

THEN AND NOW

SALOMÉ THEN AND NOW

THEN:

Salomé . . . is frank  
    About the nature of her desires,  
And accepts the fact  
    That they rule her completely,  
    And nothing gets in the way.

The only value she recognizes  
    Is desire,  
And the only things she values  
    Are the objects of her desire.

So all-consuming  
    Is her voracity,  
She overlooks none  
    From the vine.  
Few are the helpless fools  
    Who in their silly arrogance  
    Attempt to escape  
    The devouring vacuum suck;  
And many are those  
    Who maul and shove  
    In their greedy scramble,  
That much sooner to reach  
    The gaping, drooling womb.

And those who cease to serve her,  
She casts aside contemptuously—  
    Emaciated weaklings,  
    Worn out shells,  
    Sucked up into the pit  
    Of Salomé's desire.

But there are always others,  
And always  
    The Ceaseless  
    Eternity of time.

NOW:

Who would write such a sick poem?  
    Surely only a deranged person.  
No, an actress wrote that poem,  
    Play-acting out a role of empowerment,  
Salomé, the Nemesis of John the Baptist,

THEN AND NOW

Triumphant over her silver platter,  
And the severed head that lay thereon.

An older Salomé now, the She-Satan,  
Reveling over Her many conquests.  
Her witch's cackle,  
Bubbling up high from the back Her throat,  
Deepening into a rumbling,  
Throaty, ghostly laugh,  
Rolling in on thunderclouds,  
Rumbling, vibrating HUGE "HA HA HA's!"

The young Salomé, no victim was she.  
As the older She-Satan now, in triumphant glory,  
She continues to exact Her Just Revenge.  
Her enemy's own weapons,  
She turns Greed and Lust against them.  
Ruthlessly  
She eviscerates Her fallen foes.  
Gleefully  
She surveys the piled up,  
Massacred corpses.  
"Hee Hee Hee Hee Hee! Cackle Cackle Cackle."  
And with a long, loud, throaty "HA HA HA HA HA!"  
She kicks them over the cliff.  
BEGONE!

A part in a play,  
Actions make-believe.  
I got it all out,  
And I swept it all away,  
Oh my, oh me!  
Spent, but so free!

THE BELOVED THEN AND NOW

THEN:  
I called a Name;  
It echoed back to me.  
I sang a Song;  
It sounded wild and free.

The Song sang itself,  
A strong and lilting tune,  
Softly it faded to a whisper,

THEN AND NOW

Like lotus petals strewn.

The Whisper repeated,  
    Echoed over itself again;  
A jumbling, mumbling rustle,  
    Surrounding me like a Friend.

The Name it disclosed itself,  
    Bouncing all around,  
Echoes bursting back so joyously  
    Where sunlight could be found.

I followed the Glow—  
    The warmth of whispering,  
I cozied up to this Strange,  
    This Strange Familiar Thing.

It enclosed me in its rustling breast,  
    It hummed softly in my ear.  
It told me I was blessed,  
    And had nothing to fear.

NOW:  
Oh my Beloved,  
You stand so close by,  
The glory of each being,  
Of each cloud in the sky.

In every good thought,  
In every good deed,  
You are guiding my hands,  
As they heal, as they seed.

Going forward with your works,  
As I glory in you.  
The One who is there,  
The One who is true.

Truth, Beauty, Peace, and Love.  
My Soul rides high  
    On the clouds up above  
Ohm Shanti, Ohm Shanti,  
Peace, Joy, Light and LOVE.

THEN AND NOW

VELVET SEAL THEN AND NOW

THEN:

From the yawn of morning,  
the effortless cry,  
the soundless breath,  
the needle's eye.

From the full sun at noon,  
the fury and the flame,  
the melting of tears,  
the echo came.

From the empty dusk,  
the spider's web,  
I sit and wait  
for the tide to ebb.

And only night  
can cast her veil,  
encase my soul  
in a velvet seal.

NOW:<sup>1</sup>

Morning:

Born, I yawn,  
I open wide, receive Breath, Divine Spark.  
A Tiny Being, a Huge Cry,  
"What the heck just happened?  
'I don't like this strange place.  
'I was fine where I was!"

No will or conscious effort.  
Just Fear.

As with Adam before me, Father reaches His Finger  
down

Sparks Holy Spirit into my Being,  
Calms Fear.

With soft, soundless, baby breaths, I look around.  
The Five Senses, the Needle's Eye,  
Filter Universe into my awareness.  
No longer overwhelmed,  
Ready, I jump forward.

Noon:

An adult,  
My time now in the sun!

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<sup>1</sup> Authors note: The more recent "NOW" part is a more detailed interpretation of the meaning of the original "THEN" part of "VELVET SEAL."

## THEN AND NOW

The intensities of life, overwhelming,  
The Full Sun at Noon, the Fury and the  
Flame.  
Emotions spill over,  
Cooled by Melting Tears.  
Breathing out, Universe breathes me in,  
Receives me, welcomes me.  
Breathing in, Universe breathes itself out into me,  
Echoes Spirit back.  
Breathing in . . . And Breathing out.  
Universe and I are One.

### Dusk:

Old Age settles me back into my Being.  
I review my life, the complexities, the Spider's Web.  
I unravel it, smooth it out, simplify.  
Now at peace, resting,  
Calmly I wait for the Tide to ebb.  
The Tide of my Life, flowing in . . .  
Pausing a moment on the shore,  
And flowing back out . . . all the way out.  
Like a raindrop on the surface of the sea,  
Here but for an moment,  
Then one with all that is, or ever shall be.

### Night:

Night casts Her Veil,  
Envelops me in Her soft, velvet, indigo glow.  
So peaceful, so peaceful,  
I rest.  
From Source I came,  
And to Source I shall return.

## NOTHING THEN AND NOW

### THEN:

Mind of mine, where do you go?  
Stop your silly meanderings to and fro.  
Cease your aimless wanderings,  
Your crazed contradictions,  
And rest for awhile.

Rest in the mandala, find peace at the core,  
The lyrics of a tune,  
Waves lapping on the shore.

THEN AND NOW

Centering, centering, spiraling down.  
At the center of the hurricane, Peace can be found.

Then you can hear.  
    Then you can see.  
Then you can smell, taste, touch, FEEL,  
    Without introspection.  
No ceaseless makings of somethings from nothings.  
No excuse for Being.  
Being needs no justification.

The most damaging delusions are that enough is not enough,  
And that stuff is made of stuff other than stuff,  
    And that Nothing is Nothing.

In striving to make Nothing  
    Into Something More than it is,  
I discovered that the "Something More" was an illusion.  
Disillusioned, I turned away,  
    I rejected Nothing.

NOW:  
Persistence and I were determined to win.  
We went back to the mat; We tried it again.  
It took awhile, but We centered back down.  
Nothing stared back and here's what We found  
In the the Words of Nothing:  
"Forget your contradictions. Say 'Yes' to your soul.  
    'Don't shred your dreams before you reach your goal.  
'Don't try to make Something out of Me.  
    'I am You, who You are meant to be.  
'Your attempts to control me only come to naught.  
    'Surrender fickle Ego and empty every thought.  
'Make room for Me to manifest through You.  
    'Claim the Glory of Your Nothingness  
    'And You will know that This is TRUE."

I stared squarely into the Maw of Nothing: I confronted the  
VOID.  
Suddenly LOVE surrounded me like I never before knew it  
could.

Mind tries again to fool me, jealous little hack.  
But to my silly little Mind, I now speak back:  
    "Cease your silly meanderings,  
    'You crazed little Mind,

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'And in Silence claim the Glory  
'That in simple Being you will find.

NATURE THEN AND NOW

THEN:

"When you run out of Cheeks to Turn,  
    'What then?" I asked,  
    "What do you do?  
'Do you rev your motor up  
    'And spin away?  
    'In a huge splash of dirt?"

Slough it off, slough it off,  
    Let the hurt fall away.  
You are waterproof.  
Forget it ever fell.

"How do you know," I asked.  
"How do you know it's true?"

You have pores, my child.  
    You can close them  
    And open them again at will –  
Like a leaf, that's how it does photosynthesis.

Open to the sun and water that which nourishes you:  
    Love, Truth, Peace, Harmony, Human Understanding,  
    That you may blossom in all your glory.  
Open to root out the rocks and weeds that hinder you:  
    Self-doubt, fear, jealousy, resentment, worry, guilt, hate,  
    and shame,  
    That they cannot take root and grow.  
Close, shut out any daggers that others may sling at you:  
    Fear, jealousy, resentment, worry, guilt, and hate,  
    That they cannot pierce through your skin.

Tiny wasted insect stings,  
    They need your prayers,  
    Not deflected daggers back.

You can never run out of prayers.  
Your cheeks can never run out of turns.

THEN AND NOW

NOW:

So evolved are plants,  
    No brains, yet the only living things  
    That can create food from non-living matter.  
Taking in only what they need:  
    Sun, water, soil.  
Giving back all that they can,  
    Nourishment for us lesser creatures,  
    Recirculating back into the world.

And so awesome are the basic elements of nature:  
    Rocks, minerals, liquids, and gases,  
    Not possessing life and not requiring food,  
Yet so dynamic and forbidding in their power  
    That all creatures, great and small,  
    Cower in fear at  
    The devastation they can wreak.

Plants, animals, and the basic elements of nature,  
    A glorious symphony,  
Destroying and rebuilding,  
Giving and taking away.  
Always seeking balance,  
    Yet never stagnating.

Like a child's block tower,  
    The stamp of a foot on the floor  
        Earthquakes it down,  
Or a last block placed in error  
        Tumbles it down,  
Or a gust of wind  
        Hurricanes it down,  
Or a ball thrown at it  
        Asteroids it down,  
Only to be picked up,  
    And started over again.

Outer stimuli always coming in,  
    Infinity's gifts:  
        For every planet a son,  
        For every son a solar system.  
        For every solar system a galaxy.  
        For every galaxy another galaxy.  
        For every inside an outside.  
        For every outside another outside.  
World without end. Amen!