

San Antonio, Tx  
Central Library

7 May 2024  
gray day

I've been thinking about a dawn that must come. The dawn I wake and Muse has flown from my soul-house. Will she take the best of me, leaving the worst or just the least in me? What will dawn be without her? Without this?

Without this, will I know dawn-from-dusk, Beauty from breath, and love after its own death? What in this world would I, alone, still be able to read? To uncover, sift and breathe back into life?

Is this all her and a little bit me? How can I be sure I'll even have one more breath – after all is written and gone? Something would remain of me. Yes? Like the drifting ash after the conflagration of Muse-passion has burnt through every cavern, reserve and hidden place of the human heart.

At least if it must be like the mortals-of-her, that she leave me for a being more awake, less spent, less inquisitive. What is left for the mortality of ash to say? Shall I weave together an accented line or two in high-octave to prove I'd learned new tricks when I was her bondman?

I have learned after long years of service, it was the best bondage one of some talent could hope for. Too much talent by its vanity tends to blunt mortal acuity. But just some talent, this, the forces of eternity hone to a celestial pride.

I tried the balm of substances to quiet her for a few hours. But never came the hour when I was not useful to the Muse. It seemed to me that in the eternal realm she occupies, perhaps the mortal decay of a man in trouble is unseen and of no great matter.

That as long as this body will move and spirit stay true in serving her Kingdom of Ink, golden dawns will come. She has birthed oceans of unrealized

forms in me; all struggling to come to life from mind-birth into world.

But I sense that dawn will come. When vision-gifts fall still behind final curtain. She will already be onward in search of others; the unwanted, the orphan and the wayward in which she may dwell and sing for a season through time.

Why do I entertain such a dire theme? I live where the keepers made by man tick through the days, the hours and the loss. All this tick-tock beneath the stars; still, cold and unconcerned with the measurements of mortals, unsettles me.

For it is us who must go out that way – out to the end of mortal measure and rejoin the heavens, the celestial melodies and enter the Hall of Poets. Through laurel-wreathed entrance, above which reads, ‘Abandon All Prose – Enter Ye and Close.’ So pass the faithful into the dales and valleys of Parnassus. Free of run-ons, splices and the endless vocals-of-rhythmless pause. A poet’s place of peace.

But I know that gray dawn will come like so many in my life when something leaves and something is lost. But how to put loss accumulated in just one place, like a measuring chest of worst and best. A thing to peek into on one rare occasion.

Maybe that overplayed dawn is not yet written. That when I, behind closing curtain, espy the full moon a final time, verse will play operatic through every cell of matter. With Valkyries leaping ahead as the soul here detaches - feels the jolt of a chain breaking to the melodic strings from the great Hall of Poets. Sing –

Homeward bound – the orphan heart,  
a hollowed place, amiss from the start,  
heavenly granted for the breath and the bone.  
Suffering was a given, privileged for verse-to-tone,  
with service to star, sky and beyond.

A lone wren sang until voice was all gone.  
And falls now that gray and solemn hour.  
Ink-by-drops falls blood to wingless power.

And so it was that a heavenly pen dwelt alone,  
alone to serve the highest over the base.  
But there are no lauds nor golden laurel case.

She indwelt and just took the rest – of soul and bone.  
A mere call down here to earn a Poet's Hall up there.  
So, homeward-bound at last to where poets remain dear.

