

WILD FRUIT



Rain, Fog, Tree, Bud, Branch & Forest
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Sweet Mind

No...that's not the Way,
neglecting
the wren in the wall,
tree in the universal silence
its form on the void,
following is not being,
taste the air,
all this...
it's just empty,
and a long pure flow
from a hundred hills
is your heart.
Be here at rest
in whatever is,
all that ever is:
sweet mind.

Nature, spontaneous,
without thought
is all the view;
self-made, nameless,
deeper vague
and indistinct
is here
clear,
under voiceless stars
un-intentioned
process,
if we don't interfere
don't intervene,
not this...
to follow the way
is not the way.

The purposeless
pretends a purpose...
leave that,
be at rest,
make our meaning;
love ancient forests,
untouched seas,
green-grass hills,
stone-choked valleys
dreams quiet,
pines high,
wild nature singing
ringing in this light,
oh it's all about
intent, its lack,
don't you see.

It's all invention (morality)
to counteract intent
this human space.
Who needs ethics,
laughed the Taoist
master diving deep,
but don't try that yourself.
Our sensitivity
makes all worlds pure,
it's whispering
here, all light,
the snow the blue
the feather in the wind
the mind-sound,
echoing, the life.

Oh, refute the details
of those futures;
science is not
the scene complete;
truth is not some form realised,
nor is affection,
mind is not
it's process,
but its meaning,
the essence of the heart...
relationship.
Reclaim it all
from religion,
all that sacredness
that resonance,
that is nature.

Don't be confused
simple heart,
smell the pine resin
from the trees,
touch this grass
this careless grass,
feel, the dark empty void
(because intentionless)
is also light,
is also every form, every
process:
that vacancy is fullness,
nirvana is samsara,
the Buddha is
a block of stone,
you are not here.

What Is Spirit?

Ice on the sunlit pass,
and I, returning
your image
in my mind
down slides of stone
eroded rock,
clinging still
to twigs and branches,
every path
still slipping by,
until the cradle
of pure stream,
the bowl of light
shines into me.

It is the images
confound us,
the echoing
with meaning
indistinct,
the mirror
that reflects
but does not keep.
Slow trickles of clear water
out of darkness
fall and tinkle
as they fall,
they have no style
essential form.

It is the images...
mountains, trees, presences
the human,
the bubble of our air
the silent tick
of sand grains
circling deep down
round some fluid
core,
out of which images,
we make a self,
unknowingly,
despite intent
self-so.

Breeze on the sunlit pass,
on mouth and eyes
the morning coldness,
you warm
in my heart...
all abnegation
is a clinging
too,
tiny energies
the sapphire blue
of perfect skies,
reduce the fear,
bring me here
to silence.

Sit among stones,
think in tumbled rocks,
eat air
drink dreams,
construct a paradise
then let that go,
on floating
limestone dome,
through frail ash trees,
down slopes of light
to molten rivers,
these are the places
of the spirit.
What is spirit?

The mindlessness
of mindful
letting-go.

Intentionless

Non-action,
not grasping,
clinging,
striving –
wu-wei.

An 'I' was there,
cannot say
who or where,
but there, the nets
of shimmering past
or shimmering future
in always-only-present,
those seconds of now,
round which a self
coheres.

Sincerity, bow
mentally to snow.
Humility, let pain
of errors purify,
ah, lack of affectation,
the unmarked
spread of misted silk
where mind makes
mountains.

Two seconds are the now
in the singing trees,
scented pine
over empty hill-slopes,
cool mist
blue, all your
erudition no more
than a wrinkle
of sunlight
on the lake,
this sea of grasses.
No self, only selves.

Beware the seduction,
a heaviness of words,
the charmed ideas
they have no truth,
clumsy dancing figures
of a vanished age
dead religions,
intellectual powers
your being clings to
dissatisfied.

Walk in the free air,
leave the village,
this wind is cessation,
these clouds a blowing-out,
stop searching now
for what never exists,
looking now for what is never lost –
be, beyond,
in nature's awkward ease,
the marvellous accident.
Oh dukkha is frustration,
dissatisfaction, irritation,
all from clinging,
let beginnings endings go.

And April does not exist,
(it's a name, arbitrary division).
The city only is
if you wish it so.
There's a style of rhetoric
that commands
a semblance of force and mystery
(it's a style)
while reality slips by mindless
style-less,
flickers like the light
on mountain streams,
moving silently
never interfering.

Trees will rot,
we'll die
the world renews.
Love's not a metaphor
in a blaze of glory,
but nirvana
and samsara
the thing itself.
All that is free of intent
seems dark, void, empty,
conjures the wasteland,
or the feeling-filled vortices
where harsh music plays,
but torment
is only human,
the dark is light,
the meaning is simply here
within.

Morning in spring rain
soaked to the root,
drenched to the stem,
pines in mist,
unseen falls, spray,
ears, eyes cleansed,
stumble the long gullies,
drift in bright air,
all past lives broken stone;
all futures empty,
undetermined
if we erase,
if we wish;
something indistinct there,
nameless, blurred,
something sweet
intentionless.

On Neglected Tracks

Grain of the tree
twisted from the rock,
is a slow accretion
to no purpose
ends in simply being here.
The grain of the past
does not confine,
is simply a weft of ideas,
memories in the mind.
History is not what was
but what we make
of what may have been,
what we choose to take
with us to the future.
Be free.
Freedom is everything,
the path your own feet
make,
without possession,
or obedience,
no thought or perception
untested against
the living universe.
Fail to obey.
Abolish the names and creeds,
tragic deference,
the rituals of sin, remorse, redemption,
but not our (precious) ethics,
deny the past
it's gone.

Choose a better future,
six thousand feet of cliff
a slow cascade,
pine-needle stillness,
the tick of creature,
white air,
frozen earth
on neglected tracks.

Not A Word

Don't make love hard,
it's a forgetting of the self,
a not-clinging.

Whose that shadow
hanging on behind?
What's beyond the self,
the void;
and beyond the void
the self.

No shortcuts here
to Parnassus
or anywhere:
is it love
if you can't see
the separate being
of the beloved,
other or universe,
word or form?
It's not the self,
it's the other
in the self,
without oppression,
without possession,
or intrusion, in empty space.

Don't make love too precious,
it should be robust.
Twisted gorges,
rugged cliffs,
a fire in the dark,
a bed under the pines,
high mountains,
silent trails,
perhaps what is loved
at the end.

Tao is not the truth,
Tao is a word.
Zen is not the truth,
Zen is a word.
Love is not the truth,
don't make it hard.
Make it subtle appreciation,
delicate being,
a voice over distances,
a refuge in trees,
the million shower of light
without a purpose,
the deep structure
here by accident.
Shape the meaning
and place it there,
a token of the human,
it's resolution.

Wildflower

There's no violence
in you.
Your ethics
are the ethics
of peace and silence.

Amongst the green
grass you
are in place,
also infinite
also timeless.

You are
the ungraspable,
the elusive,
eschewing glamour,
pure in the soft and dim

twilight and half-light
and in the full sun
still concealed
a beauty among
shadows.

In you no doctrine,
no tradition,
no ritual,
no way, no mind,
no thing.

Wildflower, in you
there is no violence.
Your ethics
the domain
of peace and silence.

Lives of The Poets

Love also
is a great landscape in the mind,
whose paths and non-paths
reach the boundaries
of the other
and beyond,
as wide and green
as this landscape,
of soundless hills,
where the low large
winter sun,
stealing behind white
cloud,
calms or disturbs
the heart.

Light has its splendour also,
over wet fields
whose few square miles contain
more blades of grass
than minds
on the planet;
a brightness here is
the landscape loved,
the non-interference
of reality
that flows unknowingly
in relationship
and not like thought
echoing with self,
mirroring self.

The great landscape
of interpenetration perhaps
is why
we find
more truth
in the biographies
than the works themselves,
the lives
move us more deeply
than the artifice,
with their feints
and failures,
the relentless
search for self
for others.

Love also
is a great landscape,
where the heart
which is always shaped in mind
shifts freely,
pales with those distant hills,
dreams a shadow
the shadow pursued,
chasing the feared away,
the desired, that is,
banging, as the Zen text says,
on a drum
in search
of a fugitive.

Deep, Clear, Here

The point of the tree,
an ash on a slope,
is hardly meditation,
those scrolls of leaf
dark wisps of a fire,
the summer's leavings.

The point of the firs
over the meadow,
edging the cliff-slope
is scarcely dissection
scarcely the analytic,
those green spires.

The point of the mist haze
drenched with light,
the bright stream,
is not intent
here's not the place
for your reason.

The point of enlightenment
in a flash
is not to make words, empty,
but simply sail through
mindless skies, letting
everything be itself.

None Of This

One step from the village
is the wild: wild skies,
wild thoughts, wild grass,
wild fruit,
wild ideas of solitude.
Alone who needs
the laws we'll never break.
The meaning of the heart
is not social;
pleasant to feel, to hear
a wild wind blow,
proof how inconsequential
human life,
in the context
of a glittering universe.

The green hill signifies
on its far horizon,
no judgement,
its authority merely smoothness,
a casual dominance
gained mindlessly
from shaping storms,
a non-authority,
a powerlessness
to be other than hill,
then void, then hill again.
The clear mind needs
only its personal history,
its solitary tracks,
free of the species.

There's the wild
hawthorn fruit
still hanging,
the wild apples
that came with us
on our journey,
each tree the secret
chance, the cultivar,
a beauty and a harvest,
and the wild flowers
we see when we
forget the self,
and wander,
travellers, wayfarers
gone beyond.

Best when alone, some of us.
I am with Shelley's thought,
the burning mind,
image, intensity
greater than poetry;
best the wild moment
that clears the past
and travels on,
into a realm of vision
that purifies,
free of the world;
not some conceit
but the natural mode
the innermost reply
of certain spirits.

But then wild fruit's
more honest still,
wild pear,
the apricot in eastern valleys,
almond and quince,
the shell, the glowing skin,
the silent heart,
the pregnant form,
that feminine of the earth
that has the uppermost
forever of the masculine,
the bark that bears,
the slender column,
or aged arc of humility,
reminding us we made none of this.

Delight

Lightly. Here too
you cannot turn back
time, the world
does not reverse,
the order scatters,
or transforms,
irreconcilably,
a play of numbers,
so you must
escape time
another way
falling with the fall,
flowing with the cloud
that intense
boiling.

Lightly. Here too
you will not observe
the unobserved
universe,
the real truth
that runs beneath
our concepts,
and so not truth
concealed reality;
the measured being
all we know
of the unmeasured,
none of which
saves us
from ourselves,
or each other.

More lightly. Here
also, nothing
graspable
of the vague self,
you must dance
in mind
along a ridge
or through the water's
bright transparency,
we'll get no nearer,
though we visit stars
fuse ourselves
with forged intellect,
the deepest paradigm
is still the child,
whirling with light.

Lighter still. Here
universe begins
under an eye-lid,
eternity flickers.
Feeling is all,
and then is nothing,
is delight,
greater than science
finds
religion dreams,
mind more than
universe to us,
since filled with meaning,
ours the purposes
the love, the beauty:
being *is* imagination.

Lightly, here
sigh with the pines,
bow low,
the huge wind scours,
the mountain moves
discreetly,
unintelligibly, slips
or rises, lakes
come and go,
a billion years,
of light
and lightning,
and we
the ghosts of joy
our passing
through.

Wilder, Purer

That we be speakers
for nature, true
freedom, wilderness,
not human institutions,
civic worlds,
the rites,
that we adventure
the light,
through woods in spirit
not merely
woods in movement,
in our senses again
where body
is mind.

That we enter the strange country
this presence
all around us,
escaping the deformed day
that misses
paradise,
pass from those affairs
to the silent universe,
not in England
but in nature,
unowned landscape,
the hero man,
the woman heroine,
the wild that saves the world.

That we believe in forest
lake, darkness, the night,
this perfume
of trees and grasses,
the most alive the clearest,
(the cities to go past)
in the conservation
of humankind,
in the wildflower's book,
in the freedom,
and strangeness
of pure relationship,
hidden from everything:
that we recreate the self.

Mind is a process, *no* thing,
a swirl of water
or cloud.
Cleanse eyes and ears
in the river,
where moonlight
happens to fall,
existence
happens to be,
wu-shih and nothing special,
while we
polish stone for a mirror
going nowhere
in the now.

That we be speakers
for nature,
believers in woods
and meadows,
in the wildness
no civilisation
can endure.
Wild free thought
renews,
the wild and dusty
knowledge,
that when our world
dissolves,
will still ring true.

Crossing

From the road
to the forest,
from human things
to silence,
that's the way.

Cities are to walk from
into darkest nature,
into what
is secret
self and the universe.

Exercise the mind
in a mode
uncontemplated,
in action not tied,
words that liberate.

Feel what is always
yours,
unseen clear and here
silent, unspeaking
through and through.

Nothing blocks the way,
no fences
in the grass,
no barriers
in the air.

Moon of my
existence
shine
deeper
and shine
clear.

That Murmur

Away I know
from the particular:
it's my intent,
(beyond the specific
hand and eye
the detailed substance)
which is not
a place
where all would go.

All's blessed there
and direct
pointing,
like bird-song
the pure existent,
the light
unique
on the west
of every wood.

Forget the past,
its beliefs
the rites,
consider there's no
place we can dare
to live
but in this present,
pine-boughs gables,
houses without walls.

On the track of
empathy,
of intellect,
among the shining
family of trees,
the names of things
get lost,
all wider
audience.

No noise of effort,
just this humming,
in the quiet light
the marrow
of nature,
the silence
hard to hold to,
that murmur
in the mind.

With You

The heart's on far horizons,
frost
on the higher fields,
light snow on ridges,
January sun
the ascending light
of an emergent feeling;
out of fact
a song
of the intentionless process;
what you cannot leave
and cannot grasp,
stone walls
a mirror;
tuning the string-less
instrument,
sketching emptiness.

The mind's in far places,
with you
on distant shores.
Now there's no one,
hear it speak
from frozen grass.
The villages
grey in the sun,
quiet roads;
half-way to the mountain
is the indistinct
the blurred,
the thing
and then within
the thing
itself,
spontaneous.

The spirit's in far places,
not clinging
in the void,
not striving
in the stillness,
seeking openness,
the unmarked silk
affection,
hard-won humility
lack of affectation.
Enlightenment
comes in a flash,
no need for ritual,
nirvana is the mindless
emptiness,
the darkness filled
with reality.

The Bird

The bird sang
and was pure
existence.

We,
you and I,
we heard the bird sing.

There is a past,
the bird
has forgotten.

It sings
in a present
free of purpose,

is its purpose.
Sings in a moment
past and future.

On the west side
of the hill
the bird sang,

above the square
the bridge,
the little river.

It sang
all being
and existence.

It sang
a wondering
affection.

We,
you and I,
we heard the bird sing.

Being The Projection

Consciousness too
has no analogy,
though mind has
perhaps,
the anthropomorphic;
thought a breeze
a sigh in the trees,
emotion like
a river, scouring;
the process, that is,
seeks metaphor,
but consciousness,
is something else,
no thing at all.

Our world-lines tremble,
we are not
what we think we are,
but what's below
what's underground there
also,
the deep discrimination
of the senses,
that blue,
that musicality of notes,
that touch, taste, perfume
through which
we project a being,
strangely other.

The every light
of each new dawn still
the unique perception,
fresh creation
of godless, soulless mind,
the free spirit
bound,
embodied spirit free,
in the senses of existence,
in the sensual flesh,
ours, ours simply
for a time,
the joy, the pain
without analogy.

Night Hawks

You, humming in the mind,
a form of night,
how does the
windhover
wait out the darkness?

Fierce storm on the hills,
wild glow
of water,
gone, through the trees,
the peoples,

absent from dales,
deep loam
in the valleys,
or under tall stones
clasping timelessness.

The night hums,
the rocks reverberate,
thoughts drum
against the flesh
and we are here.

Under

Under the silence
are the words
the lost language,
part perhaps ourselves.

The language
of the pollen
and the caves,
of bones and shadows.

of carvings, the birds,
the fish and deer,
or horse-forms
breathless in the light.

The language of those
peoples who left
beach-prints
in the layered silt,

the tender footsteps
of the man
the woman
and the running child,

beside the pale spoor,
the gull-marks,
spoiled, unspoiled
by a sea of time,

sliding again forever
into darkness,
a dark
from which they signal

to our late loves and fears
their grasp
of beauty,
on a vanished shore.

Time Itself

The process, no
is not its outputs,
stability's between
wild chance
wild flavour,
and the habitual mind:
there's chaos there,
complexity,
and the outcome
always unpredictable.

Knowing the mind
modelling the mind
is not to know
its outputs;
or where are self,
awareness, consciousness,
imagination?
To replicate the mind
is to create
the uncontrollable, un-guessable,

the what will flicker
here in the darkness,
unforeseeable.
Absence of consciousness
is like the absence
of light
timeless black eternal:
the presence,
of light
is time itself.

Apropos Of An Answer

Things we create
have deeper dimensions,
the why always
more complex
than we see,
the making has its
manifold of reasons,
yes love, desire, delight
in its forming,
a claim on being,
an artefact of being,
a declaration
of the life itself.

But beyond these
a gift to eternity,
a cry of universe,
a gasp of beauty,
something passed on
down generations,
so never understood
completely,
such that life gathers life
and succeeds it,
more than wave,
more than the blue-green
repetition, sighing.

Moonlight Falls Everywhere

Returning to my
original home,
no 'thing' exists
for a moment
all is mind,
place without precedent,
unrepeatable instants,
every step
I took
unique.

This is the light itself,
white cloud,
dim valley,
the fog of being
the delightful
vastness,
the hundred flowers;
so how would we matter,
single species
gone beyond itself?

Idling by the ash-trees
under moons,
the inconspicuous
good thought
shimmers,
in a world
of no reward
and no regard.
Moonlight falling everywhere,
no special place.

It Comes And Goes

This hill stands alone
in the universe,
this mind
in the silence
of its being.

Down-river, music
of white rapids
filled with
the light
of spring.

It comes and goes,
all this,
transient dimension;
nowhere in eternity
to stand.

The green, the grey
the blue
are flames
of this heatless
fire where we burn.

Gone Singing Of You

Windblown water
blowing cool,
moon on its tip
of bamboo,
rises
slowly
overhead.

The bones of these mountains
are pure
rock and metal
for half
a hundred miles
the depth it seems
of our emotions.

My ashes
will be free
as the windless light,
gone
singing
of you
in eternity.

Another Kind

A little green
in the gullies
quickens,
our hearts free
to find the land
founded on
nothing's hurt,
ah, where is that,
where the cool
hiss of the weir,
the flare of grass,
the sacred
mind?

All night, I dream of you,
river of pines
in the light,
fire of the moon,
tool-flakes
deep in the dust,
scratches ten miles long
of the ancient ice,
Han River feelings,
human million years,
that weight
gone in the frosted
air.

And the conflicts of the heart
come to this,
affection;
all our lives'
civilisation's aim,
that one lost word,
remade
all the plans;
awed light,
mind to mind,
just
another kind
of revelation.

Be There

Playing the soundless
note,
drawing emptiness,

going nowhere
in the timeless
now,

be my mirror
that reflects
but does not keep,

be the music
that sings here
without despair.

Silent pointing
in the glittering
night,

flying through
the intentionless
void,

be the mountains
with their
text of pines,

be the bright
streams
that do not conflict.

Being Is A Turning

Those fires we named,
those planets
we called for,
turn in the night sky:
being is a turning,

and what are we
what will we be
here
in the universe
beyond our meaning?

We like veils,
we in the river of light
(image from Blake)
but never the light
never the light itself,

so the eye hangs
in that far nest of stars,
beyond *our* space
(in *whom*
ethics and aesthetics meet)

where the love is not
truth, where truth
is not love,
but both
are beauty.

The Human Secret

And the mind
so malleable,
we are not
stones, grass, and trees,
but the something
that began
in empathy, in nurture,
in our senses,
not this deformed world
missing paradise,
but believing in forests,
seas, night, the universe,
the conservation
of humanity,

the wild
knowledge
no science
contemplates,
the labour-less
wind humming
round the stars,
sympathy,
co-operation
at the root,
from which mind
flowers,
the bird-song
in the veins.

Language out of
nurture
togetherness,
and togetherness
out of language
neither first,
but both the spiral
the gyre
in which we rise
on every wind,
until we merge.
If I truly care for you
you are part of me:
the human secret.

That Mountain-Meadow

Cities are to walk
through
and past to reach the wild,

out of all this human,
to the silence
of the speechless universe.

Name it, it escapes
your names,
truth not culture,

madness and freedom
of deep
relationship,

a wild flower
discovered
in the grass.

Ours is not
the non-civilisation
of nature;

we, saved by the most alive,
by the empty
wastelands.

We must walk through
into the strangest
country.

I must find you,
you
that mountain-meadow.

Sing Now Strange Life

Sing now strange life
that builds
when all erodes;
makes, as if to alter
the second law,
a bird, a flower;
makes us health,
and makes us whole,
an inexplicable murmur
and not silence,
a tremor of evening star
no star from stillness,
or a morning glow.

Because we are here
what we most need is here,
all that we needed;
because the earth bears
for us, and in us,
cradles the meaning,
touches the quiet;
because our allegiance
starts and ends
with the fabric of the planet
that we carry,
in every axon, cell, and fibre
deep within.

That we give ourselves,
to ourselves,
is the hardest,
as the creatures,
the birds, the insects
place themselves
regardless
in other spaces,
hurl themselves
into risk's darkness
seeking light;
that we do what we need
and free ourselves,

in the uncertain
opening the possible,
in life itself, greater
than the worlds we make,
in a long flight
over a pure landscape
then coiling down
into what has the power
to alter with wind and rain
and light, Earth's
complex peace,
where it matters what we are
no more what we do.

Let The Poem Speak Its Truth

You too love the half-light
into which shy things melt,
the silence into which
my thought retreats,
a country deeper
than our passing by,
or moons and stars
on gleaming residue.

Let the poem speak its truth,
be the guardian
be house and heart and landscape,
be what the city destroys:
the buried earth,
below all this:
lend us its clear survival,
its strength-like patience.

Dig down in your self
you'll see it,
the glistening layer
the only past, in the present,
the ash and alder,
the leaves of their un-being,
the cry of all the creatures
still echoing.

The poem is the speaker of truth,
if we let it dare.
The speaker of love, of beauty
if what moves there
is the shadow of earth,
the living history
that slips from light
into mind's other zone.

The Intertwining

Love, greater than the one,
is the two, the un-created,
the Self turned inside-out,
the superfluous, endless
movement of the waters,
that remains for us.

It is the landscape you pursue,
walker in my dreams,
through the rich wood
over the fallen petals,
into a deep grass meadow
where light snows.

It's the true woman, Earth,
the finer than man,
as you, the dangerous fire
trapped in a cloud,
the uncertain mover
but the surer keeper.

The intertwining binds,
all loss, all flame, all death,
its words return on the slope,
the river gleams
beyond the fire, and here
in the only realm of being

the eternal realm,
in which your power
is grace, your conquest
your commitment,
the world a dream
dreamed in a dream,

and what's beyond
the path's far distance,
the wood's surrounds,
what no longer matters
what, unknown,
cannot preclude.

What is given
returned without asking,
what is shared
is no transaction
but the Earth itself
this blue madness

wild in the un-floating,
this plant from your level
ground that my feet
touch, un-stumbling,
that silence you hold
out to me in your hands,

which is still the fragile
flower and blossom
that burns on the naked
branch, still the singing
that forms itself on my lips
and resounds with you.

The Fire Not Understood

For the poem is a fragile conquest
and no voyage won,
and the spectacle
is not ethical,
only wonder, terror,
passion, serenity,
the mystery,

the secret of human hearts
not testified to
by prying, nor that
something sentient
that seems to breathe
in created object
work of mind or hand.

Whisper of breaking
moonlight on the grass,
like the whisper of rain,
brings grace from the far fields,
an austere purity of the light,
the sense of that mystic
character of material things.

We have scathed, seared
scarified the land,
and the humblest creature's
un-regarded, unoffending quiet
in its twilight world,
is shadowy like an image
of our dark conscience,

the unaware.
What we have forgotten
while there is time,
ask what we have
neglected,
in our own lives,
the fire not understood,

when the life is fragile,
and the spectacle
not ethical;
for beauty and light
belong to the universe
but the laughter
and tears are ours.

The Only Past Is Here

The landscape as memory,
embedded here
past in present,
mist as forgetting,
the fog of dark ages,
the wild landscape
buried beneath us,
its clearer waters,
its precise peaks,
dumb outlined trees.

No prize for our cleverness,
our verbal skills,
only the truth now,
sufficient,
for those who wander
wild pilgrims,
under wilder cloud;
the randomness the wildness,
and the wildness the life
of the human spirit.

That Stream!

No nothing special,
not the least
thing,
just mist
wiping the surface
of the water,
just light
clearing the high
azure.

Everything trembling,
every breeze
polishing stone,
making mirrors,
pushing cloud,
blowing the dust
away
from the dusty
veil.

The creature's eye,
so honest
if you
can bear it,
your discomfort
too much
lying too
much
knowledge.

Terse lines
dance
on the mountain
stream
if you can
see it,
that one,
bright
in your mind.

The Process Is Not Its Meaning

Shall we say it again,
the process is not its meaning;
for the meaning
it must engage with all the world.

The process is not
the significance
of the process;
the action is not its molecules

in movement; the thought
not the words
that compose it;
nor you your mind and flesh.

The direction of the universe
is no intent;
time is self-known existence
and the lifeless timeless.

But the world moves still,
and not with us, simply,
but through us,
inter-penetrating.

Extend a hand
a thought
and you become world;
it becomes you.

So don't speak of 'knowing'
a process
without its meaning,
or the meaning without its influence.

The light of the process
is nirvana,
if we
dare enter in.

Skies Over Mountains And Valleys

You are the unmarked silk:
its lack
of affectation.

You are the brush-stroke
crossing
the air, unformed

ending as form,
out of the eye,
of the spirit.

No we have no
souls, but we know
what spirit is.

The lightning flicker
of the loaded brush
drawing a mountain.

It is the madness
of the wild
human project,

from which we hope
sober
never to wake.

The Theme

My theme is the light
falling from clouds,
through clouds;
that immense
tent of sky
with its lines
of beauty.

There's the theme of juniper
a soft breeze,
spring beyond snow,
the tranquil
loss of fear,
the creatures unhidden,
freed, at rest.

My theme the green fields
of a limestone dome,
the lichen stone,
clear water
a depth
of charity
and everything living.

Stopping the eye,
looking again
waiting,
till mind
catches sight,
reining-in
restlessness,

the theme is the thorn bush
the grass the thistles,
bright stalks,
motionless reeds
in hill ponds,
ancient trails
of the other world

of those who ignore us
in their landscapes,
in the leaves,
secretly, silently
passing,
who fear our tracks
in the dark,

whose point is survival
(but who too
know joy,
simpler and deeper,
higher
than pain)
and will outlast.

While We Are Here

No violence no
possession
no transaction.

The empty fields
are quiet,
walls non-sentient.

The human closes
down, light
carelessly opens.

All human knowledge,
silent
in spring rain,

can make no difference
to the essential
random drifting,

though all the links
in the green chain
were broken,

this unbroken
floating, flowing
earth beyond the senses

this sightless, touchless
tasteless, scentless
soundless

process singing,
without
language,

this place of paradise
here
while we are here,

and the mind in paradise.

Eclipse

A few green stalks of grass
in the muddy lane
show signs of life,
lichen on grey bark gleams
and buds half-open,
thought half-concentrates,
incipient poems darken.

At the coming of spring
the rain at the root
moistens the rot,
new sap creates
the vision of blossom
on an empty branch
its sepals breeze-stirred.

All you know of the blue
is there in a rag of sky,
nothing of what you do not,
ghosts of the deathly;
this is the ecstasy
of the self-found
burning heart

of the wood and the flower,
which is where
the dreams of resurrection
came from, this greater
rebirth under the sun
of a greater nature,
no longer trite

but experienced in this flesh,
the flame of life
our love, our work, exhaustion,
freedom, form,
loosed to the fields,
the having-been without which
nothing seems,

and its values
meaning, vision, solitude,
without which
what is there
of us that is not
suddenly
endlessly, eclipsed by spring?

Keeping The Flame

The tender footsteps
there
before ethics,
feet in the grass
the pale harvest,
those pure hands
stirring the water
planting the shoots,
burying seed
raising the flame.

And the tender mind
here
after ethics
feet in the grass
the soft harvest,
hands in the light
moving the clouds,
planting a thought,
burying the seed,
keeping the flame.

Imprint

For the poem of the heart
must be without
difficulty
and hide no enigma,
itself suffice
to dance like the figure
of light on a canvas of light.

The poem of the heart
has no secret
to steal
from the native wildness,
itself complete
in its voiceless ascent
to the core of mind.

The poem of the heart
is as simple
as your
acceptance of truth
of the friend,
and nothing
we must pretend.

The poem of the heart
has no word
to find or deny
more than
the hand that paints
its line of a sky
and places you there,

at the heart of the poem
and in
its beginning and end,
like the line of the hill
its complexion of light,
and the print
in the grass of the hare.

The Silent Tongue

That everything should be
itself
and not
material for poetry.

That the human should
be human
never object for others,
and nature should be nature.

That the broken barn
in the field
should stay a ruin,
the air here run clear.

That the river
with its heron
should always
flow darkly,

and the green lane
edged by wildflowers
always glow
in the light.

That the heart should
always
meet heart
with grace and forgiveness.

That the private self
should be
private forever,
an inviolable space.

That because a mind
validates a mind
the silent
tongue should learn to speak.

Proof

And say the dead are living, as we are,
that we inhabit all the depths of time,
my living love, and are the deeper rhyme,
the sonnet of the river and the star.

Say that the afterlife is this one place,
eternal motion round an inner voice,
you, all the mind's delight, the mind rejoice;
in us the dance, in us the wilds of space.

Declare your presence in the loneliest hour,
part every darkness, shape inside my eye,
speak in the language of the move-less power,
invoke those seas in us, their helpless sigh.

Prove – that the living word returns again
beyond our light, your beauty, and death's pain.

Hesitant Spring

Delicate prongs of bud
and offer of leaf;
spring's blue
smoke-haze
on the wild
hills
the rivers:
intelligent blue,
the knowing blue
of the buzzard and lark,
it's a kind of hidden
singing.

Paradise lost
is split
from paradise found
by the thinness of a hair,
'no interference',
how can I explain:
if the west had started east
or the east
survived,
the bird would be greater,
the flower,
than thought: and we'd get it.

Soft gentle blue,
blue in the rocks,
through the air,
trees brushing it,
and considerate hearts
small selves
happy to wander,
nothing more serious
than the crystal mind,
arching sky,
streams of rare water.

People here,
before laws,
had order,
cleared the grasses,
respected nature,
helped, were helped by
the land,
endured honestly,
saw truly,
made little of progress
much of beauty,
carefulness, affection.

Respect those days,
truth
in simplicity,
meaning
in speechless doing,
the blue
of the light,
the lines of the landscape,
the thoughts
that some
find foolish.

March Winds

March winds are wild
they say, but here are quiet,
by the river;
I wander in grass,
the click and tick of time
turned here
to eternity's
wild fruit of freedom.

It sinks deeper here, mind:
into the leaf,
into the inwardness
of the stream,
is the patience of the larva
in its womb,
is all my shadowed heart
my spirit's room.

Oh, here is the place
of innocence
and the mad romantic,
the place of the helpless,
hopeless, the specific
fragile moment of endurance;
under the hawk's wing
shrew's unawareness.

Here is March mystery
and the stir
of life,
what pains the body
ache and bliss of light,
pure in the smallest,
clear
in the insect eye.

Here is my mirrored echo,
my return
to the sheltered core
of being
to the fire
that flickers
in the roar of night,
beyond delight,

but quiet as lichen,
silent as the moss
on the split stone,
and I am nothing
I am metaphor,
the pool on the shore
where the creature
waits, tide-washed, uncertainly,

for the moon-driven wave;
or the river fish
aligned to flow,
flickering scales burning
with liquid silver,
biding its moment
water all its thought,
its form desire.

Quiet as before
the birth of season,
or the wild rose,
twined on its spiny stem,
quiet in the grass
I whisper by
and to my Self am I,
the weft of Man.

The Sunflower

Out of the wild,
in the room,
the licking petals
of the sunflower
on snaky stalk
dragon-flames
contorting in the air,
the torque of life,
the thrust and flare;
out of the bowl the one
sure mystery,

they are dream life
those extending tongues,
sun-hair, mind-shafts,
dream journeys
as the child
dreams green slopes
and stranger mountains
or now-dark trees
where anything might
happen beyond
the world.

They override the human,
they are more,
the sunflowers.
Here, cries life, am I
the faceless form,
the nameless eye,
the unfocused
focus, mindless,
certain, deep,
greater than you,
enduring.

I die in their writhe
of stalks, the whorl
of tensile blades,
die among suns,
among stars,
among galaxies
filled with dark fire,
and die in sweetness,
a sweetness of bickering
birds, or the delicate
snows.

I lie down in their light,
inwardly,
where we lie in our Selves;
I feel their exploration
of space
they made,
and time,
a strange felt fabric
of the twisting heart
caught in the unfelt wind
that blows from darkness.

Quietest Red

The stillness of this glow
reminds me of
the quietest red out West
the slowest sunset,
over far states then,
but here is soft,
on backs of sheep,
lights evening walls,
calmer, more tranquil
than the dust on twigs
of these still leafless ashes.

Deepening life
grips the elder heart,
we sing
in the tree to the tree of no name
no longer there
yet we still care,
our calling,
as light falls
into the voiceless calm,
the fragile slopes of air
the depths defended.

Speaking Of Which

Where there's no language
is the furthest
communication,
where there's no competition
it just flows.

Where the wild hums
I cease to hear the voices,
unnatural,
and there is only
the one simplicity.

Where the sounds fade
no need for ethics,
respecting the creatures,
feeling the land
moving.

Was our civilisation
truly
worth the having?
In freedom
is my true self.

Unseen, All Around

We cannot twist it
to be – what we wish.

We cannot force it
to take us along.

We cannot tell it
about ourselves.

We cannot ask
for its indulgence.

We cannot see
where it starts and ends.

We cannot save
what we love forever.

Water is water
mind is mind,

but sitting here
each enters in the other.

But Why?

A crescent moon
in daylight
in the blue,
crests the tree
above
the limestone wall,
pure object
in the heart,
but why?

Bending arc
of frost
and dream
of starlight,
pale as stone,
holds the eye
in thrall,
commands the will,
but why?

Inner Reaches

Shy heron beats downstream
tugs at the mind,
a lone indifference
to all things human;
takes course
for river haunts
for darker pools,
for mental quiet.

Where does it rest
at night,
lancing shadows,
gathering silence
being there
waiting for eyes
that rise
from glittering depths?

How does it sleep?
In mirrors of the moon,
under the hill,
above the cauls
of leaf's
doused fires,
in a separate world
deeper than ours?

There Is Nothing To Follow

The single tree, not many;
the wildflower
only one;
the rock,
the hill,
the cast of light,
like a dark stone
in snow,
the mind a speck,
the eye unmoving
vastness forgotten,
a soundless self
un-self,
the stillness
neither water
nor cloud.

Stone

Who knows
who stands here?
The universe
falls as snow,
shines as hills,
opens as
wild flowers.

Wave is mind,
the dream,
the wind is pure,
blowing leaves
in silent valleys,
moving white cloud
in the blue.

It comes and goes
the Self,
sings in the mirrors,
restless is
a tear in the breeze,
lamenting worlds,
the unprecedented, unrepeatable.

No end
to these affections
in the heart.
Nothing to hide.
Nature shows itself
as it is.
The stones of light.

Study

Yes, that's it, with the lark
the invisible lark
trilling
out of the near sky,
somewhere in the light
under driven cloud,
rising with self,
the self forgotten,
falling without self,
to the depths of being.

The whole hillside's
windblown air
those points of lark,
ascending and descending
each its field of space
its tremor
in time,
its beauty
clear
of purpose.

How we communicate.
Not as larks,
borne on the natural
flow,
wild as streams,
or moons
the water cannot
carry away,
or grass
lifting, bowing in the night.

Build no temples,
melt the dancing gods,
and study larks,
they sing
from joy, unless
you think that is
not joy,
the fire that lifts them,
and their fall
to coolness.

Something Random

A moment's inattention
the cup might fall,
spilling
ice on fire
the mind is steam,
and all is almost,
yet not yet.

One snowflake
after another
in spring air,
strange,
melting on
incipient
green leaves.

The world is its
potential: what is that,
a knowledge
of the process
in the mind
or something more,
the weight
of world itself,

the pressing through
of every certainty
of being,
were it not for
the little lever
of a complex chance
the moment's
inattention?

At The Dark Heart

At the dark heart of the storm
the winter lightning,
are you there, my love,
are you there?

Where the questions are denied
all answers,
the mind laid bare, my love,
mind laid bare?

On peaks of yesterday, in deep
black hollows,
in moonlit echoes wild
on living hills,

are you what the wind delivers,
what moves the spirit,
not this fire
that chills?

We cannot know
our history, remember
what time has taken
and what time now holds,

we learnt nothing
slaves to inattention,
confused a chance direction
with life's goals.

Beauty was real, yours,
and love, but truth
was always slipping
damply from our hands,

we inhabited the alien lands
we shrank in cowardice
on harsher shores,
for an uncertain cause.

The winter lightning
lighting silent waves
is not your light my love,
the glare that saves.

What merit from it all?
Said Bodhidharma:
no merit whatsoever,
none at all.

Breathing

Hills are this nature
that remains to us,
this universe
that colludes with us
in unreal form,
between self
and the horizon,
somewhere there
where Being is,
the world the mind
interpenetrating,
hills are its symbol,
green slopes
in the eye and there
outlasting eye
but frail, fragile
as a green perception,
beyond and in the self,
in space intangible
in mental time
vision but not pure vision,
imagination's thread
to bind the heart to life.

Nature is what remains
of our wreckage,
essential light,
even in darkness
a shimmering,
nothing we take with us
nothing we leave,
out there on orbs
rotating about stars
as here on Earth,
pure though we ravage,
beyond our savagery
in a deeper wildness
forever clear and free,
as the un-purposed,
mindless, is forever
free of our intent,
absorbed, an intimacy
far from ours,
a concentrated fire
burning gently
in a stony place.

Nature is all our ethics,
nurture, all
that made us intent
on what is and how it seems
its truth, its beauty,
its hostility unmeant,
its strange beneficence
though it bears
what knows it,
the rest our failings,
and who dare touch
the living flank,
the shining eye,
unasked, who interferes
with what the spirit
feels as sacred?
Who dare claim
authority, possession
over this?
Who dare usurp
the meaning
granted us
by our inception?

The hills are what remains
to us, the light,
chiming, quivering
from dawn to night,
in a thousand hollows,
through a hundred
streams,
in the blind leap of time:
we can sleep here,
live here,
breathe here,
the grass and roots
rhyme with our hearts,
the rain is ours,
reason is never
complete understanding,
there is something else
the vein of fire
that living represents
that burns the brain,
our heritage,
the strength
that vivifies us.

Mind Filled With Scree

Blue spring on the April creek,
birds but no bees, cold
light and sifting rain,
rock pool stones
where the rock slide hits the water,
dark green depths by the shore,
Leonardo's braids of hair
twining bubbling light,
foam in the sink-hole,
the worn shelves
hanging on darkness.

Is looking enough, will it fill
the chasm within, time
carves, inhuman form,
blood overleaps in spring;
the air flows over the spoil-heaps
caresses quarries,
snow-burnt slopes,
tumbled lines of ancient sediment
are they enough to assuage, are they
the changing writhing image
of mind's buried deep demand?

Frail small pines in the scree
hang on like grim life
shake free of seed and frost,
a meaning spills
over the level platform of stone
into the eye
below, a feathery flow,
a string of hills
fade, purple in evening light,
this heart just might
believe enough.

The Space Between

We climbed the mountain simply to be here,
through joy of climbing,
from the volcanic base to the granite peak,
in excess of love,
and time's defeated,
we stand where we can see.

We climbed the mountain simply from desire,
and found this vantage point,
above the skylark's heart-beating suspense,
the fires of love above
the ash below, the perfect air beyond
our space between.

The Spectrum

In my deepest silence curlews cry.
Outward from my skin the green grass grows.
Murmurs of earth move in the lover's mouth.
Mine is the life of serpent stone that stings.

I am the fabric of time's skeleton.
Here the articulation of the cricket sings,
halts with the curlew's distant bubbling.
I fall to stillness in the shadow's cold.

Further from me the wind the star denied.
Women in gowns of glory are these suns
that countermand the winter of the heart,
a paradise imperfect as the dawn.

Out of my deepest silence curlews cry.
I am the universe in a brown wren's eye.
The imagined presence of the real I sigh,
the spectrum of the soul's imaginings.

Bodily Presence

The solid melted the thaw long-delayed began.
The fluid atmosphere arched, and we moved too
round the unstill darkness in a frenzy of desire

through a profligate universe we barely knew,
in which we seemed the minutest in-gathering,
pure form un-denied in an intricate dissolving.

Warped absence, distance, silence un-became;
we were the real abstract, the wilder metamorph,
a something soul-emergent and un-reclaimed,

token of what flickered and yet blew eternal
in electric presence, in indistinctness, an altered
fierceness, or the space transforming into time,

the time to space, the blue-white star to nova,
the base on which the mountain reared itself
to a green shadow disposing of its grandeur.

We were the insignia of borrowed gassy veils,
bright spectres, bones entwined, the phantasms
of being, slow eliding, vacuum, or far collision,

the clouded star-formation reared in deep blackness,
the gemlike points of nuclear abeyance, we burned
and it burned with us, in shadow and in semblance,

denying nothing, asserting everything, in the golden
deep; as much the human as the forever non-human,
but never the unfilled void, never some true non-being,

always the instance, the foreground gleam and glow
of our mangled spirits or the shrill un-yielding sight
of myriad moons, bravely turning round pallid orbs.

The Coming

And how we touch the person in each other is the thing,
and what makes us happy or unhappy, that we do not
have any understanding of, as this inability to separate
body from mind, love from contact, or inability to bring
together affection and the near presence of the other,
the complications of the past and the unremembered,
the thought that is abstraction and the bare feelings.

As how we go through this blue and green landscape,
its challenging spaces that curve beyond the point
in a delicacy or delirium of form, and seem to suggest
a meaning that is absent from the artifice of boughs
and birds in the mosaics, or the faces in the stones,
but is it meaning: or the conjuring of the magician
in the almond-tree, the blaze of nature in proximity?

How we become's the thing, and go on becoming
despite the composition of the unwritten score,
despite our lack of substance, the irreality of us,
caught at the interpenetration of universe and mind,
to be the mirror and to see the mirror, to be the stream
and to see the stream, to be the wood, and stone, and air
of an unreal coming, that haunts our inwardness tonight.

After The Violence

The ghosts that rise in an eroded landscape
are not those of the dead,
they are the ghosts of the imagination
the phantoms of a loss,
the pits, field-fringes, margins of the marshes,
the hilltop boulders
and what's buried underneath
the tangible skin,
the misted stillnesses also survive
the violence we have done.

The ghosts are beautiful, those blurred faces,
not simply the circumstances, the events they cried,
but the deeper real that is not
a victim of its times
but existential truth,
the love that's hammered out between the stars,
our in-wound deaths and dearths
no one to blame
but everything to bless
that lurks in landscape and can ease the spirit.

The clouds that blow on an eroded landscape
over the ruins and relics,
the grass-grey fields, the strangely blue horizon,
bring only the old pulse,
the ancient flickering from below the soil
of nature's unabashed insistence,
what outlasts the grinding going-on
of our particular madness,
the murmur in the veins of a country without ghosts
searching itself again.

Suggestive Form

Don't be too precise
the blur is beautiful.

It's not terrible, it's joyful,
turn the world around

and from the other side
see 'nothing' glittering.

Too many years, too much
preciousness and perfection

of intransigent description,
the crisp phrase wistful

and the hollow echo
make fools of us,

the fools we need to be
to be pine and cloud.

Moon in an April sky
trembles in the heart

as if in the surface of the pool
but is no ghost

of long-dead moons, rather
the dimension of a universe.

Cry harmony, the leaf is green
the mountain violet

brighter for its lack of virtue,
its un-solemn purity.

Nature is not what we think.
The solitary is not alone.

Deep in the third silence
watching the elegance.

The Bright Edge

Depths and more depths are what
we should desire,
little revealed,
the self the private self
not public voice,
the right of vision to be dim
and cramped and hidden,
or burn inside
in a Bronte silence,
quiet as the flare
in the fire.
The confessional
was never clever,
we cannot frame
never mind endure much truth,
our reality
the bright edge of confusion.

And we cannot be forgiven
for what has no sentience
to know us or forgive,
our own crimes
sufficiently well understood,
the secret history is blessed
and Freud(e) means Joy
if it means anything.
Certainly none can forgive
the perpetrator
but the victim,
or a double violence is done,
though others
for their purposes would rather
a figurehead absolved
from what must pain
and should, and be worked through.

I like the lone and solitary
which is not
the lonely and abandoned,
the soft grass invades
and veils
forsaken quarries
thankfully,
trees seed,
the wind brings wild
flowers and wilder
perfumes of what we once were.
Depths and deeper abysses
are worth the finding
absence worth cultivating
to teach the self,
the unknown self,
what it is not.

Losing Our Way With Words

The edge is nearer
the bare lip
of the rock,
the association
of an age
with silence,
wherein grace,
and beauty.

We go
over the heights
in soft-speaking
quiet
hushed as
the creatures,
losing our way
with words.

Still Moment

Thought, fast as mind
was ever,
flickers,
flames through
the vibrant air.

The speed of thought
gives never
a taste of time,
the body slows
but not the mind.

When the species
lives
in immortal
frames of the future
it must fly

on first wings
the timeless
falcon,
outside moment,
these selves still.

Se Habere Aude

Only by leaving it,
pure separation,
can the Self find itself
in reparation.

Only from distant tracks
is the way home
more than the silent fact
bred in the bone.

Fear is the test of truth,
as death of life,
beauty is what is born
under the knife.

Only when minds are free
deeply their own,
can they possess themselves
far from the known.

There where we finally
dare to become,
we can yet greet
the other as one.

Bring Me Back

Bring me back
to the blue mountain
and cloud,
to the pine on the hill
and the stone
in the stream,
bring me back
to what purifies
the heart,
and is never
betrayed.

Where the trail vanishes
there is the trail.
The stream
disappearing
babbles with form:
bring me back.
What never
grows old
is the flower,
the most transient
flower.

Bring me back
with the spring water
to seasons,
drift in the coolness
shine in the moon,
bring me back
to the silent land
that sings,
and slowly
absolves
my singing.

Through A Dried Fern

The way is light as a feather,
sky-feathers
crossing the blue
shining dome of air
and moving.

The flight of flocks of birds
is sweet,
directionless
pure direction,
self-sown and sure.

Snow flurries still,
buds there
break on the branch,
between March
and May.

I am still the white flame
of the hedgerow
burning.
Dark
in the emptiness,

but the dark that is free,
and free of
the names,
free of all
enmity.

Oh the way is light
as a feather,
as a snow robe of light,
falling intentionless
falling indifferently

on the space it fills with beauty,
so simply, stare
at the cloud gate
through a dried fern,
simply be there.

Water, Cloud

I'll remind you mind
is process,
self quietly goes on
behind the scenes,
amused at our
performance.

It's empty, nothing sacred.
Nothing blessed
all blessed,
the language we
reclaim
from the religions.

The intentionless void
is reality.
Mind is no-thing.
Without analysis
or purpose, let
everything be itself.

This breeze has no wish
to stir the grasses,
these grasses no wish
to feel the breeze,
but everything is light,
deep fields grow green.

I am silent like
the running river,
ungraspable, elusive
as the stream,
none of this for you
is all for me.

The pine is pointing,
the cloud is clear,
the voice is echoing,
no self
is here,
no selfishness.

Let the cities go,
chase mountain streams
in marvellous accident,
till moment's
unexpected,
unrepeated.

Let names go, let forms
ride easy
in your non-interference.
No doctrine,
no tradition:
water, cloud.

What The Dark Said

To be where the body is and not mere spirit,
to be in our senses, not in the deformed world
that misses paradise, and is lost in naming.

To be where the landscape is not owned or owning,
where the wild is this strange country always new,
where we can believe in water, meadows, forests.

To taste what civilisation cannot endure, the outer,
the most alive that flowered beneath the cities,
saved by the prospect, marsh and stones and trees.

To bend down close to a wild flower, to perceive it,
its inwardness, its benign, its unanticipated darkness
out of which all culture, truth and beauty comes.

To know the madness of a deep relationship, bound
to nothing, no-one, beyond its borders, no one's land,
where no one sees the miracle, the private and the hidden.

To rest in the civilisation of nature, the ancient reflex,
in the intelligence no one invented, in the uncreated,
and exercise the mind beyond all knowledge, beyond

that schools perform, and rites distil, in the ignorance
before the world returns, devoid of labour except that
of love, in love of the labour that darkness told us of.

The Waste

A flash of redcurrant over the wall,
drops of crushed colour, and the butterflies
out of nowhere into nowhere
vanishing,

having sipped sunlight from a flower
and skimmed a stone, part of the wanton
wastefulness of nature, the floods of lives
dissolving in a night,

to leave, hanging there, the deft cocoons,
dimly uncertain of light, unpurposive
it seems, till life blindly stirring
forces emergence,

compels continuance, as though an urge
towards something, though strangely
nothing, born to brightness, conquering
space with form.

Deer Going By

The grass in the corner of the field
holds the print we left, and theirs
in their corner opposite, the deer
who move now in the coolness
of the trees, on down the slope,
gazers at everything, from eyes
of the delicate liquid primal dark.

And the breeze holds a scent of air
of new-cut hay, the world keeps us
on its tenterhooks, still conceals
any deeper meaning, but so reveals
its tangle in us, its stake in what
we are, a move of substance, deep
tremor of misunderstood awareness,

that for a moment we glimpse it there,
swollen in the light, ghostly in trees,
the pulse of what we are, the mystery,
almost the graspable, but maddening
and restless with elusive murmuring,
in fleeting presence once personified,
but now forced shapeless into thought.

The grass holds the passing of our feet,
and the clefts of deer hooves in clay,
wherever the wild darkness slithered
down that sunlit bank, and shattered
a fern or two, signalling those ways
something outside the self might go,
into the substance of what we knew.

In The Labyrinth Of The Ear

Going gently
over gentle fields
to find
the gentle heart
is therapeutic,
to find the flying weirs
their cold sounds,
to ease the mind
with trees and stones,
to learn that nothing
is the Self,
and everything,
if thought is gentle.

No message is transmitted,
this, nature,
is the message,
this breath of life
where there are no bones,
drinking tea
on a rock
in the silence,
something enters the ear,
its labyrinth,
some stir of light
some sea-call,
gurgling cry of the birds.

You are gentle,
all that is not
world's violence,
human conflict,
barbed words:
you are the white cloud
that comes and goes,
in the flow
of immeasurable virtue
this high azure,
and I have no need
to chant your being,
yet still do.

After School

They'll teach you how to be
with good intention.
Though no one said we had to be here
we reached here
through the tiniest
of gradations, the slight
accumulations.

Native things do best here,
natural trees, original
seedlings, not attrition,
and the road we need
has undermined us,
at first without
our noticing.

What children learn, what they
teach, the good intentions
the maths and literature
can't take us back to our geography
to simpler numbers past the history
to nameless spaces, species,
to what came before the ash.

Maddened minds are truly ours,
let us be gentle.
Show the children, not teach them
how to be, reach
for the inner silence
and be sure, before we step
across the bridge of knives.

Casual Uniqueness

A well-piled wall under flickering stars.
Do deer go by at night in silent lines?

Lichens on far-off planets seems about right,
the chances low of a second consciousness.

Through the hole the summer triangle
delineates a darkness in my brightness,

Altair in Aquila, Deneb in the Swan,
and Vega clear above me in the Lyre,

a hole where sheep might pass, but odd
stones block the gap, and tall weeds

where I lie deep in the sea of grass
taking a creature's view of the earth.

Here's the heart, and here's the eye
for beauty, here's the mind for reality,

that's none of those. Hold out no hope
in running to the orbits of the stars,

we'll still be there, carrying our burdens,
finding a language for the dust and glare.

Good walls are beautiful, just stone on stone,
placed one by one, the work of loving hands,

they fence these fields, they are the classics,
you can't stay awake too long studying those.

Dust and pollen in my hair, starlight in back
shines from the far wombs of the universe,

carelessly birthing us and sheep and deer,
who pass the gates at night, with snort and sigh,

as their hoof prints indicate, the rubbed off moss,
and went down over gravel, and drank the stream.

It Couldn't Be Simpler

Nothing twisted, nothing to hide,
Confucius said, everything declared,
the heart still, the mind a waterfall.

What we do not control, blesses us.
Against the roar of night, a gentleness
reminds of the grasslands, glades,

those cool green forests, mute deities
staring at nothing, the long gone days.
Relinquishing finding words for everything,

but everything open. Opening eyes.
Leaving the creatures alone, the trees,
the grasses, being grateful for the shade.

Nothing tarnished, everything pure as moss
or lichen, or the dark mud of after-rain,
the sky-reflecting pools on rutted trails.

It's the getting there is hard, and then
the staying there. Nature's performance
far too difficult for long-cultivated ways.

No Matter The Moment

And then the music plays and it's no matter
where we came from, or where we are going,
no matter the painfulness, or the separation,
the lack of purpose, or meaning, no matter:
here the music, and there is only the music,
no matter what is before, what comes after:
here is the moment, and the music playing,
Self poised on an instant, the body calming.

And walking too, there's a music of the mind
playing, my music and not yours and therefore
hidden, your music and not mine so secretive,
a music which remembers, cogently complete,
those spaces of intimacy, places of technique,
passages of beauty, tensions and limitations,
but still the music, as now, the music playing,
in the stillness without pain, or before or after.

The Intentionless Has No Weight

What we wish is that the universe had a heart
where it has none:
the world is light
as a speck of pollen in my palm
or a tiny fly blown in the breeze,
the purposeless
is always impossibly light
impossibly bright with existence
unshaded by any meaning.
We grant that.

What shall we make of ourselves
and the greater spaces,
what shall we do
with a world so purposeless?
When what we wish for is not to be
generated but
must come to us from beyond,
must take us and find us, know
what we are and tell us
what we must be?

If the dark does not frighten you, it
frightens me. Be still, Pascal,
the world is light,
is that ball in a mountain stream,
is a puff of cloud or pale smoke
that may fall or
perhaps ascend, in wisps of time, or
threads of memory, likely or random
trails. What is purposeless –
is Tao, cannot be said – is Zen.

Primal Ethics

When power allows, our values
straight revert
to the gatherers'
egalitarian few,
the foragers, even quieter,
the nurturers, eyes filled
with a beauty they could not
describe or name,
in a world that worked
who could say why or how.

When power and plenty allow
our ethics remain
those of the lake-shore
by the warm embers,
bright spaces of the star-ways
where the universe hums
and whispers,
where bells of light tremor
as the world, deep below
the seas, echoes and rings.

When we are not coerced, when
we are not slaves,
our fineness of being
surfaces, our far truths,
the path of four million years
ancestral murmurings,
the places
where we were alive and free
and being was no transaction,
and the tracks were clear.

Tree-Planting

Silent in sleeping dales
we plant the trees.
Our culture still
envisages courtesies
of shade and light
in subtler tints of green.

There is refinement in
their dance I mean,
the arabesques of grace
that root the scene
and bow to nature,
humbler than they seem.

All of the beauty that we
compromise, is still
inherent in these peaceful
skies, the delicate spires
of linden, pine and ash,
though we are liars
that no truth redeems.

Our violence was late:
the peaceable who go
underneath these trees
and love them so,
share in an earlier world
with angers slow
and bird-like dreams.

Who, wood under the hand,
to ease our strangeness
shaped the utensils, tools
the blamed and blameless,
that interwove all nature
with our culture, spoke
deeply of leaves and streams.

The place is nearer than we
think to what we are,
pure reason will not bring
the mind as far
as those soft sounds,
like music, in the woods,
nor be the ghost that gleams,

the shape that is half-seen
that sophistication
half-discounts, but art
attempts in every intimation,
and science would know,
the being-in-itself of all the flow,
stranger to mind than seen

worthy of its attention. Softly
the tread of woodsmen
in the dust, the saplings lean
towards a deepening blue,
heartwood grown true
wafts towards clearer skies
an atmosphere brushed clean.

And there's a silence intimate
as our shared silence, learned
through the patient mutinies
of hours, time's reclamations,
the dark exchanges, and the bright,
as if a woodland moon at night
lit trees where our touch has been.

Defining The Soul

No, no confusion, what poetry makes happen is the soul,
and the material world dances attendance on those words
that conjure the spirit, the whole person, in its true being
out of the space of our familiar forging, the common lie,
declaring its utter strangeness as our own, in absurdities
and graces, the adept and the clown, beats out the time
to which we caper, where sing in a miraculous utterance
choirs of our greater vision, not this debacle of untruth,
violence, vestige of heritage, ridiculous misapplications
of rational intellect, dumb frustrations of an inner dream,
but the cooler movement under cloud-wrapped blueness,
the shared thought where the gift that was made returns
increased, to nurture, in this communion of compassions,
no, no more confusion, but the only definition of the soul.

Place Your Quiet Hand In Mine

Place your quiet hand in mine
feel the silence where we lie,
defended by transparent sky,
unclouded light, eternally
the each in each, in greater trust,
though we, the transient creature, must
vanish into time and space,
our only triumph in our grace,
our only mortal weapon this
to seal the compact with a kiss.

Then free, in our integrity,
knowing neither guilt nor sin,
with the truer life to win
godless, in this universe,
against all violence, all that masks
its Self, all that obedience asks,
oppression, stricture, limit, ends,
bless the hour that made us friends,
and in its laughter brought the One,
forever Two, when said and done.

Loyalty is deeper than
a superficial constancy,
denying us the right to be
the unrestricted, and the wild.
Our world must pass
but not that glass
in which the lover lover sees,
their manifold intricacies,
the deeper image of a thought,
that body shaped, and knowing taught.

Meaning gathers in the night,
truth, delight, affection live,
nurtured by our hands that give
and receive life multiplied,
so may you place hand in mine,
as soul in soul, though not divine,
that undivided we might be
wild lovers in eternity,
the substance of our mortal dream
burning in the midnight stream.

What Touches Us

No one owns the species:
here's our path
down under ash trees
on the oldest trail,
here before
and here always again
in intimacy
with nature,
cut logs, pale flowers,
windflowers by walls
where deer and squirrel go,
in twenty above or ten below,
places of being,
places where love
is not in evidence
but simply there,
and moving is a joy
down slopes of scree
against the wind
to reach a valley floor
cool and solid,
wild with rain,
the pure foundation.

There is no knowing
where lanes lead,
or dales begin,
they challenge our
existence, our fragile minds
dancing in a light-shaft,
they lay down
lay out the earth,
its rough uncertain tangle,
its dense layers of life,
each corner vital, self-borne,
there, unique,
a domination by humility,
a conquest of the ant,
the empire of a wren,
the linden silence
or this hazel closeness,
drenched and sure,
the after-sexual flame
that burns in nature
deep, laughing in its freedoms,
soused in its hanging tears
from leaf-green eyelids
immortal sobbing.

Now eyes and feet must learn
familiar ways
as if we were the strangers
that we are, long gone
from here,
discovering the outcrops
logs and leaves,
the twigs and stumps
the grassy life-filled patches
the insect havens
where peace defaults,
and time arouses
to timeless practises
of drowsing and arousal,
and we no need to be
other than what we were
by lakeshore arcs
and woodland bays
the strange comers,
in the equal places
each one equal,
foraging for what
requires no foraging
being that touches us
and passes by.

Grasslands And Trees

The world in itself
is free,
being free of mind
intentionless,
while we are all
intention,
the ground of our being
is free.

The world that does
what it can,
the grass,
is itself spontaneous,
in itself
our unconscious mind
is free
unanticipated.

In itself the earth is free,
the trees
and the grasslands free,
the universe is free,
and its confirmation
in being
beyond is
the unanticipated other.

The purposeless is the void
for us, who
are all intention,
life itself is intent.
Let the grass and trees return
and cover
the solid pavements,
we'll understand the free.

The world in the mind, unreal,
is not the world
in itself,
is bound by mind
un-free, not like
the grass and trees,
the hidden flow in themselves
of nature, mindlessly.

Nature is life and death,
is hair, is bone flakes,
teeth,
fragments of shell and cartilage,
the remnants
under the trees,
and in the grass,
the forms of energy,

that indicate form
beyond
all colour, or feel
of the breeze,
the taste of air, the light,
but world in itself
the hidden,
the inconceivable.

For we are bound
by mind
but the world in itself
is free, following
the flow it can,
easing the purposive heart,
in grasslands and trees
the poetry of liberation.

All Form, No Design

Where does the beauty come from,
how is it made
the power of the landscape
to move,
or anything we love
which becomes the beautiful,
that resonance of delight
where both are true?

Out of form and light,
the intentionless and free,
without design, on us,
with no authority,
unowned, possessionlessness,
out of colour and flow,
and the rich complexity
of intricate being?

Out of integrity of line,
individuality,
harmony of shape and shade,
multiplicity,
clarity and the glow,
the meaning of the leaves,
the liberty of snow,
the shared, the known, the given?

Where does beauty come from,
how was that made?
By the movements of chance
in the gradients of being,
level by level by level,
across and down,
till the trees and grasslands
sing of liberation.

Deserts Are Not Empty

Deer in the light dark clashing
with scampering
of gerbils and hamsters
over a desert scape,
laying up stores,
down in the dark,
deer in the light;
the click of antlers,
the sudden rattle of life,
and the hush
of the tiny creatures
each embodied purpose,
of which we are the excess,

excess of feeling,
excess of anticipation,
recall, too much knowledge
of death, too much
empathy with the harmed,
too bright
for our own good,
too careless about others,
a casual effort
of nature seeming
like an error,
but lacking all design:
that simply is.

The birds circle, watchful;
bear and fox,
in tandem, shuffle and slink on by;
the smallest are vulnerable,
their thought is many,
not all thought in words:
in music, colour, and line,
creative power, delight
in whatever brings each joy
we should call beauty,
there's the something,
unconscious, of affection,
that gathers and burrows.

Mind Ideal, World Real

*'The creature has a purpose,
and its eyes are bright with it.'* John Keats

Blue light on the Peak,
whole dark shadow
of larch wood, black
cloth, stretched on the slope,
creases, bends,
wind creaks
a freezing glare;
the Other hangs
over consciousness
the planet in space,
the whirl of galaxy,
the deep fields glinting.

Haze of breath in the air
congeals on things.
Pine-tips gleam,
hard branches bend,
brush blue glows,
ways of the creatures, dens,
Earth's private lives,
the wildflower secrets,
silent leaves;
Earth, a promise,
given,
not understood.

Something moves,
no past or future,
vast tremor of a void,
by meteor, wild goose cry,
something,
flares, makes trails in us,
ungraspable light,
such pain, this transience;
the ground of our being
is intentionless,
Mind
is all intent.

Somehow On Board

The world we see,
not quite all invention,
on grace, ease of the Other
floats and sighs.

There is no energy
in energy
only the effortless flow
of powerless power.

What changes is not
nothing,
emerging
it returns.

The world-in-itself
is not of our invention,
the silence deep inside
it is not ours.

No way to grasp
the being here
the having been
the being gone.

Beauty, affection
are mind's only gifts
to this universe
lacking in both.

But not in light or form.
Birds at the tide's edge
flicker and eat,
and are themselves.

Too clever by half
cried the crow
and tipped his head:
overcome your fear.

The world-in-itself is working
we pass by.
This going nowhere
is the beautiful.

It slides the tide and sings.
It moves the wind.
Eyes dazzled,
we are healed.

Uncertain Lights

The exquisite beauty of the mirrored sky
is equally
the hard to understand
as this inside, which is
outside, here, there, or beyond.

We cannot reach the silver of the other,
the silvered ground
that makes the glass reflect
the something there
akin and alien.

You is not I not you,
and yet is
the richer meaning,
to closer find and feel,
as we penetrate the world

that penetrates us.
No glass is dead that shows us
and suffices
to light our absences
glint our returns.

What is this world
we never understand
but together echo?
This world that still creates
in us its own creation?

We are not ourselves.
In their chaos of reflections
these mirrors show us.
To love is to be confused
with someone else.

Woodland Floor

In misted moss in gleams of light
these fragments of the brittle earth,
a piece of snail-shell,
feathery tuft,
leaves in the gravel,
trickling flow
of life-bright stream
around the pebbles,
sticks, needles, litter of being,
which is also the void
purposeless *therefore* empty.

In the heart we bow to this,
in that part of the mind
we locate feeling,
empathy, the fear of falling
and the deep awareness
that all we are not all.
It demands respect this
living earth, greater...
all the sweet detritus it leaves
behind, all its apparatus
of existence.

Without which nothing gets by.
Yet humanly we betray
the peace, the gentleness,
the quietness of propagation,
generation, the easy
wind blowing over the ice-field,
the hot field corners,
all this flow,
and we are left
with the made not given,
with the covered-over land.

So I go here, to water
and woodland floor,
to the scatters of weed and wild,
eye-level, sit
against a stone,
feeling the tree twigs tremble
in the lightest of airs,
feeling the light
settle on dreaming eyelids,
sift and fall, fragments layering
till we are gone.

Inside, Out

No way to convey
the walk into the void
that is being,
into this universe
of sky and trees
and windblown light.

No way to convey the feeling,
the tremor
of transience
the fragile falling,
the chaos beneath the skin,
the electric mind.

And no way to convey
the uncertainty
of the other,
like sea-deeps or night-darkness
a glittering
serving to deceive.

What we touch disperses
is not ours,
what we breathe
dissolves us,
what we are shimmers
inside, out.

Being Ourselves

It is not we who are what gleams
in the uncertain emptiness star-filled
which might, might it not,
have been a simple dark
without our planetary moonshine,
without a hint of life,
without its structures of chaos
or intimacies of light.

There are no gods in the texture of things,
rather it is the human that confounds
with alien depths, not galaxies,
not silent voids or the gaseous
tremblings, never the mist whose most
subtle articulations
are simply natural involutions
of energies we strain to understand.

It is you and I who are the mystery
of an uncalled-for warmth, we
who embody values, who invent
the affection, beauty, and the truth of this,
out of the beaten heart, it is we
the wildest hostages of time
who ask an echo of these un-echoing
speechless spaces veiled in fire.

Nothing of us attaches to these flames
that scar the night's black dome,
nothing of us moans deep in the sea
or rustles among leaves, quiescently,
they have no tongues to speak of,
part of that cold and heat
that is always a sightless motion
neither warming nor cooling.

The un-living breathes out life, the mindless
mind, the intentionless intention,
the non-human all that is human,
what is at heart neither ideal nor real,
but Is beyond all doubt,
because it shakes us, like the leaves,
in our desire, for an eternity
that is this moment too and its progression.

The Last Freedom

Not mine that theatre
that seeks to manipulate,
likes to exploit emotion;
not mine the poetry of action,
motion of things that seem
in words noiseless, fine,
in reality offensive.

Not mine the places where
I do not find myself
nor my predilections,
the social tree on which
I am no twig or leaf;
mine more the difficult,
the awkward but angled
slightly away, soundlessly,

custodianship of a music
creeping across the fields
in a distancing of light,
in the one bright star still
flaring unmoving in a void
of blue-black occasion,
this glitter in the bone.
The last freedom is to be alone.

The Hold

The world shivers, and has identities
though not its own,
our calling names that signify,
our labels for the un-anthropocentric mire.

But here the wind is light
on wild fruit hanging
or clustering in the fingered silence
and has your beauty.

Too much is strange and mantled,
veiled in possession,
the groping hand is baffled so,
seasons are muted in perceiving.

But here the fields are the deepest
green, in shining waves
that bring me reminiscence of your
light, easing the air.

The scholars' metaphors, the poets'
fail, atomic meaning is no
word to us, the alien, estranged
from any root or tang of home.

But here the stones sing selves
though not selves such
as ours, their selves like yours
gracing the eye, holding the heart.

The Absent Leonine

World has no intent to return upon itself,
and no point here is central, everything
is periphery, each piece of land that seems
a boundary is also an extent, un-signified.

Where we stand is arbitrary, our beliefs
provisional, every atom a fiction, every
fiction a reality, every word public,
but its significance private, as a child

is various to the barren, blessed, bereaved,
as a pebble is a spiritual container
to the zen mind crazed with being,
as a tree's a stick or Blake's glimpsed paradise.

Time is not yes or no. Mind is not
the substance of the substance it projects,
that form in dream, that hiss, in the sleeping
head, of the ocean of samsara, heaving.

All the prayers kneeling, all the flowers
in the stone god's lap were worthless then,
and all the observances. The light sang,
the universe moved without us.

Maturation In Time

Perfectly blue sky yields to a perfect
grey, the cloud un-flowing seemingly,
but forgotten flowers, the unseen angles
of the mind may be suddenly live,
this is satori,
wakening of the now ready self-sown
spontaneously fine,
so that champion burns bright
in the path's corner,
and is present for a time
in this eternity.

When the influence has matured in silence
after that premature that early bud,
the single leaf on the fresh green stem,
then there is awareness, then all
is immanent, clear,
arrival of the style and the essence
always there
now flowing, with grace achieved,
amazingly,
now no longer difficult but explicit,
no more obscure.

The stream surfaces and the pool fills,
and the reflections shimmer in the pool,
which is un-shadowed, as art is,
by the partings and goodbyes,
the voiceless pains,
deep in the mind of the meaning,
is rather light
bouncing silently from the surface
of the water,
bringing the world to the inward mirror,
in an un-held grasp.

Considering Our Good-Morrow

And I wonder too what we did before we loved,
imagined the single self, dreamed
of an order laying out the stars,
where we were present naturally,
not ghosts of ourselves, the words
of a beauty not self-generated,
but capturable in the I and we.

Without souls to wake, without power to control,
afraid of every world, doomed
to create them, needing room
beyond this room of little earth
and water, this space the maps
cannot make real for us, cannot
prevent its being real and endless.

I need the calm of your eyes, the sweet silence
of your face, that quiet beyond
the winds, that dome of nights
without direction and decline,
where there's an end to parting
like a death, and minds must fuse
or melt into the harbour of the dark.

The Woman By The Water

The seal's a poodle in its sea of green, who said that,
and the lions stroll behind the mind;
everything we found is echoing there
in the waves of the esplanade in the woman
seated at its edge, attending to water,
who has all our history in her open eye,
and now adjusts it to conform to value,
to be the dream itself and not its shadow,
the powerless grace not the solid shore.

Softly, gently, she observes the inhuman,
which stretches also windward to the fields
and can be made unfamiliar, can be shorn
of its named assurances, its quiescence,
until its nature shimmers like the ocean.
She sees beneath the surface but the depths
she sees are no more hidden than the ebb,
when her fingers move it is not to form
any new substance out of its strange being.

Rather it is to speak imagination, with lips
warm in a mouth of air, to humanise this,
to be the gold in the fibres of the sunlight,
to unmask, to transform the brine-wet cry
into a sighing call of grace, an exaltation,
to utter from the spirit which is the mind
in empathy, the voice in the outer roads,
a fluttering of sheets, a voyage, a harbour,
a plunge of shadows, and a coil of flames.

Rather it is to be the evening planet setting,
whose mystery is solitude, an un-wavering,
so that after the green flash, when our star
dips in the sea, she might illuminate stones,
touch the restless heart, soothe the nerves,
be the flickering light off the furthest cape,
setting a path towards the wind-blown eye,
in a course of silver on a plain of darkness,
where boats toss, where their poles aligned
point at the heavens with our interrogation.

How are we not to speak her, and her stillness,
despite all her true rejections those vagaries
like ours, who is our message also to the night,
who grants pure discipline to lengthening day,
that figure in the foreground of the landscape,
round which white whirls of cloud congregate,
with an ethereal blue, with sketched-in whorls
of moving tide, ghost coils like coils of hair:
how are we not to query her deeper meaning?

Felling

Wood piled high at the crossroads,
a mind of zen
hovers between things
and their process
sliding downwind
along a dusty trail.

No one comes this way we tell
ourselves, but all
things go this way really
slipping swiftly
the old stone walls
wide tumbling.

And a mass of flowers, road
side flowers, let be
be nameless, you
imagine them
bright assertions
of endless time.

You can find them everywhere,
studiously ungiven
and not quite random,
in a random world,
no joke but deserves
our laughter.

Wood piled high waits, un-waiting,
as mind walks un-walking,
somehow feet move
through hazy hills
by waves of grass,

that glitters, really it does,
gleams and moves, is not
a metaphor, and is a sea,
where ideas drown
and single phrases sail,

downwind again,
there's the sound in the wood
of a cut tree falling,
the human act inferred,
the world made real

though the unreal heart
insists on an emotion,
destruction's tug
on the inanimate,
a pang, it seems.

The Signs Say Do Not

It's a harsh world where a child
can't pick the flowers:
though they vanish her mind lives
the flowers return.
What meaning has a world
preserved in amber?
This earth must take its chance
with all the rest,
it will.

Beyond the wire the flowers
and the creatures:
though which side is sacred
who's to say?
And how can the deep heart live
if not with the flowers,
memories of the child
in the summer grass
in silence?

No worlds of crystal. Let the child
cull the flowers,
feel life in her fingers, touch
the un-created.
This is the way we know the world
is real, and time unreal,
where a flower glows
in the undefended realm
forever.

Two In The Wild

Wild in the field of flowers
down the valley's slopes,
where the river breaks
in a gusher out of stone
on the dale-side, runs
over bright green grass
like a pliable mirror,
and collects the reeds,
the water-birds, the flies,
life in a moment,
time in a dipper's eye.

My heart is light, this
is the paradise place,
the place of freedoms,
where the ache of transience
is summer beauty,
the heart a cloud,
the mind a blade
of grass, the stir
of the creatures subtle,
world no exaggeration
nor need for exaggeration.

There is nothing uncivilised
here, this
is the deeper civilisation,
its tenets are implicit
honesty, a sober truth
of landscaped light,
a form and line
which make beauty
out of the honest, love
out of honest beauty,
and fill the spirit,

till it overflows in the wild
like the dark stream
over shadowy ground
that parts the stems
and shows the fire
of what day brings you,
my acquiescing mind;
and me, your energy
of fine appreciation;
both flames of a silent
disempowered compliance,
of pure recognition.

Desolation

Plant us in silicon and we will be
the same fearful creatures
if no longer creature.
Then the risk will be
eternity versus absence,
not life against age;
the fearful, we will hide
behind strong walls,
in virtual realm
to escape the real.

Plant us in metal, plastic, we will be
the same lost, lonesome
watchers of empty sky,
our thoughts trembling,
afraid still of ecstasies,
empathies, afraid
in the silver void
and in samsara,
hiding our feelings,
moving the same levers,

dead power, or mute morality,
hurt by lost kisses, burned
with the savage tears
we can no longer cry,
(for where are our bodies?)
or dark with simulation.

Plant us in silicon and metal we,
in mind that made itself, will
come to be – the thing the tales
foretold, the desolate one.

Equal, Distinct

All these things that differ in what they are,
are open to the world's equality,
and all these things the grace of light renders
equal, are distinct and individual selves;
stem of grass, the stone, the bird,
the cloud, the mind, the process, energies,
transient structures. Where is value
except in the moving mind?
All things at their deepest level simply equal,
all things distinct in their reality,

and all minds equal in the unconscious,
all levelled by feeling, are one
in the democracy of wild being,
each an equal individual self.
alight in eternity, each burning eye
the eye of the universe, leaf of the tree.
Be careful of one another, fear
the violence, how we destroy
one among all equal presences shining,
the single individual where life resides.

Slowly

Slowly it glitters
in the shade under the tree,
in hot afternoon, the stray idea,
and I love ideas,
the root of poetry.
It moves slowly
like the distant tractor
turning the drying hay,
far enough away still
to be noiseless
but imminent, immanent.

It coruscates
in a sky of heavenly blue,
paradise Buddhist blue,
an idea in the void,
a little universe
preparing its soft expansion
not yet itself the real
in which the thought within
the mind might exist,
but being incipient,
mind premature.

It shimmers,
is a delight, there must be
something of affection there,
a gift to be given, not yet
framing itself in words,
but ready to soar across
the eternal infinite space
and time between friends,
a gleaming thought,
shaping itself so slowly
just out of the sun.

Empty

There no one goes
along the way.

The mind is empty
and the way is empty.

No way in mind
the empty way.

The empty sky
is full of cloud.

The empty mind
is full of process.

Where there's no one there
the way is open.

When there is no way
the mind is free.

White Plume Moth (*Pterophorus pentadactyla*)

Appears at dusk, pale as the ghost of Banquo,
black pinhead orbs for eyes;
or comes like a shrouded crier from the Greek chorus;
or outstretched, in a strange icon,
a double-winged hovering
a pallid angel,
arms, antennae lifted, wavering
long ladder-like legs at its side, pointed down,
the head non-human
the silver carapace,
the feathered shoulders.

Or stands on bark-surface like a canopy,
all legs and arms
and birdlike pinions,
a delicate cradle
of twig-bent limbs
topped by the phantom aerilons
those chalk-white, milk-white ferns
as in one of Leonardo's flying machines,
or a fossil print stretched on darkness,
or a weird transparent fungus
with feathery gills,
or a photographic negative
of some black tanist twin
embroidered on air
at twilight.

She/he is the intentioned and minute
resting, somewhere,
not escaping:
as the ghost
an inner-mirroring, half-expected,
signifying reluctant action,
mysterious constraint;
as the chorus
a plaintive subdued note, not tragedy
but the whiteness of absence
after the denouement,
the stillness of catharsis,
a half-lit quiet
a muffled sobbing.

Or powers through leaves
then sinks to wait
like the mythical poised hero,
cloak out-flung,
in the legend,
stilled by the silence
of the trees,
hoping for whispers
or salvation,
or glittering procession,
the land resurrected,
the earth healed,
the raised arms praising,
needing a ritual
all that makes heroes,
needing the grace,
the consummation.

Or fades, a fan opened,
among dark leaves,
pallor that takes on shadows,
blanched raggedness
of fluttering, creeping,
reaching, and retreating,
a roll of cotton,
with torn fabric pennants,
on crutches of legs;
as an angel,
one without a deity,
though perhaps transfigured by the light,
the white wasp fuselage, felt arcs,
the nest of tendrils,
muscled arms ending in braids
too small for transcendence,
too remote
from all things human,
moral, metaphor,
too uncannily science-fictional
a face yet not a face we understand,
more the Renaissance mask
in an angled corner
gazing out unreadably from a window,
far-off, and miniaturised.

The universe and she/he are of equal size.
His/her brief time is its eternity.
Ghost, shrouded Chorister, or Angel,
a visitant, in the end a Self,
nature weirder than us,
a form perfected,
not a form incomplete
in a half-way journey,
but a beginning and an end in one,
a simple hero's arc
unaware of anything heroic.
July is flowing onwards into night,
to nullify the ghost or calm
the hero, quiet the chorus,
or relinquish angels,
with a perfumed silence
answerless.

Water-Plants

Let's praise the things
without biographies
whose history is only
what they seem,
these water-flowers,
dark-rooted in the mire,
pale heads in blazing light,
and dumb between
the long refracted
cooling stems of green.
Praise voiceless things
desiring proper names
no more than separate identities,
by river's run
drown in anonymity
this moving universe
where we're forgotten,
among leaves neither
calm nor dissatisfied
through gleaming depths
that drop away to darkness.

Then climb to the slopes above,
where folk build their own,
mend walls, and farm, and trade,
and most of what they do
is shown by a direct pointing.
Here's a solidity of effort, skills
seventy centuries old
though tools and materials
may change, even the soil,
but among this permanence of hills,
these curves of valleys,
their artefacts the outdoors visible,
their obvious work the work of hands,
of minds turned inside-out and planted
in black earth, or grassy fields
the wind must cross in waves.
Praise their reticence like the lobes
of the water-plants, their flowers
waving there above the River Lethe,
the scent a scent of things that leave no trace.

If We Are Not Careful

A sentimental mythology
will speak still of fate, of destiny.

Flowers, moons, dark rivers will
cry out aloud to the mind under the hill.

Creatures will personify, their natures
anthropomorphically primitive, their features

invoking ours, noises will seem like signs,
trees grey pillars of meaning set in lines.

All will seem sacred (as it surely is
if we name it so) and none will know

where the hush of light that encloses
seeps from, what the bright star opposes.

We will appear still raw and still primeval,
alive in this world, done with good and evil.

Unconfused With Hawk

The I of the hawk is the eye of now,
is the eye of the past and not the future,
or only the future in instinctive skein,
unlike ours full of regret and dream.

The I of the hawk is not a thing we know,
nor will when the circuits, networks spill
their secrets, and we cry similarities.
Every mind keeps its private mysteries.

The mind of the hawk is its own perception,
alien awareness of foot or feather, stillness
in stranger trees, manners of life and death,
a beaked sub-consciousness of avian breath.

The I of the hawk is not mine, I cannot see
beginning or end to that inner complexity,
which is not for science to call. A living eye
is its own universe, Self, set on high.

Stratum

Why is the long curved ledge of stone
so satisfying to the eye,
or those grey clouds and the flowers?

Do they speak to our origins, our
evolution, is it pure sensory
or the ordered chaos of identity,

where each un-made, accidentally
formed, has surface, boundary
on which light falls uniquely?

Is it a deeper juxtaposition of self
and world, the real outside us
that mirrors some shape within?

Is it an ache to be done with all this
and be still, free of the human,
unaware of time in the un-minded,

an ache that forms itself in beauty,
sounds a note, conjures a harmony
from the inharmonious chilling air?

Or is it memory it provokes, a flare
of forgotten being in the abyss there,
deepening day, longing for the night,

not of the pang of promises un-kept,
or denied compassion, but a thought
of a kind hour in a space without lies,

where open minds shared such horizon
graceful as ocean, golden with the trees
where there was no need for promises?

Masks Of The Sea

Masks glitter in the silence, masks of the sea,
not yet beached or sunk in the deep volcanoes.

Some, bony jaws, gleaming with phosphorescence,
others, bright heads of Medusa, tentacled, beckoning.

The forms of our beginnings are not like us,
they dance between atolls, decorate the gravels,

rainbow white coral reefs, dart in each crevice.
Some hide behind helmets, others trail spears,

heroes and generals out of the Protean deeps,
brief as Achilles or crusted with Nestor's hairs

older than hills, links in the chained generations,
long spiny noses of bone or chambering spirals.

Under the midnight stones of the timeless world
the ghosts of our ancestors dance, full fathom five,

in dark blues and greens, or bob along in the foam,
where Arion rides, and Ariel casts his spells

to save us. The monstrous masks swarm scaly
undersea, and swallow moons and hulls and cloud,

the glow of monstrosity, as here, in the grass where
I dream, the insect lives express themselves in bristle,

joint, antenna, carapace, compound eye, shell and horn,
more wild than the slithering pool where we are born,

calling ourselves familiar. These are the familiars,
the familial host, weird as the crowd in Bosch's garden,

but all of our brothers and sisters, as under the waves
our relatives flicker and swarm, the fair and unpleasant.

Out Of The Dark World

Out of the dark world
missing paradise,
from the road to the trees,
from city to universe
is a single step,
and your heart in your mouth,
or your hand,
into the nameless
is only a moment in time.

Out of the owned landscape
to the unowned,
out of the un-adventured
into the wild, into
the meadow of night,
the forest of believed-in stars,
into the spirit
into your senses again
is only a footstep,
a scent of the meaning
the civilised cannot endure.

Out of the febrile self
into the essence of days,
the strength of the marsh,
the wood most alive,
is a simple journey,
one pace and there's the wild flower,
truth and not culture,
freedom's relationship
a dusky learning,
the touch of the mist
on a field of glass,
and your being
at stake.

Walker in wilderness
savour this while you can,
all of our passing,
the humming of winds,
the rays in the glade,
since this is
the ancient of ways,
nothing that we invented.

To return to that silence
we heard, and we know
when we hear,
to find that reality
beyond, to see
what we see too briefly
always, never for long,
to exercise the mind
in the strangest of ways
as nothing can teach,
as poetry cannot be taught,
as life, as compassion.

To be where we were
in the grassy place
where we were
gazing at stars.
All of our intellect there
in the rustling of light,
in the wildest of freedoms,
in the only way back
to the delicate beating heart
of the bird or the flower,
the tremor of pollen,
the bee's dust on our feet,
the cry in our ears.

What It Is Not

The roar of the wind is not the roar of the indifferent universe. Even indifference supposes attitude, mind. This is the intentionless which cannot reach to the black roots of your unrest, to the grasping slime-bed of the stream.

The roar is not the roar of beauty in the flowers of the fields, no matter it is a fact they are stirring, a wave of their swaying, a blindness there under a crescent moon. The universe hears no roar, free of your turbulences.

The roar of this wind is not a blueness of air soaring along the walls, scouring a limestone country, this echo of time in your head, this pounding of morning light, this blank white hush of the rain, shattered branches or disinterred bones.

The roar of the wind is not truth: a roar of what exists is never the roar of what might not have been, is a roar of the real in your projection, quivering meatiness in the void of things, a shade, whatever slowly rises eyeballs staring, to silence.

The roar of the wind is not the roar of compassion in the human mind, is not the sadness that makes the poet, nor the madness, is not even an anger unlike ours, neither the scream it seems of its coming nor the hiss of its going-by.

The Symmetries

The symmetries are conservations, why
the maths is useful, what remains the same,
unlike love, which is always subtly changing.

The laws are conservations, the interactions
are reducible to our equations, energies
and relations, continuities or not, quantified,

unlike pity and hope which fluctuate, they are
oceans; chaotic waves beat at us and we eat
the ground of matter, drink the flow of mind.

Physics is form and state and change of form,
the transformations are the symmetries, life
deceitfully refuses to obey a formal neatness,

love is always a monster lurking in the dark,
that vulture landing or, a flower in the light,
is one more face upturned to the crescendo.

Whatever is intentionless is empty: the void
is full of strange and mindless symmetries,
as love is, life is, pain, compassion, truth.

Health Warning

Oh it's all words, the drama and the theatre,
not truth, even though you, Reader, thought
it may be, the feelings do not fit the page,

emotion – is what mutes the self not what
impresses, least of all delights or entertains.
Your empathy is for creatures who cavorted

in a commedia of their own invention, that
deluded even them. Dante too was confused,
as to the reality of the dream he murmured,

neither a charlatan, nor visionary, but a poet,
something weirder and between. Beware,
you can invent the sexes, races, difference,

while only the self exists, and the social
is an opera full of silliness and sweetness,
mad tragedies and the modern foolishness.

Better to strip the mind of all that clothing,
accept a nakedness of irredeemable being,
leave the page blank, and stare at landscape,

where there is no mirror, where the winds,
moons scorch, scar us bare as the ash-tree
pointing its upturned spear-tips at the cloud.

Practising Being Tree

Down fields of light,
the grass now
or the tree.
So hard to become
what we are,
what are we?

Culture, like the river
made us flow
deep and green
and dark
below the bridges;
glittering with reeds.

I am the ash the elm,
I root I breathe,
I wait under
the wide-open sky,
everything
more real than I.

Can mind ever
stop being
the maker,
become
the silence
like thunder,
the air of light?

Afternoon Of A Faun

It's the promise never promised
but implicit,
a woodland gesture
something of air, leaves,
lichens, dust
under the trees,
a breeze in time;
it's the tissue
of the world
that binds us
and unites us,
the ephemeral ones
slight as ghosts
strong as stems.

It's the poem
at the back of the mind,
the one unwritten;
it's the un-minded statue
in the garden expressing mind,
Petrarch, there,
scroll in hand, saying Laura,
with a mute sunlit gaze
of seeming affection;
it's the old stone urns,
on which the satyrs dance,
the nymphs display,
the piper pipes, Venus
in her chariot attended by Amor
commands, and shepherd-lads obey,
timelessly.

It's the power of mind
behind the green design
(all human)
the thousand shades,
the trickle of thought
that sinks on sand
to the great shadowed pond
and a flash of carp in the shallows;
it's the depth
of the universe,
that elates and appals,
the darkness
behind Arcadia,
the silence
that backcloths the pastoral.
The flautist on the grass
plays silently,
the splash of water's silent,
the storm-cloud voiceless
not even sounding
one black note of dissonance;
it's the small hope
and the slender movement
of the dancer
over this mottled surface
of weathered ornament,
invoking four thousand years
of mind
in the cave of light.

The Fire Is What We Remember

Vision is simple,
it is of the spirit,
therefore denies
matter supreme.

Realism is fine
and yet never is
enough to satisfy
our ravening hearts.

There is indeed
no other world
than mind makes
infinite, eternal.

Young I raged,
there are many
precedents, all
truth is crazed,

like Rimbaud
in the dark, or
sacred Blake,
fore-runners.

Vision exhausts
time as mind
tires of matter,
but not hot life.

Everything is
holy but it takes
a while to see it
and exist there.

Sleepless and
afraid we miss
the message,
the meaning:

it's all to do,
all to do again.

Who Sleeps?

Who sleeps under the golden
fields at evening,
the silver shores of midnight,
green grass noon seas?

Who sleeps where you sleep
in the bays of azure,
in the viridian bayous,
who sleeps there?

Who sleeps under the deserts
in the dawn light,
under the forest detritus
in moonlight?

Who sleeps under
the mirror of our dreaming,
beneath our feet
below the churning tide?

The Garden Beyond The Garden

The meaning of the Pastoral is this:
that culture is not a slave to matter,
that the naked self is root and source
of our ethics, nature the flow of form.

The essence of the Pastoral is simple:
we can't hide from or outrun the Self,
dress it, build above it, buy or sell it,
translate our being to something else.

The metaphor of the Pastoral is potent:
embedded in the universe, mind beware
of mirroring the mind in other matter,
uprooting the spirit, who knows where.

This is the Pastoral of the human heart,
which is simply an aspect of the mind,
this joy in affection, delight in beauty,
need for truth, beyond the fleshly wear.

The meaning of the Pastoral is this:
the only human root is in the creature,
the essence of the creature is in nature,
there our emotions, senses, being rise.

How Do We?

Deserted places
where the creatures go,
on their own trails
delicately wandering,
down paths the grass erases
dust covers
the mind loses
in an ancient darkness,
trails where they go
(scattering their bones,
their cartilage, their hair)
under empty moons or fuller,
peering through blueness,
ignoring beauty,
a part of it,
noiseless or making
the inward sounds
of self-proclaimers.

Bare places of the beginning
clear houses of light,
that swept us back
or swept us on,
on sea-grass oceans,
down still valleys
up the far side dreaming,
you can imagine us
there, inside the flow
waiting by streams,
sleeping by stone,
wild in the dark
peaceful at dawn,
unspeakably slow minds
setting thought to thought,
not slow enough
to match the lightning creatures
pouncing and done,
or the careful grazers
on enchanted ridges,
whom the wind carries
down-slope
through magenta trees,
to scented flowers,
by quiet pools
of reed-filled water,
no route, no end.

Still places of the empty world,
the world before us
once around us,
existence enough
and movement aimless,
gestating unbeknown
the destruction,
learning one way
but still then free
to go another,
all paths open
that the creature makes,
stepping, resting,
a contentment,
choosing all the maps
fearful finding
each hint unique
and all together
the individual the species
counterpoint.

Wilderness country,
always its own,
with an atmosphere
unreproducible,
impervious to art,
except the impression,
a flick of form,
a touch of shadow,
something there,
with its own mysteries
and unknowns,
its line of bedrock,
its haze of stems,
the distance, the horizon,
that makes you smile,
the liquid coolness
of the ages, the ancient smell,
the glitter and gleam:
if we came from there
how do we get back
past forty
centuries of stillness?

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