

AN EMBRACE

The distance between two hearts seems so great –
Two stars semaphoring in their unbreachable skies,
Those weary setting arms each flashing a single message:
That single beam of light that is each heart itself.

Yet hearts do touch,
They do continuously touch, moment with distant moment;
Sometimes in bewilderment like a hurt or indifferent noonday sun,
Sometimes in communion like a precious star
Seen in that self-same dampened light of dusk and dawn,
Sometimes in compassion like moon-bent sunlight
Genuflecting to a sky of intimate stars;
Yet moment after faded moment,
The vast separating space remains.

But I believe, I must believe
That all those moments of each lifetime,
Those bewildered fingers offering forth their sacred hosts
Of bent radiance,
Those mismatched heartbeats
When at last awoken from this hallowed jumble of time
Do coalesce, do reform and entwine
Into a gentle all encompassing embrace,
And hearts do meet
And are seen to have nestled together always,
In that closeness out of time.

TIMSHEL
(thou mayest)

*Only while dusk dawns
May lingering teardrops weep
Soft caressing sight*

Searing gaze of sunsets rising, looming skies
Sweat stagnant shade. Cowering my proud clearings
Suns invade.

Rise, wilting teardrops, skim my eyes:
Aloof conceits tread filmy seas – all searings
Beached by babbling tides – each teardrop's single
Searing gaze

Lies. Must the light and darkness part
In so many lonely ways?
I choose the night: fluid fingers flowing clasp
The seas. Safe. Discerning gaze here nothing grasps:
For while sight's gone,
Lonely teardrops mingle.

Soothing shade, sweet breath of sunsets setting,
Lilting breezes petting, clear and wise,
Draw near.

Clasp, pregnant teardrops, brim my eyes:
Deceits truly gloaming – nor wrong nor right
Choosing my twilight – just a hesitant leap
'Twixt me and
Thee. Must the light and darkness part?
Setting sunsets loom both ways.
I choose the twilight: shimmering finger
Softly touches soft caressing sight:
Only while dusk dawns,
May lingering teardrops weep.

ASSUMPTION

(group action)

Let us assume that the sun and the moon
Are the same – (to daylight tame illusion,
To still night wise) – nigh fusing incompletes,
But simply the very one-and-the-same
Orb. Try them each for size:

When both in tune

Eclipse, snug moon completely nestles sun.
Sail full through waning spar sun spryly sheets
Itself entire to fill strained lunar frame.
What difference? Corona and fixed stars;
Uplifted mix of mine and yours and ours.

Let us assume both the moon and the sun
As the same. Not assuming for an hour,
Or a day or night. Day instilling hopes;
Night accepting stillness; moon and sunbeam
Blaze apartness – clear to each seeing one.
Assuming sameness is beyond our power,
Even for a moment.

Great interlopes

Breathe eternal choices; dragon wings dream
A primordial trance of friend and foe,
Wafting life's assumption on what we know.

Try we assume our choice sun as our same
Trancing moon? Cascade of cindering doubt,
Burnt searing fear – the blast of dragon breath.
Eternal dragon, our eternity;
On you, free, we float: needful breathing flame;
Dream wings that waft our trancing lives about;
Fixed choices interloping underneath
All orbs, mixed and same; serendipity;
You lie beyond our power and we pray –
Let us assume this moment what we may.

THREE ROSES, HALF RED, HALF WHITE

I

A single teardrop.

II

A single wilting teardrop rising.
Gather oceanic tides and heaven's twirling gaze,
Glaciers swarmed by blistered sprays
Hug fast igneous current writhing.

Shelter fissured puddle,
Seething geysers huddle,
Warmth amid the frigid blizzard lull.

Draw near aloof vast orienting poles,
Teardrop shoals
Hear stiffened breakers crack and harmonize.
Titanic tightened vice,
Conched steam and sea and ice,
A hard emerging of each twain;
Beached open eyes,
Cochlea conscious, rough, and wise.

Just clasp that shell upon an ear,
Small sounds appear,
Soft strains of purging joy and pain:

III

South is South. North is North.
Back and forth.

West is West and East is East.
West is daily feast.
East is calming night.
South is right and left and wrong;
A voice with treble bass, cleft song;
South is just that East is West;
South is least and South is best just as are all the rest.

'Twiht North and South a strange lament:
From West – a sign, we need another;
From East – still waiting is my lover;
While South through broken teeth may smother
Its sunken testament:

Wise South and East, demurring guest:
Communion West! Be smartly moved.
Is it friendly –
Grasping all things, tasking more?
Twice said (approved),
It hurts when one from three is four.

Rough South and West, slouched purring beast:
Communion East! Be smartly wrought.
Is it friendly –
Drifting downstream, drowning care?
Twice said (aware),
It hurts when one from three is naught.

Smart North replies, two lips one mouth:
Communion South! Be me; change size.
Is it friendly –
Doing, loving, being free; unconsciously rough and wise?
Twice said (begun),
It hurts when one from three is one.

IV

Simple arithmetic guides,
Grazing on unknown hillsides.
Three roses growing: pick one – it's dying;
The unpicked two grow the picked one's crying.
Teardrop weeping, alone dead right.
Now smell those roses, those unpicked roses,
Those grieving roses, one red, one white.

But if you do you may be two,
And three maybe may be.
A flowering garden crop
From one lone clasped teardrop.

DROUGHT

My dying deserts, bleeding sand sees
Empty sockets
Strain to drink at evaporating wounds
Trickles of heartbeaten dust.
A dervish dances
With itself alone
Forever changing partners.

My dying deserts,
Dark robes twirl their shadows across the sand.
Processional winds shrivel empty hearts,
Their sorrows black stenciled dust
Held past eye's length
In a cautious sky.

My dying deserts, blown sand
Blinds each grain,
Sending each alone
To seek itself in an empty eye,
Calling one hoarded speck
Down
To share the hurting with the hurt.

PUGET SOUND

*(with thanks to Mary's porch
on Sunset Hill, Seattle)*

I sit upon this porch, my lofty perch,
While cloud caressed Olympic mountain peaks
Pew proud immortals, cloistered here with me
To reverently gaze upon earth-bound
Sky-wading water, altar of a church
For spilt souls. Hushed reflections - which god seeks
Those blue-white thoughts alive 'twixt wind and sea
Which no mere mirrored diety has found?

*'Nothing but an emerging joy may search
Such openness; its uncombed pollen streaks
Our graven prayers with flowered mystery.'*

Draped clouds descend to wait upon the Sound,
Their tassels wet, while I adieu this porch,
To bathe within my soul until it speaks.

NOTHING BUT

My essence is its own mortality.
Revealed through each hallowed skein I girdle,
My essence, graven, deeds absurdity.

Thrown within my diamond groves, possibly
Beyond each gem, there lies my vacant hurdle.
My essence is its own mortality.

Fallen upon fallow grooves, portably
Immortal absence wills such grooves to curdle.
My essence, graven, deeds absurdity.

Essential shroud – and all the potency
I may glean – they both sip from the same ladle.
My essence – is! – its own mortality.

Safe within my soul my essence is; but see,
Such shadows shadowly secured are fatal:
My essence, graven, deeds absurdity.

Fatigued into a charmed consistency
My flickered lives these soft equations cradle:
My essence is its own mortality,
My essence, graven, deeds absurdity.

Title True is false, false is true,
of It all just depends on you.
the Lies or truths, what's the fuss?
Song It all just depends on us.

Song Here's the wall, guarding bones;
of Garden: nothingness and stones.
the And we walk the wall with our names of naught;
Stone All with naught and stones is wrought.

This old man, feels bad,
Feels sad and mad and bad.
And he walks the wall between naught and stone;
This old man reveals the bone.

This old man, he plays Zen,
He plays your move now and Zen.
And he walks the wall turning bones to stone;
This old man Zends up the bone.

This old man, he plays great,
He can simply calculate.
And he walks the wall turning joys to stone;
This old man computes the bone.

This old man, bids goodbye,
Why forsake me dad, why fly?
And he walks the wall turning boys to bone;
This old man picks up the stone.

This old man, Simon says,
Give Graceland a chance John says.
And he walks the wall giving Paul a Star;
Here is sun. Shine - Waters - far.

This old man, he pulls strings,
He plays everything has wings.
With a shipwrecked blank check, hitch your star a guide;
Waters clear shine far and wide.

This old man, he plays new,
One plus one is one and two.
And he walks the wall urging joys their bone;
This old man says fly, fly stone.

This old man follows signs,
Circles seen as true straight lines.
Though he walks the wall, yet he won't annoint;
Point-infinity is just a point.

Song Here's his line (circle scars):
of Stars are ours and ours are stars.
the And he hears the wall (circled water clogs);
Bone Hears the grunting of the hogs.

Song This old man, this old hog,
of Sleeping, grunting, lost in fog.
the And he tunes the strings winging hogs their stone;
Home Bone-menagerie: boys circle home.

See the Twins – Rangers now –
Angel, pig and dog and cow.
With an oink-oink, moo-moo, barking up a tree;
See the pitch. What do you see?

Perfect pitch, playing strings,
Full harmonic is all things.
Witches, people, beings, cat-dog too;
We are you and you and you.

Play the strings, moon at noon,
Let us dance all to our tune.
With a my song, your song, our song's new;
Dance now this song, one with two.

Play the strings, one at two,
Let us dance all, me we you.
With a my song, your song, push pull shove;
Dance now this song, two with love.

Play the strings, two at love,
Laden songs rend joys above;
To a tune of maybe, sing our fate;
Dance now this song, love with hate.

Play the strings, love at hate,
Love may many hates equate.
While a hate is many, love is none;
Dance now, love and hate with one.

Love at one, hate at one,
Let us dance all, all at one.
With a my song, your song, hear our noise;
Dance now this song, joy with joys.

Here's the wall, guarding bones;
Garden: nothingness and stones.
And we walk the wall with our names of naught;
Joy at joys: a star is wrought.

MOAN

I am a man who walked the sand
And found a pebble under foot.
Rebel loot it seemed to me.
That pebble polished to a stone,
Sparkily.
It sparked a vision of a fate that may be mine,
Of walk and wait a fair division of lose and find.
But I was still upon the rinds, the kind such pebbles make.
My foot through some door must be put,
Now what for should I pine:
A grain of sand?
A sacred ache?
A family manned with family lore?
A balloon burst with string in hand and wind in face?
A manic foot race with a stone?
A feeling in my bone?
An urge to be alone?
An urge to be at one with me with help to see my face?
An urge to be a part of more?
An urge for a state of grace?

Or simply an urge for primordial ooze:
They serve too who simply wait
Or simply walk or simply lose
Or simply find or simply stand
Or simply fall or simply not at all.
So why do I moan
Foot over stone?

TECTONICS

The land moves on so untroubled, when it moves unaware.
Floating on itself it hears its own advice;
Repeats with firmness that endless escape
from its constant motions.

Cradled within, a magma flow yearns to mingle with air.
Pressures faulting over time do not suffice;
They only trouble the accrued landscape
with their blank eruptions.

Troubled figures gesture, but just uncover heated air.
Agile fingers cover holes with melting ice;
Circulating one and all ride that gape
of dissolving motions.

But let that igneous pacific, itself, be my share.
Indigents may pay the complemental price;
My shape where you once shaped or once will shape
bestows benedictions.

The land moves on so untroubled, when it moves on aware.
Floating on its selves it hears its own advice;
Repeats its fullness as the endless shape
of its constant motions.

MOIRA

(fate – a sunset rises)

estin – what is present:

A window clear but at a distance,
Full of splashing waving green,
Blessing life with leafing joy.

logos – gathering:

I draw near.
The trees loom larger,
As do walls and street.
Each leaf has grown a self.
At window sill I stand,
The leafing splendor gone; – oh where?

eon – the presence of what is present:

An ocean near yet but a shadow,
Full of swarming floating shades,
Pressing life with grieving shores.

noena – the gathered:

I am a car
Driving down streets
Longing to walk
On sidewalks and grass.

physis – emergence:

Wearily searching out signposts
For the direction of your yearning,
Amid such all pervasive absence
All merges into one
When you finally come to a stop,
Letting the all pervasive presence
Annoint you with vanished joy.

alethia – truth as unconcealment:

Just like the surface
Of the sun brought calmly here
To float on water.

ousia – the emerged:

A toy car waits
On the edge of a sidewalk
Near some trees surrounded by grass:
A window clear both near and far,
Full of splashing waving green,
Blessing life with leafing joy.

A STILL LIFE SKETCH

I have
Walked barefoot over rocks,
Felt naked shame.
I have
Worn self-forged chains and rags,
Warning slime.
I have
Attached myself my claws my flesh my pain,
Made them my pawns;
Stripped them naked, raped and flogged,
Enslaved their joys;
Denied their God its simple task,
Preferring insects,
Self made playmates jury-rigged.

I have
Wished a world of graveyards
If only the ashes could fall for once
On communing solid ground.
I have
Cracked my knee on solid ground
Only unspeaking pain can feel.
I have
Tossed on supplied soft beds
Fearing my mosquitoes' teeth;
Moved dew-eyed through translucent worlds,
Fires burning in my head;
Raved and raged as old hands clawed
Me back into our light;
And yearned for winged snakes that speak
Above a hiss and below a roar,
Offering me bite
An apple, earth shape of silver-gold
Grown from all unearthly soil.

THE ING ITSELF

I pace a sandy beach and sometimes pause,
Senses strained through clear and murky waters,
Hard studying what may very well be
Something.

Reaching out I stretch my fingers
Through foam it may very well be churning
And ripples it may very well have made,
Touching water it may very well be
Touching. I gaze and squint both near and far
Above the glassy water, observing
What may be sloughed drifting shapes harboring
Its place. I hear sounds, sea words and music,
That may so well be from its own singing
Voice. Bending down, my knees upon the shore,
My face held close above pulsating surf,
Breathing in unstoppered swells decanting
Pungent spumes and spray – well may I fathom
This simmering bisque of fondly basting
Juices, flavors tacitly anointing
It itself.

My senses form a picture,
A clear well focused sculpture of a thing,
Which very well may never be some thing
Itself.

I try to keep my feet on sure dry ground.
I know my feet are moist, are wet, sopping,
Are likely drowning corpses with the rest.
But something need must strain myself away
From what may very well and truly be
One of my abandoned boots
Or one of my torn toenails
Or one of my footsore drops of blood,
Now shriving my mirrored conceits
Back into my dotting arms.

From twigs and rags and things glued in a pile
Upon the sand, all soaked, I offer you
My only gift, what very well may be
Myself.

SAND CASTLES

A man and a maid
Were afraid
And they prayed
To a great big old wall in a great big old house.
They made and they manned
Both of each on the sand,
And they heard on the land
The soft falling fur of the cat and the mouse.

The mouse and the cat
Leave their spat
Seeing that
When on land they can play very well on their own.
A cat with a mouse,
And a wall with a house,
And a spouse with a spouse,
Lived each within reach of a home they had grown.

Away from the sand
Fur on land
Strand in strand
Goes to dance down the wall and to dance down the house.
A house mixed with wall,
Such a jumbling fall,
In a heap, each with all,
Relieved they will grieve with the fur, cat and mouse.

Quick back then to sand,
Sure on hand,
And sure grand,
Fine old sand all of fur and of house and of wall.
Their feet with their toes
Feel warm sandy glows
When each foot gladly knows
A home grown of sand can withstand any fall.

**TO A GOD DAUGHTER
FROM HER GOD FATHER**

Siobhan, I love you.
For I know you grow love too.
No need to seek or hide
Your loving pride.

Sing, when you go a swaying,
Playing on your swing;
High, low, still,
Praying sky will know.

Kind, when you go a grieving,
Leaving us behind;
High, low, searching, binding,
Finding love loving your own mind.
Sighing I will fly to a sky with a moon.
In tune.

Wise, when you go a dancing,
Trancing all with your daring fall;
I will know you with my moon's gaze –
Sky's caring praise.

TWILIGHT

Drooping daylight nests
On silhouetted branches
Of a leafless tree.