

# HIDDEN IN THE THROAT

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SUMMER NIGHTS, SECOND REFRAIN

Nights' walk and bend a  
Blade of grass  
Blade of grass  
Around your fingers

Not knotting but twined  
Silence, comfort, song  
With hooded meant,  
Aroused feeling fair.

Render in series,  
Render in pair.  
Naughted, and nothing  
And knotting your hair

But around your grace  
Golden, token, born  
Remembrance bent  
Awake and slightly lingers

That would with one an  
Eye tilted away,  
Eye tilted away  
Appear to motion nearer.

## PARABLE OF THE BUDDHA AND THE MAN IN THE MUD

One day the Buddha was traveling by the river along a dirt road where he encountered a man who was rolling in the mud with several swine.

Recognizing him as the Buddha, the man stood up and hailed him, saying "Oh great Buddha! You see that I am your servant and how I bring myself to the level of these animals that I may share their suffering? Surely you have come to share the secret of enlightenment with me!" The muddy and fly-bitten man danced in his joy, for he believed that his journey must have ended and the time come to experience Nirvana.

The Buddha thought for a moment and said to the man "Do you find the mud cool and refreshing on your skin?"

The man replied that he did not, that he suffered greatly in order to leave the world of desire behind.

"Do you swat at the flies which come to land on your skin as you lie festering in the mud?"

"You mock me!" the man said, "I would never dare to hurt a single fly or flea who landed on me!"

"That is good," the Buddha replied, "but what of those hogs which lay with you? Do they truly suffer, do they leave the flies to dine on their blood and birth maggots in their flesh?"

"No," the man admitted, "They seem to enjoy it here and their tails are constantly shooing the flies from their hides."

“Then I will share the secret of enlightenment with you, as you most surely have suffered like an animal in order to come to this day.”

And the Buddha continued on, saying this to the poor man sitting in the mud.

“When a man is thirsty he may drink. When he is hungry he may eat, when sleepy he may seek the comfort of a bed. And we say of that man that he does not know what it means to suffer, and that he is a slave to his desires.

But what is often forgotten is that a man who is starving and who does not penetrate the maya of the world before he falls into a swoon may die and for what? The apple in his hand which he let rot is as much a part of the great self that is no self as his desire to eat it is.

The mud will not tell you secrets, my friend, but the river will take the mud away from your eyes and perhaps if you take a moment you will be able to feel the suffering of the river.

The river suffers when a man lays in the mud with red skin. The river suffers when a flower in the desert dies. Peace is as simple as bathing in the sacred waters and laughing about the time you spent rolling in the mud - it does not live in swords and shields and pieces of gold in a king's purse.”

With that, the Buddha left the man behind to think on what he had said and continued on his way to the town, carrying the river.

## THE CITY ON THE LEFT HAND SIDE

Answer the refrain  
Air inside a poured stone  
Ringing heartbeats stutter, stutter  
The clockwork turns

I'm Africa, I'm trapped expertly  
In the belly of your world  
A voice is removed  
Absorbing the simple evocation  
Of hands cradled slowly spread apart  
Sand bleeding drops in ivory streams

Whispers punctuate  
The footsteps of friends  
Who file in parallax procession  
Stones, mirrors, tangible ghosts

The sound walks, heels turned out  
Staccato pavement talking of city swans  
Avenue guarded by a thousand rats  
tails, claws, pebbles displaced.  
Get to the next sidewalk bus stop -  
They've got to pick up.

## STUDY OF PURITY

The absence of all purity is the pure pure.  
Where god is every/thing and god is no/thing.

Pure pure  
This is how the ash is mixed with the snow  
Pure pure  
This is how I mix my seed with your flower  
Pure pure  
This is how the dog's blood rots in the roses  
Pure pure  
This is how the air becomes smoke through  
The application of white fire

Pure pure  
Each thing  
This thing that thing this thing that thing  
this thing that thing  
Nothing  
Pure pure

## MEGAN IN A MOMENT

Take your sceptre  
Set it down  
The cigarette that's burning  
The glass hotel ashtray  
It might be your last one  
In peace  
Profound and blindly walking  
Unguided.

If not too far  
If not now, when  
Will ocean's wave  
With grace and will  
Begin the journey  
Through this garden land.

(I don't want to watch you  
Walk away  
And so  
I bow my head.)

## WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE

And in the tangled hearts of lovers  
Populate the earth with desires and sorrow  
I've rubbed on my red skin  
I am very sorry, so  
Like a bright eye, bright eyes  
Down in my gutted inside for the moment



## THE INTELLECTUALS

they are soul dead  
and waiting for a cup of coffee  
they forgot to order, tapping  
cigarette ash in morse code SOS

a poet sits reading at the table  
peering out from eyes  
scrabble tiles are scattered across  
checkerboard chesstops

spelling out "PAIN" and "EMPATHY"  
the softness is missing like the letter "H"  
hidden inside the throat

transmuted into sobs  
and muses mocking laughter  
that pushes miles between  
tips the chair standing up

talk talk talk talk  
don't leave room  
don't leave the room  
talk talk talk talk

EVE?

rs in the night and in the smoke  
and almonds grow from the Buddha's navel  
kin — shit and sundrops  
ee this reflected  
ye — it's twisting and dull  
ments when you steal this from me

## FAIRLY MET FOR 100 DAYS

Oh my gentle heart that sways to the wind  
Of the rhyming song of your voice  
Let your melody play where it can expand free  
Lest it find the lonely cavern where I dwell

And wrap its lovely lyric around mine  
To never be separated nor bring an embrace  
Let my entrance be guarded by stone  
Or black eyed angels proof against all energies

Oh bring instead the cup of clean water  
To wash my feet, then anoint my forehead  
Let pure harmonies gather if in truth they can exist here  
In a warp of rock hollowed by time

That took to bed in sorrow and in flame  
To wit, the truth was spoken and ne'er erased  
Let me dwell in the fields, fairly met  
In peace, for 100 days by the river's edge.

## A LITTLE DEATH

Death wraps his knuckles around my blue-veined heart like  
it was the throttle of some road-dusted Harley Davidson. He  
leans into my ear and whispers, "wanna ride?"

I shake my head, mutter no, but of course, it's a lie.

## WHITE RABBIT IN AN INDOOR HUTCH

There's a stain on your carpet  
You've covered  
Covered with roses and china shards  
Whispered words of three  
Three years, nine months  
A map of the coast  
Marked blue and black with stars  
And scars of  
Three years, nine months  
and "I Still Love You"

White rabbit, shiver inside  
A wooden hutch  
Hammering nails through your  
Covered carpet  
Vinyl record sleeve  
Notes that trembled in the air  
Ten numbered tones  
When it came to the end  
Of three years, nine months  
That didn't wash away

You wished on dreaming mushrooms  
And salted the sea

YOUNG MAN, CHRISTMAS STAMP, VACANT DRESSES,  
THE WIND'S SPINE

My mother was a young girl  
Told that she should love  
That her heart was on her back  
Or resting heavy against her tongue

My father was a man  
He'd lost three homes  
Before he could count the stars  
A silent crookless shepherd

I woke up on Christmas morning  
Counted the presents and candy canes  
If I was innocent  
And good, all wrapped with string

The postage stamps are dreams  
And doves, wedding doves released  
They never return on envelopes  
But in chilled midnight red alarm clock light

A vacant lot where young boys played  
Before I was born, I guess  
Their hearth-fires kept  
After bicycles bent and metal screamed

My sister wore cotton dresses  
Spoke, timid, to men with the faces of birds  
In black trenchcoats. I don't think they were men,  
I take it all back for her

My heart was cut too many times  
Remaindered and weighed for proper disposal  
Eight ounces of pink flesh  
That I was born too late was the great lie

No, I was left in the wind  
Ancient mad heretics, 100 years past  
They spoke to eagles in mountain caves  
All I had was my own attention

Old habits and old friends' spines  
The things that relate  
My father's voice is in my throat  
Praying for intercession from a darkened womb

## THE DEAD WILL FILL THE STREETS

"Given up the ghost" is what the oldtimers say.  
You picked the wrong profession, or the wrong procession,  
Like a boxer who's afraid of shadows. You're sheet white.

"Wait for the other shoe" is what you'd think.  
But they're hanged in hallway gallows, or cut on cabinet shards,  
As if shocked, their mouths emit silence; wet black noise.

"Time to hit the trail" the survivors write.  
They packed and picked through the scrap, or await help,  
Not an honor they expect to be granted. They've ivory teeth.

"I'm not gonna take this any more" are the last words.  
It's simple really and painless, or at least victimless,  
We're rabbits hiding in hats to disappear. Gray sky, red ground.

## HOW TO WRITE WITHOUT COMMENT

Don't walk across the soft surface muscles  
Of cobblestones, cobblestones  
Mortar, muerte, mordre  
A mortal man moving through quietude

Tucson is only eight hours away from here  
Tangled in wires and love  
Soldered to brass coins and  
Speaking in forked binary tongues

100 miles southwest, the ocean's alive  
A jellyfish tentacle mandala  
Of home and heartache approved  
But where are you?

Let's have a long talk  
I don't want to breathe, but I am  
So fill the air, for me  
Call from the corner store, crying.

The empty ether and sections  
Of newspaper discarded  
Offer up solutions in 10 point times  
Skin and fragile facemasks

The world is a hard place  
Where strangers and friends  
Are covered in spines  
And I'm looking for meaning, reasons



Thank you for reading.