever the silent thief.
A mirror, and not a mirror. Free of dust?
The dust we are, a whisper from the stars?

The Poet of the Irreal

The poet of the real sings
The sheer solidity of things,
Yet insubstantiality
Inheres in everything we see.

The poet of the irreal knows
Tree, stone, and grass that glows
In the softened evening light,
Within, are darker than the night

That gluons, and photons, blind,
Mediate, and tightly bind,
All the constituents of matter,
Quarks, leptons, of the latter,

The inwardness we cannot see,
The being-so, of what may be
Obstructive substance to the flesh,
Yet, deeper, a dark, unfelt mesh.

I kiss your lips, I trace your face,
Banishing the irreal, with grace,
Yet in the darkness feel all slide
Into the soundless, sightless tide,

Where, the drowning man, I roil;
Through weightless agitation, toil;
There's Sartre's 'nausea' at the root,
The Tree of Knowledge bore ill fruit.

Here's rock and root, yet ice and snow;
The opaque veil hides all below;
Its essence, though we see its form,
Ignorance, habit are the norm.

Let you and I not here dissolve,
Though inner doubt tests our resolve,

Though science queries every art,
And in the mind now sets the 'heart'.

At ease with the irreal, we'll lie,
Matter, beneath the golden sky,
Rendered eternal, like the past,
Yet mind to mind still, at the last,

Selfs un-selved, to grasp the now,
That to which all power must bow,
Fluttering here, softly, in the grass,
Birds of bone, thoughts that pass.

Blue Azure



Ema Pandrc - Unsplash

Blue azure here, a hint of breeze,
Grasses wave
In the coolness, cliffs upstream,
Once,
In a while, heron glides in,
Makes stalky landing,
Flick of the feathers,
Bows to the stream.

The heart, so full of pain, no machine
Feels the
Pain of being, pain of
All
The creatures, merciless
Nature's endless circus,
Stab in the dark
Mind takes, but here:

Here's blue azure, the touch
Of air, the purl
Of water, beauty
Bright,
Flowing, fuelling
Mysterious love of form,
In the eye, in the brain,
Love, that's beyond desire.

The Mountain Stream

Plunges,
Plume of light
Over stone
Cascades,
Glistening, scattering,
Falls, like Universe
Into itself
To become itself
Once more,
Gone, found,
In every moment.

Flows
Sheet of silk

Over stone,
Glittering, gleaming,
Distance, silent
Measure of space,
Time, silent
Measure of change,
Remorseless slide
Of all that exists
Silent as vision.

Sinks
Plunges in foam
Over stone,
Challenges rock,
Becomes
The pool,
The swirl of a leaf;
The weightless
Pebble
Spirals in shallows;
Endlessly, to and fro.

This Unique Day

Walking in the pines
Under the stars,
Thinking of the future
Of the species.

Without feeling,
Where's the life?
Mind in flesh
Is mind deep-rooted.

After all this,
Nature still remains,
Or rather the non-human,
Blessed, intentionless,

Pure, and wordless
Whorl of being;
Every instant's
Unrepeatable motion.

Without beauty,
Or affection,
Where's the life?
In pursuing

The restless spirit's
Bright embodiments,
Robotic chatter,
Mere mirrors of the self?

Behind language
Is what there is
No language for,
The pain and joy,

The walking in the dark,
The water's gleam,
The unprecedented night,
This unique day.

Leaving the Self Behind

Three that will do for
Gods, serve as ideals,

Truth, the desire for fact,
The existent, the stable.

Beauty, desire for form,
The complex, the easeful.

Love, desire for the Other,
The unique, the sacred.

Fact where I am grounded,
Form where I transcend,
The Other that is not I.

I enter the gulf of night,
I sense the stone, the tree,
I leave this Self behind.

And Beauty?



Raychel Sanner - Unsplash

Aquinas said: Integritas,
Claritas, Consonantia;
Wholeness, brightness,
Harmony, the thing 'itself'.

Yet I love the fragmented,
Too, the dim, the half-seen,
The dissonance of night,
The amorphous nocturnal.

Beauty's the shiver of form,
A complexity of detail,
Or a lack, simplicity, pure,
The affirmation of light,

And so, the blade of the real
Entering the core of self,
Seen, unseen, in a moment,
So, not the Gothic choir,

With its own magnificence,
But Nature, seen on edge,
The breeze in the grass,
The tremor that eludes,

So not Piero's skies,
Bellini's line of cloud,
Or Titian's distant storm,
Though they too transcend

By entering the silence,
And the stillness of being;
No, rather the enigmatic
Denial of mind in-solid,

Is what I crave now, time
Visible in water, passing
Clouds, a quivering leaf,
Whirls of sand in the pool,

And not death's quietude,
Though ever seductive;
Beauty now, in the new,
Changing, configuration.

Chaos and Order on the Mountain

After the rain
The bright stream
Runs clear,
The bounded fall
Repeats its infinite
Thread,
With no two variations
Ever the same:
Liquid order
In liquid chaos.

Drops slide
From the leaves,
A branch unbows
In flecks
Of light,
Random movement
But, beneath,
The delicate pattern,
Imitating
Life.

After the rain,
The clear stream
Runs bright,
Here nothing's owned.
Behold the three:
The Present
Moment,
The Play of Energies,
The Individual
Life.

Old Granite

This breeze on the mountain is best,
Green pine,
And below, oak and ash,
A thousand feet high,
And dreaming.

Old granite, and cool air,
Pondering the mystery
Of why we love what we love,
Why certain forms,
Why certain people,

Facts, that quiet the mind,
Facts that disturb.
There's a complexity
At the heart of it all,
Not single reasons,

Grounded by what calms,
The unique, the bright

Other,
And the non-human
Distinct from the self,

Hints of the purer species,
Clarity of tone and texture,
Harmonies
Of the natural,
Pleasing the senses.

Half-physical, half-mind,
A mental state,
The stone-wet stream,
The sighing flow
Pine-cones and needles,

This high floor, the spirit
Walks on, breathing
The atmosphere of light,
Wild air,
The realm of creatures,

Who live close to the land,
And know the ground,
And not themselves
Other than as purpose,
Pain and ease.

Here are the best trails,
In the sun,
Or under snow,
The years of fact
Of silent form, beyond us.

The Wrong Way

One more species gone,
One more
Insignificant insect,
One creature less
Of the primal world,
Gone to the something
Crushed under your thumb,

Yet this time
Unrepeatable,
Irreplicable form,
Leaving a startling pain;
Mere unalive matter.

Say what we have done
To the planet –
Which needs no saving:
It's you and I,
We are the ones
Need saving,
And the landscapes
We love,
The hills we love,
Where creatures still move
And meet the day.

Night-Walking

Watching the moon
At midnight; straying
Along dark slopes,
And needing nothing;

Wandering off the path,
To find the way;
Nothing is sacred,
Everything is sacred.

All of it of itself,
And through itself,
From within itself,
In self-derivation.

Celebrate the Earth,
The creative forces,
The freedom of solely
Natural constraint.

My freedom is creation;
All of the wisdom
In the world needs
Little time or space.

Everything of itself;
No line between life
And matter; life mere
Matter in process,

Autonomous replication,
Growth, self-modification,
A step beyond rocks to trees,
Eating minerals and light.

I go the sacred road,
Where nothing is sacred,
Where the moon is free,
The grasses at liberty,

Among glistening leaves,
To find the masters there,
The ones who only cared
To try and comprehend

This world.

The Movements of the Mind

I speak to the ones
Whose internal life,
The life that lies
Behind the face,

Being finer and deeper,
Is worth more to them
Than the public world
And their external life.

I speak to those few
Who sense the flow,
And only need to stop
For a moment to feel it;

Those whose thoughts
Reflect on the source
Of order, within,
Life born of matter.

Out of the inanimate
Came life, the living,
This landscape seen
From the peak, alive,

With its crystal streams
And wave-like grasses,
Its flowing mists, the cloud,
The breeze, in process,

Since all process to us
Forever seems alive.
I speak to those few
Who, though knowing

There's no way back,
Find their meaning here;
Those whose values lie
In the delicate silverpoint

Of the half-smile's tenderness,
In visions of light, the tremor
Of the world behind the world,
Freed from its gods and demons;

Those who gaze within,
Hiding, in inner being,
Behind the silent face,
The movements of the mind.

Wherever You Are

Wherever you are
There is reality.
Rinzai, indeed, said
Something similar.

If a star dies unseen
In every way,
Did it exist?
Oh, I think so;

And the past eternally
Past, which is
A thing the living
Can't be robbed of.

The real cannot be
Spoken of, it's wordless.
We, the unreal,
Bow down before it,

And not in any language.
No art
Imitates nature,
Pure and godless,

Art is new creation,
Out of mind,
Enriching mind.
Nature beyond

What was within.
And so, the real
Is only here,
Is only now,

And our worth
In our intensity,
The reaching out,
Trying still to touch

After a lifetime,
The existent other.

This Moment

This pattern of pine needles
On the floor of the wood,
Unique, the pattern eternal,
Once only, once and forever.

Unique the motion of mind,
The flickers and tremors
Of memory, these feelings,
The unprecedented hour,

The passage of shadows,
Of what I must grasp,
Eternal, opened, gone,
Bright flare of its burning

World in which I exist,
Feeling the beat of my life,
Of my heart, this moment,
This moment! This moment!

Credo Recalled

The truth, and only the truth.
Whatever is shared, increases.
Form, affection, and freedom.
The creative life of the mind.

Whatever is given not made,
Whatever is silent inside us,
My memories, my emotions,
That the sacred is not for sale.

This Nature

Stumbling from place to place
I find my space of existence,
Below the mountain pines,
Under the birch and larch trees.

The mountain paths are fine,
Cool in the heat of day,
Traversing wooded slopes,
Stumbling from place to place.

'It's in my nature to love
The hills and mountains.'
T'ao Ch'ien, said it, so.
His nature. This Nature.

Clear Evening



Mark Basarab - Unsplash

I look at the brightest stars
And feel the silent planets,
Circling and rotating,
The endless stony masses,

Orbs of gas, in every shade,
With molten or icy moons,
All the places empty of mind,
Of human love or intent.

I stare at them in silence,
As the flow of air goes past,
And the grasses sigh and stir,
And darkness soothes the eye.

I imagine alien shores and seas,
But mostly bare rock and dust,
The unblessed and intentionless
Universe, devoid of purpose.

Empty therefore meaningless,
Meaningless therefore empty,
Leaving us to find our space,
Thankfully free of destination.

Those like myself who value
Freedom, to be one's Self,
Who witness and seldom join,
Who love forgotten corners,

Embrace the furthest stars,
To live and die with them,
Amid their fire as we are,
Holding to damaged Earth,

Clinging to this blue sphere,
Tinged umber here and there,
Never quite what it seems,
Spinning on without a care.

The Mountain Path

There's no way to describe
The mountain path.
'The scent of pines'
Is not the scent of pine,
The floor of the wood,
Seeds, needles, tufts of hair,
The upturned soil.

'The shining lake'
Is not the shining lake,
Its gleam,
Its quivering brightness,
Piercing the mind.
Words are not senses,
Human speech fails.

'Sound' is not hearing;
'Taste' is not biting
A stem in the teeth;
Touched by the breeze,
'To feel' is not feeling,
The turmoil,
The joy and the pain.

Texts are not life,
Though they leave,
Footprints behind
For a while,
Traces of being,
Pressed in the earth,
Imprinted on stone.

I have no language
To say what you are,
What you know,
In the transient flesh,
Though you grant
Me meaning,
Walker at daybreak.

All this Irreal of ours,
Where Mind
And Matter meet,
World and the Self,
Vanishes tenderly:
Now, wash your Mind
In the mountain stream.

Strangeness

Waking in morning light, reflecting
On the total strangeness of the world,
Often inexplicable, well, to me at least,
Starting with existence, the Universe,

The something, rather than a nothingness
Which is, in itself, meaningless, of course;
The consequences of the speed of light,
Or of its constancy, which is the mystery;
The fact of entanglement, pure paradox,

'Ed eran due in uno e uno in due': Dante.
The ease of disproof with a single fact,
The impossibility of disproving fantasies;

The reality, the experience, of colours:
To the gazing eye, how red appears red,
How blue shows blue, all the features
Indeed, of vision, even in our dreams;

Mozart's music, and all Da Vinci's art;
The impossible odds of there being life,
Intelligent life, I mean, on any planet;
The experience of Beauty, ours alone.

The existence of empathy and affection,
In a species that was honed for survival;
The vast complexity of human feeling,
And how sensation ends as sensibility.

Consciousness, of course: not the theory
Of mind, or the networks of the brain,
But the raw experience of being I and Thou;
The 'thatness' of the Other, of the World;

Truth that is truth for 'I', but not for all;
And Love: that which involves the whole,
The entire human being, body and mind,
Sense and sensation – Love, and its power;

The absence of design, our chance presence;
The impossibility of imagining being dead;
The thought of the void versus the non-void;
The thought of all those mind-less planets;

Our inability to live the life of other species,
Blake's bird flying in a spacetime of its own;
The essence of change, and nothing changeless;
The eternal vanished past, the imagined future,

Therefore, the slippery nature of the Moment;
The experience of force, of potential energy,
The world poised to become, and yet remain,
And all without mind, and all without intent;

How the determined, not the pre-determined,
Manifests itself, through us, not despite us,
And how the will, unfree, still nonetheless
Expresses the individual; we are the bud,

And the bloom on the stem, as is the rose,
Which would exist in no other universe,
No more than we ourselves; all forms unique;
How Buddha was right to hold a single flower;

How fragile everything is, and yes, on fire,
But with the fire of creation, self-creation,
The as yet undimmed light, against the dark;
Magnificent language; the life-giving Word.

The Hawk in the Sky

One green pine on the slope.
Watch the hawk in the sky.
Mist on the sombre cliffs;
All this shadow and light.

Begin again, in the silence,
Always be the beginner.
Scatter the pollen of dawn.
Watch the hawk in the sky.

Recall forgotten purpose,
Be the river after the rain,
No need to search for truth.
Watch the hawk in the sky.

Lighter, Still

Ice and snow, on Cold Mountain,
Rain, mist, and winter winds.
Grasses sigh; the summit shines.

There, is peace; here, the restless spirit,
Glinting light, flickering leaves,
Black pine-trees, the mind's illusions.

Here's the real and not the image,
Here's the feeling, not the words,
Bright torrents, and the bright path.

Wandering late; above, a full moon,
This place is limitless, this hour,
This world, lighter than a feather.

At The Full

No place to rest there, in the sky;
Listening to the breeze, is beauty.
The mind is loose, thought is free.

Deep night, among the galaxies.
Cascading back through time,
Falls the fountain of true being.

In the crystal stream, white moon,
Lost far down, all noise and stir,
The night sky is my inner home.

I know the Way's never closed,
That all is form and process,
World and life in the detail.

Silent as the Stream



Thorsten Hack - Unsplash

Back in the place where the cliffs are high,
Watching the green fern flick in the water,
Bathing my feet, now, cleansing my mind.

Summer or winter, it's all the same here,
The deer gaze back at the creature in me,
The sun in the mist is tender, and bright.

When darkness falls, there's the universe,
A solitude, one that glints and gleams.
Back in the silence, where it all began.

The Individual

Escaping from Purgatory
(A metaphysical concept,
Though the pain is real),
One is never sure at first
Or even later, where one is.

The pines are taller, the air
Is purer, the insects, birds,
And creatures' presence
Nearer, the light is brighter.

Over the bare rocks, solid,
Free of shadows, of ghosts,
Where the stream descends,
Through a bouldered bed,

Observing clouds forming
Changing shapes in the sky,
One inspects one's thoughts,
Abandons preconceptions,

Every rule from the dead,
Till the world's made new,
The delicate light on leaves,
The flow of water and air.

Escaping from Purgatory
Into Paradise (though not
The one the book ordered,
Rather the one mind made),

One forgets what is done,
(Though the past is eternal)
As if starting again, clear,
Like the stream, again, again,

Maintaining its perfect form,
The motionless, ever-moving
Moment, the endless fount
That falls forever into itself,
Where the Individual is born.

The Process – Evening

The flight of birds, the movement of water,
The floating mists, the flotillas of cloud,
Sunset and shadow, contours and planes,
Branches in silhouette, dark leaves blowing,
Shivering, flickering, glistening, flaring
Grasses like wisps of hair, heads of hair,
Billows of vapour with facial expressions,
Falls and streams over rocks and pebbles,
In pools and meres, across shelves of stone,
Flowerets furling, briars reaching, coiling,
Beetles whirring, and grey moths settling,
The planet, its moon, in silence, orbiting,
The darkening sky, shimmering twilight,
The altering heavens, Venus, descending,
Bright gas-plumes, veiling spiral galaxies,
The hiss of the night air, the cry of the owl,
Calling from solitude, claiming its presence.

Aspen and Ash

Moon of silk, cool breeze, and no noise.
Water and clouds, what do you bring me?
Mountains and flowers.

Here's contentment, clouds in the pines,
These, the permanence; those passing.
Age-old pine, and parting mist.

Everything clearly revealed in the dark,
Bright, lucid, pure, in our ancient home.
Perfect night, and unrepeatable,

And always eternally lost in the past,
Once having been, the never-undone;
Aspen and ash, filling the mind.

Hisen (Waterfall)

(After Jakushtisu Genko, 1290-1367)

The breeze blows the flying spray,
That being the noise of coolness.

Moon-rise on the mountain ledge,
Here, the grasses bend brightly.

To grow old in the deep valley
Is more and more my desire.

If I die at the foot of these cliffs,
Then even my bones will be pure.

Metamorphosis

Here, the Nature human art mimics:
Form, the dancing of light, the music,
The murmuring almost of words,
Almost a voice;
Persephone's, or Eurydice's
Whisper from below.

Here, the creature, softer than stone,
Is harder than water, than air.
Here, the fractal, chaotic, ordered
World of process,
Flows through all; transforming
What seemed so solid.

They dissolve, the mountain, the moon;
They become a sweet misted light
A dance of the photons, electrons,
Muons. All things
Are equal in their uniqueness,
You and I the unique.

Developing, changing, existing, simply
In order to cease mere existence,
In order to thread the labyrinth,
Descend, inside,

Where life vanishes and reforms,
Perpetually bright.

The new is born from the oldest place,
The figure ascends and descends,
Eats of the seeds, and renews,
Harvest by harvest.
Living is process, always unstill,
And being – becoming.

Conversing Among Flowers

A thousand feet down
To the valley floor,
Scrub-wood, birch wood, and pine.
The wind as light as a feather,
The endless fragrance,
The falls filled with light.

No calendar here, suns
And moons, wild
Stars, the gentle, tender heart,
The mind silent behind.
Mysterious vagueness
Wherever love resides.

I hold your face in my hands,
To feel the resonance,
All purposes quiescent,
Unscheduled, living world.
Conversing among flowers,
Imperceptibly changing.

The Flicker of Birds

The flicker of birds,
Everything clear,
Nothing hidden,
Nothing twisted;
Granite and loam,
Birch and aspen;
Noticing light,
Admiring shadows.

Don't be casual
About the process.
Once chance only.
The flicker of birds,
Here is paradise.
In the end, every breath is precious,
Every hour, every minute,
Every moment of the day.

What Odds?

And the wild rose, in the hedgerow,
The dog-rose, under the stars,
No god made you.

Rose of the sieve of life,
What odds your spiral,
Absent on every planet?

Yet this, the light of the rose,
Stares at the worlds, the show,
The mind below.

Just once, the light of the rose,
In all this universe:
Prove otherwise!

The rose in the hedgerows, wild,
The flame that's borne,
The odds on another,

Infinite, do you see;
No there's no
Guarantee, however long,

Six 'million-to-one' events,
Required, no odds,
Of a rose near any star,

Calculate, less than one star
In all those stars,
Less than one planet... Yet!

Earth hosts the rose,
The wild rose in the hedge,
The ditch-bright rose.

No calyx on other planets,
Yet the light of the rose...
No different

To the light of the mind.

A Little Song for the Poets

This is the Way, the path
You chose.
Despite the darkness,
Plant the rose.

The Deer Dance

The deer dance in the clearing;
A thousand feet high,
All is wind and light
Among the trees,

This moment, *is* your life.
The insect lives;
Fragile, transient beings
Swim in a blaze of light,

Not images of the world
But the world itself,
Creation, destruction,
Wheels of the Dharma.

A thousand feet in the air,
All is process and form,
Form and process:
Paradise, in the detail.

Nearer to Home

The sweetness that lies at the heart
Of indifference;
Infinite being and true.

The wild flower, the white
Butterfly of more value
Than history – alive.

There is solace here
In whatever is not us,
And inwardly silent.

On this planet only,
The rose, the wild deer,
Being, not image.

Every detail of all
This vast universe
All is self-same.

Sometimes the past
Seems solid, but
Here is the world,

Not those landscapes
In which we are lost,
Ones nearer to home.

On the Edge

A predictable silence gathers,
Around the predictable trees
And we are saved.

It seems that for a moment
The wind is beauty enough,
The air among pines.

Clear, and cold, and silent,
Mountain glitters, and mind,
The world is on fire.

You vanish, mist in my seeming.
One not the other, both one,
And so little time.

No, non-existence is not
Another form of being,
But beauty enough.

Under the bright moon
This world
Still light as a feather.

The Restless Spirit

Out there, peace;
In here,
The restless spirit.

The tiniest of poems
Shows you
The power of process.

Image is only image,
I love,
The impossible real.

Back in the solitude
Where it
All began.

Flesh is the 'Mother' of Mind,

Snow in the trees downwind,
In mind it falls,
And a bird
Flies through.

Cold glass the ice
On the lake,
The larch trees brace
To snow in the wind.

Cell by delicate cell,
Nerve by nerve;
Flesh is the mother of mind,
And life a performance.

Breath hurts,
Sight flickers,
The bird
Flies through.

Snow on the dust,
The leaf fragments,
Seeds and husks,
The floor of the wood.

All, surprisingly,
Inside-outside the mind.
The real is
The matrix of irreality.

Where does the snow fall?
Here, in the mind.
Where does the bird fly,
I've no idea,

In a world, as Blake said,
Of its own,
Beyond our senses five,
Deep in its own.

Oh, we've all got those,
All we creatures,
Suggesting
Where we came from.

You can have language
And meaning
Without them,
But not that which flesh creates,

White snow,
And green pine,
The being-here,
Granite and silent air,

The beauty we love
We're here for.
Flesh is
The mother of Mind.

You and I in the Darkness



Steve Gribble - Unsplash

You and I in the darkness
View
The cratered
Surface
Of the moon,
In lovely silence.

A lifetime,
Two, gone

In a flash
Of far-off lightning,
Slow resultant
Thunder.

Leading to quiet,
If not calm;
A deeper
Knowledge of beauty;
A closer
Bond in time.

The past,
Simply the past,
Not our view
Of it, is eternal.
Changeless,
Everlasting,

Unlike the world,
These voiceless hills,
Unless you call
The sighing
Breeze a voice.

Here in the dark,
This moonlit
Landscape,
Hoping
It lasts out
Our time.

What I Have Lived

Incomparable strangeness,
Un-transmittable knowing;

All things not what they seem,
All exactly how they seem;

How stone is stone, and tree
Is tree, and both are neither;

The persistence of anger,
The strength of affection;

The eternal roar of the past,
The uncertainties of the future;

The illusory surface of life,
The fractal depth of the mirror;

The otherness of blind Nature,
Its non-human powers of healing;

That the smallest thing is equal,
In pure being, to the greatest;

That the democracy of feeling
Encompasses the creatures;

This fragility of presence,
The painfulness of absence;

The brightness of the dawn,
The solace of pale evening;

The darkness of obedience,
The fineness of true freedom;

The lack of clear analogies,
The limit of faith and reason;

The unreal, individual life,
This intentionless universe;

Your words in the darkness,
To my disembodied silence.

The Glowing Day

Survivors of the vanished gods
Reflect
The stillness of the empty stage
Fill it with objects
Stage-craft, small event,
Yearn

For the god's existence,
Stumble
Among gleams of words;
Wistful,
Those half-sighs
Of final resignation,
The dumb mule's
Acceptance.

Inheritors of ruins
Contemplate
The broken garden,
Its damaged leaves,
Destined
For the bonfire
Of the future;
Describing
Matter that moves
Feelings that settle,
Into the quiet
Of the bay,
Gleams of light:
But here's the glowing day.

Last Night

Last night the stars broke in me,
The light, absorbed,
Roused my thoughts.
They used to call this
Inspiration, breathing-in
Whatever is not us,
The un-made, un-created.

How great and pitiful
The things we spawn,
Extensions of the ape-form,
Self-engendered
Six million years;
Long enough
To dismay a planet.

Still, there's the beauty,
The blessed indifference

To us, to savour;
The irony of our laughter,
The galaxy at night,
And seas and grasses,
The calm of trees.

Who reach a kind of peace,
Blessed be they,
Free of all religions,
Finding a way through life,
Harming nothing
Other than for survival,
Watching the crystal moon.

The crests of the trees
Bow, the mind bows,
The unnamed fall
Gleams
Frozen in time by distance,
The Earth bows,
In all directions.

Look to the floor of this,
Its seeds, its detritus,
A fallen leaf, a spray,
A trace of spoor,
Life's delicate prints
That say
We passed this way.

The vast night broke
In a million stars
Cascading,
Free of intention,
Soothing
This universe's
Strange anomaly.

The Death of Why

A wildflower gleams, at night
Beneath the pole.
Arcturus glitters.

A rustling in the grass,
These passing creatures,
Sparks of the unknown self.

Thoughts incoherent, in-cohering,
All that I do not know,
The ambiguities of reality.

Where mere matter ends
And life begins,
Self-directed, mutating, replicating.

The parameters of beauty,
The dimensions of affection,
The complexities of fact.

But here's a universe,
Glowing
Through the arc of my fingers,

Blake's infinite jewel
In a single pebble,
Seen for an hour.

The wildflower, complex, life;
The star, simple, power,
The rules of form.

Up there, dark energy,
Dark matter,
The cascade,

Falling into itself,
Mysterious present,
Lighting the leaf.

The air is cool,
The darkness soporific,
Purposeless,

Therefore, wondrous,
Free of all
Things human.

At the heart of the flower
Is sweetness,
That of the gentle heart.

All creatures, flakes of the self;
All mind, a miracle,
Godless, and exquisite.

No, I don't need to know
What's passing by,
Nameless, and other.

I am I, star is star,
Wildflower is
Wildflower;

We sing identity,
Enigma of being,
The death of why.

Once

Through the long grass bison ran,
Wild horses; in the trees,
Elk stirred, bears loped.

Now and then, lightning, fire,
Red glow among pine,
Flight for survival,

Now and then, gleaming snow,
Iced trails, the layers
Of summer settling.

Once, we were only one
More branch of being,
A clutch of species,

Innocent tricksters,
Claiming
Emblems from the creatures,

Symbols, from tree and star,
From cave and child,
Jung's archetypes.

Once, blast and pick
Crushed-stone and tar,
Cable and fence-post

Were the unseen future,
And light and shade
The only true definers

Of the present where we were,
The past eternally over,
The future unknown,

Though at times predictable.
And we, the silhouette,
Dark on the far horizon

Not yet the greater dread.
Once, the green meadow
Edged by woodland

Was simply the buzz
Of a million insects,
The river a flow of glass.

Once, we made few trails,
Left only footprints,
And scattered hearths,

Perhaps a flake of stone,
A bone, the hollow
Where we slept in starlight.

Once, a civilisation,
Not our civilisation,
Sang speechlessly.

Close to Nature,
Closer,
But never close enough.

At Blue Creek

At Blue Creek
The bones of the Earth
Show through.
Crystal water
Clears the senses.
All the world down there
Forgotten.

Can you climb the mountain
With no mind?
Gaze from the thousand-foot
Cliff?
Wash your head and feet
In the mountain stream?
And still be there?

From rock to rock
The water falls.
I fall, the universe
Falls with me,
Above, the solid wall of stone,
Below,
The broken line of trees.

Hold tight
To the thousand year pine,
Drift once more
With the clouds.
Every wildflower here
Is worth as much
In being, as you.

At Blue Creek,
Can you throw the past away,
Irretrievable,
Irredeemable;
Let go
Of all that following,
Those beliefs,

Hold your life
A shining orb
Deep in the sky?

Archaic Eyes, No Violence

Arrow-heads on the slopes.
Shell-casings
In the clearings
Where they practice.

Where are the deer,
The hinds, the fawns,
Lying?
Far-off, in the shadows.

At night here,
Seeing Altair, Deneb,
In warm air,
My soul is lighter,

Soul a facet of mind,
Or its root network,
Or simply the sense of self
Magnified.

Only the predators' cries;
From the rest,
The gentle hearts,
Pure silence,

Our dreadful propensity
For violence,
Survival's gift,
The sieved inheritance,

That – mars us;
All our violence,
The primal fault,
The inborn error,

Morality?
Commit no violence,
Of mind or body
Against mind or body,

The whole, the entire
Crime.
Respect the soil,
The creatures,

Our transience,
Love and beauty,
Thought creates
And feeling,

The individual mind
Below the stars,
The dance of Nature,
All we never made,

Deneb, Altair, Vega.
Between
The gentle heart
And the universe,

No barrier.
Breathe the dark;
Invoke
Those archaic eyes.

The Bones of the Hare



Chris J Walker - Unsplash

In the grass of the limestone plateau,
The bones of the hare.
This is how
The universe ends.

Disarticulated backbone,
Delicate, bare
Bleached skull,
Ribs strangely un-scattered.

Here a civilisation ends.
A white glow,
Faint beneath
Uncivilised stars.
Over the bones of the hare

The night wind
Blows,
The absent ears

The hollows of eyes.
No more beauty of dawn
Peeter Snyers;
Albrecht Durer,

No more the gentle gaze.
All that's done:
The final leap,
The zigzag trail in the dew.

No more mythology,
No more
Shape-shifting
Trickster magic.

A wisp of mist
In the evening light
In a green
Abandoned meadow.

But the spirit?
Where is the spirit,
Bound
In the bones of the hare?

It shimmers to life,
Resurrects
In the grass,
In the silence,

Timid and swift
Like the heart,
The gentle heart,
An omen in flight,

A phantom
The Self conjures
Out of stillness
And empathy,
For the grazer

On clover and herbs,
For the field,
The mountain, dweller,

The harmless
To bringers of harm,
Pure
Among wildflowers.

I could sing a litany
For the death of the hare
To the vast
Un-listening,

To the rising planet,
Veiled Jupiter,
To the setting
Glow of shining Aphrodite.

I could stand
To feel the wind blow,
The grasses stir,
The savour of in-coming night.

Form in its form was
The living hare;
See it stand
In the light.

Fact in its being,
Invoking mysterious
Beauty of line,
Vivid as flame.

Witness its brief
Flickers
Of almost
Affection,

For its secret
Resilient
Children; here's
Purpose, incarnate,

Out of which
We make meaning,
Or die with the dead,
Lie down in the dust.

I could sing
Of the power of the hare,
The strengthless power,
Of the vision,

The leveret's solitude,
Its patient endurance,
Its grasp
On the hidden life,

Individual Self,
That becomes,
One more spirit of Earth.
No Mind? All Mind!

Index Of First Lines

A whisper of light, from a distant galaxy,.....	4
The poet of the real sings	5
Blue azure here, a hint of breeze,	7
Plunges,.....	7
Walking in the pines.....	8
Three that will do for.....	9
Aquinas said: Integritas,.....	10
After the rain.....	11
This breeze on the mountain is best,	12
One more species gone,.....	13
Watching the moon.....	14
I speak to the ones	15
Wherever you are.....	16
This pattern of pine needles.....	17
The truth, and only the truth.	18
Stumbling from place to place	18
I look at the brightest stars.....	19
There's no way to describe.....	20
Waking in morning light, reflecting.....	21
One green pine on the slope.....	23
Ice and snow, on Cold Mountain,.....	23
No place to rest there, in the sky;.....	24
Back in the place where the cliffs are high,.....	25
Escaping from Purgatory.....	26
The flight of birds, the movement of water,.....	27
Moon of silk, cool breeze, and no noise.....	27
The breeze blows the flying spray,.....	28
Here, the Nature human art mimics:	28
A thousand feet down.....	29
The flicker of birds,.....	29
And the wild rose, in the hedgerow,	30
This is the Way, the path	31
The deer dance in the clearing;	31
The sweetness that lies at the heart.....	32
A predictable silence gathers,.....	32
Out there, peace;.....	33
Snow in the trees downwind,.....	33
You and I in the darkness.....	35
Incomparable strangeness,	36
Survivors of the vanished gods.....	37
Last night the stars broke in me,	38

A wildflower gleams, at night.....	39
Through the long grass bison ran,.....	41
At Blue Creek.....	43
Arrow-heads on the slopes.....	44
In the grass of the limestone plateau,	46