

Cave Song

Damp stone
On my hand
A slapping sound
O, Mountain grand

How you amble
On Earth like music
On a turn table
Turn quick

Now, Mountain,
Spin us outward
To the Ocean
And the Fjord

Dancing on songs
That shamans found
In the shadowy stones
A dancing sound

Like drums
In a starlit Vale
Licked by the Braille
Of your palms

The Dream of the Scientist

I
observe the strange dream of the scientist
brain, adaze in pregnant wonders;
there is depth even in this shallow sleep.
believe what you see,

yes, even as the bonehouse melts from maze
to goldmine, whips bright ghosts out of the seas.
the woman we are in is hard at play
upon her mental centrifuges, and we her specimen;

shall we give up our secrets, we, blood,
spit out our desires as we spin?
she would have us do so; let us preserve
our seat in the theater; let us press on.

there, in the fog above the murk of ice,
is what she sees all day behind her eyes:
all you can know, compressed into a point —
mathematics gestating in its cosmic egg.

pulsating in it, alive, embryonic numbers
split and multiply, mutating axioms like limbs
that attack their chamber, burst out like a flood
and enter as dimensions that they fill with heat and time.

what constants that were set in that deep seed
have pushed us through this dreamer's sleepy hollows?
shhhh, for she is stirring; let us quiet as we change
from audience to subject of the strange.

greet her inward eye with something secret,
sate her thirst for novelty,
she, an animal wracked numb by hunger,
quivering with curiosity.

well done, your kernel of sensibility
has pleased her, but now we must give more:
summon her a dream, you can do no other,
she will accept no less than utter captivation.

I will help you. follow my lead.
look inside: you will see your fetal longing
for a place to hide. I give you leave to enter.
tell me what you see.

*I am riddled with holes, my mind a series of rooms.
Who is the architect of my consciousness?*

*I am an actor, my day cycle a stage.
Who writes my dialogue, who reads the script?*

ah, your questions gratify the dreamer.
now, fall asleep, and I will read your dream.

II

I am a pianist now, on keys I play
what alphabets emerge upon my brow,
but what on earth were ebony and pale
beneath my paws change colors like a cuttlefish;

observe my clever brain perform a scale

from $H \log 3$ to Theta squared, and back
along the fourth-dimension keys,
the ones in infrared and gamma tones.

I wrote this symphony an embryo,
coiled like a bass clef in my vat of sound;
I call it: rhapsody for comas, to be played
in empty amphitheaters, such as skulls and graves.

the piece begins a soft and fragile thing,
mere chords ascending tranquilly through time,
a happy death — my instrument dreams of peace
— pursued slowly, savored with a languid smile

but, like Job, my keyboard soon learns to fear me.
the next movement takes his breath away;
he longs for death as my fingers strike like knives
and crack him open wide, tapping his heart

for its demonic liquors. I corrupt his innocence,
rape him vengefully to harvest dissonance
from his meek fields; you think me devil?
you've entered a domain of intense evil,

but the music is heavenly to my ears.
I keep my piano alive, give him space to breathe
between murders, dancing mutely on his polished tiles,
moving with him, breathing life into him

to bestow in him the fleeting joy of a man.
it gives my instrument a chance to worship
his creator and grow scars on sores;

there's even a moment of harmony

in these sonic reprieves, when you can hear
the twinkling of a star in a child's soul.
in the third movement, I break his back in half
and bash the keys, producing fire and flood;

I wreck the very floor of my studio
with uncomfortable blood.
this lasts twelve measures only,
then the air is still,

the only sound the phantom of past song,
already fading into silent memory.
in the final movement, I play the last two keys
remaining on the board, A0 and C8,

and sit and grimace as the music dies.

III

listen! can you hear the laughing
echo off these mental walls of womb?
you've made this world of woman
bashful with desire for your eyes;

stave off her fingers, which will pluck
them out like pearls, grains of sand
to melt to glass and cram inside her scope.
do not yield your lens; you must preserve

that organ in this scape of wonders.
in bliss, her inner eye has closed and curled

in imitation of the blooms she studied,
tingeing all we see red, emitting musks

that overpower reason; even now,
I feel mankind eclipsed behind the moon,
drugged deep in slumber, double-dreamt
by gentle hemispheres. companion,

carry on! I fear I've been unmanned.
retrieve the mangled instruments I slung
here from the vaulted skies of day.
I'll be subsumed within a minute

in mammalian clay.
yea, and the scent of eden
carries on this current,
fresh as birth;

I let myself be drugged.
a live charge carries on the water
that I breathe.

Rhapsody in B

i

The woods are a pool
I swim wholly nude
And the water infiltrates my fertile soul
A cold osmosis
Of the trees' dim dreams
Where they fall and feed the worms
Because they are hungry for it

ii

Dirt is holy as birth is holy
As the species rise from it
And the species die into it
The novel of the earth
Is a drama of dirt
On a journey to give birth
To the minds that write its stories

iii

How far down this mountain do I need to scream
To remind the world of its passionate chapter
In the body of a vast incalculable womb
Where its mother was a fount and a mountain its father
Our precious minds then were the pregnant goldmines
That wise astronomers dug during dreams
Into the night's sky before becoming clouds

iv

One night you and I will wake from failed sleep
The lust for adventure with fond fire ablaze

And scour the hills for a place to converge
Our footfalls beating down the wild weeds
The slumbering worms then will dream in their splendor
Of wondrous trees whose leaves howl with thunder
Whose roots walk the earth in the warmth of the moon

The Birth of Venus

Aphrodite is magnanimous in her concealment as she covers up with bashful hands and curls her nipples and pubis in the sea foam. She gazes unhurried upon unseen fields and, stripped dry of the ocean, balances nimbly on a grateful shell.

My mommy shrieks as if a mouse has nibbled of her toe. She bounces in shock backward toward the far end of the shower, warm spray ricocheting upon my face and hands. Her look is of anger and remorse as she slaps her hands onto her breasts and thighs, now hidden, and scolds me, “No!” “Bad boy!” “Go away!”

Like all humankind, my memory begins with myth. For me it was Venus, warm in a cozy basin, me and my infancy approaching her entrance along a shady corridor, she, humming a song of some delicious sleepytime, I, in silence not to disturb her peace. She, disturbed by my peace. She, jumping in shock at my observation of her nakedness. This is perhaps the first time I have seen her nude from the outside. There is a black, spiky crown adorning that which she hides at my eyes’ level, and I think that there must be evil there in the dark abyss beneath.

The room is of ochre tile and umber and shadows in the hazy glass, smiles and grimaces as from departing species peering sideways onto the naked humans as they flee into their bodies and their souls. The bricks of glass tower high into the misty indoor sky. My feet, barefoot. My heartbeat, rapid. A flicker of terror gallops down my back. Yet I do not cry.

I am seen by a row of mirrors. Ruined, I turn my back on my mommy and see myself, tiny, in their reflection. The shower

shines its starry song into the vast chamber, a sound as of stalactites wailing in a hidden mass. My mommy, wailing, "Get out! Get out!" I flee into the maze of carpet that rejects memory, my feet somehow wet as though I had sought to enter that forbidden domain of Neptune. My mind remembers my dinky being exposed. But this cannot have been.

I rehearse this memory in the dark corners of the house. How I crept along the row of glass bricks, a hunter pursuing beauty and truth inside the singing painting that lurked beyond the transparent wall. Mommy, she was called. She was called, Mommy.

How I slipped out through the vast cracked doorway, fleeing light and gentleness with their shiny waterworks, carefully pulling closed to make amends for my slight shape. Hearing each waterdrop in the echoing cavern, playing and replaying off wall and floor, coming to its end.