

**bees
of the
invisible world**

POEMS FOR WORK

We are the bees of the invisible world....
We perpetually gather the honey of the visible
world in order to store it in the great golden
hive of the invisible one.

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1.

WE ARE MANY

Of the many men whom I am, whom we are,
I cannot settle on a single one.
They are lost to me under the cover of clothing
They have departed for another city.

When everything seems to be set
to show me off as a man of intelligence,
the fool I keep concealed on my person
takes over my talk and occupies my mouth.

On other occasions, I am dozing in the midst
of people of some distinction,
and when I summon my courageous self,
a coward completely unknown to me
swaddles my poor skeleton
in a thousand tiny reservations.

When a stately home bursts into flames,
instead of the fireman I summon,
an arsonist bursts on the scene,
and he is I. There is nothing I can do.
What must I do to distinguish myself?
How can I put myself together?

All the books I read
lionize dazzling hero figures,
brimming with self-assurance.
I die with envy of them;
and, in films where bullets fly on the wind,
I am left in envy of the cowboys,
left admiring even the horses.

But when I call upon my DASHING BEING,
out comes the same OLD LAZY SELF,
and so I never know just WHO I AM,
nor how many I am, nor WHO WE WILL BE BEING.
I would like to be able to touch a bell
and call up my real self, the truly me,
because if I really need my proper self,
I must not allow myself to disappear.

While I am writing, I am far away;
and when I come back, I have already left.
I should like to see if the same thing happens
to other people as it does to me,
to see if as many people are as I am,
and if they seem the same way to themselves.
When this problem has been thoroughly explored,
I am going to school myself so well in things
that, when I try to explain my problems,
I shall speak, not of self, but of geography.

Pablo Neruda

2.

TURKESTAN

Thinking only of their vow that they would crush the Tartars- -
On the desert, clad in sable and silk, five thousand of them fell....
But arisen from their crumbling bones on the banks of the river at the border,
Dreams of them enter, like men alive, into rooms where their loves lie sleeping.

Chen Tao

3.

33

When it was day they came into my house and said, "We shall only take the smallest room here."

They said, "We shall help you in the worship of your god and humbly accept only our own share of his grace"; and they took their seat in a corner and they sat quiet and meek.

But in the darkness of night I find they break into my sacred shrine, strong and turbulent, and snatch with unholy greed the offerings from God's altar.

Rabidranath Tagore

4.

ODE 1397, "I" and "We"

Of these two thousand "I" and "We" people,
which am I?

Don't try to keep me from asking!
Listen, when I'm this out of control!
But don't put anything breakable in my way!

There is an Original inside me.
What's here is a mirror for that, for You.

If You are joyful, I am.
If You grieve, or if You're bitter, or graceful,
I take on those qualities.

Like the shadow of a cypress tree in the meadow,
like the *shadow* of a rose, I live
close to the Rose.

If I separated my self from You,
I would turn entirely thorn.

Every second, I drink another cup of my own blood-wine.
Every instant, I break an empty cup against your door.

I reach out, wanting You to tear me open.

Saladin's generosity lights a candle in my chest.
Who *am* I then?

Jalaludin Rumi

5.

Between Your Eye And This Page

Between
Your eye and this page
I am standing.

Between
Your ear and sound
The Friend has pitched a golden tent
Your spirit walks through a thousand times
A day.

Each time you pass the Kaaba
The Sun unwinds a silk thread from your body.
Each time you pass any object
From within it
I bow.

If you are still having doubts
About His nearness

Once in a while debate with God.

Between
Your eye and this page Hafiz
Is standing.

Bump
Into me
More.

Hafiz

6.

A Cicada

Pure of heart and therefore hungry,
All night long you have sung in vain --
Oh, this final broken indrawn breath
Among the green indifferent trees!
Yes, I have gone like a piece of driftwood,
I have let my garden fill with weeds....
I bless you for your true advice
To live as pure a life as yours.

Sun Zhu

7.

THE DREAM CALLED LIFE

A dream it was in which I found myself.
And you that hail me now, then hailed me king,
In a brave palace that was all my own,
Within, and all without it, mine; until,
Drunk with excess of majesty and pride,
Methought I towered so big and swelled so wide
That of myself I burst the glittering bubble
Which my ambition had about me blown
And all again was darkness. Such a dream
As this, in which I may be walking now,
Dispensing solemn justice to you shadows,
Who make believe to listen; but anon
Kings, princes, captains, warriors, plume and steel
Ay, even with all your airy theater,
May flit into the air you seem to rend
With acclamations, leaving me to wake
In the dark tower; or dreaming that I wake
From this that waking is; or this and that,
Both waking and both dreaming; such a doubt
Confounds and clouds our mortal life about.
But whether wake or dreaming, this I know
How dreamwise human glories come and go;
Whose momentary tenure not to break,
Walking as one who knows he soon may wake,
So fairly carry the full cup, so well
Disordered insolence and passion quell,
That there be nothing after to upbraid
Dreamer or doer in the part he played;
Whether to-morrow's dawn shall break the spell,
Or the last trumpet of the Eternal Day,
When dreaming, with the night, shall pass away.

Pedro Caleron de la Barca

8.

“Sometimes I go about ...”

Sometimes I go about pitying myself
and all the time
I am being carried on great winds across the sky.

Ojibway

9.

As Much As You Can

Even if you can't shape your life the way you want,
at least try as much as you can
not to degrade it
by too much contact with the world,
by too much activity and talk.

Do not degrade it by dragging it along,
taking it around and exposing it so often
to the daily silliness
of social relations and parties,
until it comes to seem a boring hanger-on.

C. P. Cavafy

10.

COME INTO ANIMAL PRESENCE

Come into animal presence
No man is so guileless as
the serpent. The lonely white
rabbit on the roof is a star
twitching its ears at the rain.
The llama intricately
folding its hind legs to be seated
not disdains but mildly
disregards human approval.
What joy when the insouciant
armadillo glances at us and doesn't
quicken his trotting
across the track into the palm brush.

What is this joy? That no animal
falters, but knows what it must do?
That the snake has no blemish,
that the rabbit inspects his strange surroundings
in white star-silence? The llama
rests in dignity, the armadillo
has some intention to pursue in the palm-forest.
Those who were sacred have remained so,
holiness does not dissolve, it is a presence
of bronze, only the sight that saw it
faltered and turned from it.
An old joy returns in holy presence.

Denise Levertov

11.

The Waterwheel

Stay together, friends.
Don't scatter and sleep.

Our friendship is made
of being awake.

Jalaludin Rumi

12.

Shantideva

Whatever joy there is in this world
All comes from desiring others to be happy,
And whatever suffering there is in this world
All comes from desiring myself to be happy.

If all the injury,
Fear and pain in this world
Arise from grasping at a self,
Then what use is that great ghost to me?

Therefore, in order to allay all harms
 Inflicted on me
And in order to pacify the sufferings of
 others,
I shall give up myself to others
And cherish them as I do my very self.

Shantideva

13.

SONG OF A MAN WHO HAS COME THROUGH

Not I, not I, but the wind that blows through me!
A fine wind is blowing the new direction of Time.
If only I let it bear me, carry me, if only it carry me!
If only I am sensitive, subtle, oh, delicate, a winged gift!
If only, most lovely of all, I yield myself and am borrowed
By the fine, fine wind that takes its course through the chaos of the
world

Like a fine, an exquisite chisel, a wedge-blade inserted;
If only I am keen and hard like the sheer tip of a wedge
Driven by invisible blows,
The rock will split, we shall come at the wonder, we shall find the
Hesperides.

Oh, for the wonder that bubbles in my soul,
I would be a good fountain, a good well-head,
Would blur no whisper, spoil no expression.

What is the knocking?
What is the knocking at the door in the night?
It is somebody wants to do us harm.

No, no, it is the three strange angels,
Admit them, admit them.

D. H. Lawrence

14.

“To wake up to ...”

To wake up to
who we are
what we are here for.

To make all life
more poetical, more sane
more livin, lovin.

To experience
the true of all things
this moment...
this moment...
this moment.

William Segal

15.

IF ALL THE HURT

If all the hurt
Of all the years
Were on the scale
It would not balance
Now
this moment of
Indifference

Delia Blythe

16.

The Fleas Interest Me So Much

Fleas interest me so much
that I let them bite me for hours.
They are perfect, ancient, Sanskrit,
machines that admit of no appeal.
They do not bite to eat,
they bite only to jump;
they are the dancers of the celestial sphere,
delicate acrobats
in the softest and most profound circus;
let them gallop on my skin,
divulge their emotions,
amuse themselves with my blood,
but someone should introduce them to me.
I want to know them closely,
I want to know what to rely on.

Pablo Neruda

17.

Unsuspecting

There is a natty kind of mind
That slicks its thoughts,
Culls its oughts,
Trims its views, Prunes its trues,
and never suspects it is a rind.

Jean Toomer

18.

The Delights of the Door

Kings don't touch doors.

They don't know this joy: to push affectionately or fiercely before us one of those huge panels we know so well, then to turn back in order to replace it--holding a door in our arms.

The pleasure of grabbing one of those tall barriers to a room abdominally, by its porcelain knot; of this swift fighting, body-to-body, when, the forward motion for an instant halted, the eye opens and the whole body adjusts to its new surroundings.

But it still keeps one friendly hand on the door, holding it open, then decisively pushes it away, closing itself in--which the click of the powerful but well-oiled spring pleasantly confirms.

Francis Ponge

19.

Little Gidding

III.

And all shall be well and
All manner of thing shall be well
By the purification of the motive
In the ground of our beseeching.

Marty suggested that this poem had been truncated by accident in copying, and he has the full poem

T. S. Elliot

20.

Silence Clarity

Just where you are
searchingly, wholly
go toward the moment
this tremendous new moment
no you, no not you
the pure point
everywhere, always.

Go further where
there is nowhere,
no-one,
no coming, no going
no place knowable
the place where
you are now.

In the nearness
the Silence surrounds
beckons the burden body
soothing the errant mind
freeing the heart.

Beyond body and mind
transcending all the Silence,
But can the silence know itself?
Its undreamed necessities?

It is through the body that sits here
that I go to my true nature.

William Segal

21.

The Guest House

This being human is a guest house.
Every morning a new arrival.

A joy, a depression, a meanness,
some momentary awareness comes
as an unexpected visitor.

Welcome and entertain them all!
Even if they're a crowd of sorrows,
who violently sweep your house
empty of its furniture,
still, treat each guest honorably.
He may be clearing you out
for some new delight.

The dark thought, the shame, the malice,
meet them at the door laughing,
and invite them in.

Be grateful for whoever comes,
because each has been sent
as a guide from beyond.

Jalaludin Rumi

22.

Sometimes

Sometimes, when a bird cries out,
Or the wind sweeps through a tree,
Or a dog howls in a far off farm,
I hold still and listen a long time.

My soul turns and goes back to the place
Where, a thousand forgotten years ago,
The bird and the blowing wind
Were like me, and were my brothers.

My soul turns into a tree,
And an animal, and a cloud bank.
Then changed and odd it comes home
And asks me questions. What should I reply?

Hermann Hesse

23.

Childhood Friends

Whoever sees clearly what is diseased in himself
begins to gallop on the way.

There is nothing worse than thinking
you are well enough. More than anything,
self-complacency blocks the workmanship....

Don't turn your head.
Keep looking at the bandaged place.
That is where the light enters you.

And don't believe for a moment
that you're healing yourself.

Jalaludin Rumi

24.

TO-MORROW

Lord, what am I, that, with unceasing care,
Thou didst see after me, —that thou didst wait,
Wet with unhealthy dews, before my gate,
And pass the gloomy nights of winter there?
O, strange delusion, that I did not greet
Thy blest approach! and, O, to heaven how lost,
If my ingratitude's unkindly frost
Has chilled the bleeding wounds upon thy feet!
How oft my guardian angel gently cried,
“Soul, from thy casement look, and thou shalt see
How he persists to knock and wait for thee!”
And, O, how often to that voice of sorrow,
“To-morrow we will open,” I replied!
And when the morrow came, I answered still,
 “To-morrow.”

Lope de Vega

25.

BABY TORTOISE

You know what it is to be born alone,
Baby tortoise!

The first day to heave your feet little by little from the shell,
Not yet awake,
And remain lapsed on earth,
Not quite alive.

A tiny, fragile, half-animate bean.

To open your tiny beak-mouth, that looks as if it would never open,
Like some iron door;
To lift the upper hawk-beak from the lower base
And reach your skinny little neck
And take your first bite at some dim bit of herbage,
Alone, small insect,
Tiny bright-eye,
Slow one.

To take your first solitary bite
And move on your slow, solitary hunt.
Your bright, dark little eye,
Your eye of a dark disturbed night,
Under its slow lid, tiny baby tortoise,
So indomitable.

No one ever hear you complain.

You draw your head forward, slowly, from your little wimple
And set forward, slow-dragging, on your four-pinned toes,
Rowing slowly forward.
Whither away, small bird?

Rather like a baby working its limbs,
Except that you make slow, ageless progress
And a baby makes none.

The touch of sun excites you,
And the long ages, and the lingering chill
Make you pause to yawn,
Opening your impervious mouth,
Suddenly beak-shaped, and very wide, like some suddenly gaping
pincers;
Soft red tongue, and thin hard gums,
Then close the wedge of your little mountain front,
Your face, baby tortoise.

Do you wonder at the world, as slowly you turn your head in its wimple
And look with laconic, black eyes?
Or is sleep coming over you again,
The non-life?

You are so hard to wake.

Are you able to wonder?
Or is it just your indomitable will and pride of the first life
Looking round
And slowly pitching itself against the inertia
Which has seemed invincible?

The vast inanimate,
And the fine brilliance of your so tiny eye,
Challenger.

Nay, tiny shell-bird,
What a huge vast inanimate it is, that you must row against,
What an incalculable inertia.

Challenger,
Little Ulysses, fore-runner,
No bigger than my thumb-nail,
Buon viaggio.

All animate creation on your shoulder,
Set forth, little Titan, under your battle-shield.

The ponderous, preponderate,
Inanimate universe;
And you are slowly moving, pioneer, you alone.

How vivid your travelling seems now, in the troubled sunshine,
Stoic, Ulyssean atom;
Suddenly hasty, reckless, on high toes.

Voiceless little bird,
Resting your head half out of your wimple
In the slow dignity of your eternal pause.
Alone, with no sense of being alone,
And hence six times more solitary;
Fulfilled of the slow passion of pitching through immemorial ages
Your little round house in the midst of chaos.

Over the garden earth,
Small bird,
Over the edge of all things.

Traveler,
With your tail tucked a little on one side
Like a gentleman in a long-skirted coat.

All life carried on your shoulder,
Invincible fore-runner.

D. H. Lawrence

26.

After Forty Years

After forty years
A few quietly spoken words
Have led me irrefutably to know
That hidden in the constellation I call
Mind, or
Heart
There truly is
The home
I never dared believe
Could be.

Jack Cain

27.

The Crystal Gazer

I shall gather myself into my self again,
I shall take my scattered selves and make them one.
I shall fuse them into a polished crystal ball
Where I can see the moon and the flashing sun.
I shall sit like a sibyl, hour after hour intent.
Watching the future come and the present go -
And the little shifting pictures of people rushing
In tiny self-importance to and fro.

Sarah Teasdale

28.

AGAINST MEANING

Everything I do is against meaning.
This is partly deliberate, mostly spontaneous.
Wherever I am think I'm somewhere else.
This is partly to confuse the police, mostly to
avoid myself es-
specially when I have to confirm
the obvious which always
sits on a little table and draws a lot
of attention to itself.
So much so that no one sees the chairs
and the girl sitting on one of them.
With the obvious one is always at the movies.
The other obvious which the loud obvious
conceals
is not obvious enough to merit a
surrender of the will.
But though a little hole in the boring report
God watches us faking it.

Andrei Codrescu

29.

“Gratitude”

If the angel at your table suddenly
makes up his mind, Be quiet;
gently smooth the few wrinkles
in the cloth beneath your bread.

Then offer him your crude food
Let him taste it in his turn
And raise to his pure lips
A simple everyday glass.

Rainer Maria Rilke

30.

The Tent

Outside, the freezing desert night.
This other night inside grows warm, kindling.
Let the landscape be covered with thorny crust.
We have a soft garden in here.
The continents blasted,
cities and little towns, everything
become a scorched, blackened ball.
The news we hear is full of grief for that future,
but the real news inside here
is there's no news at all.

Jalaludin Rumi

31.

KEEPING QUIET

Now we will count to twelve
and we will all keep still.

For once on the face of the earth,
let's not speak in any language,
let's stop for a second,
and not move our arms so much.

Fisherman in the cold sea
would not harm whales
and the man gathering salt
would not look at his hurt hands.

Those who prepare green wars,
wars with gas, wars with fire,
victory with no survivors,
would put on clean clothes
and walk about with their brothers
in the shade, doing nothing.

What I want should not be confused
with total inactivity.
Life is what it is about,
I want no truck with death.

It would be an exotic moment
without rush, without engines;
we would all be together
in a sudden strangeness...

If we were not so single-minded
about keeping our lives moving,
and for once could do nothing,
perhaps a huge silence
might interrupt this sadness
of never understanding ourselves
and of threatening ourselves
with death.

Perhaps the earth can teach us
as when everything seems dead in winter
and later proves to be alive.

Now I'll count up to twelve
and you keep quiet and I will go.

Pablo Neruda

32.

Noah

The ark adrift:

My prayer has long been this:
To remember,
Amidst my family quarrelling,
Amidst the stench of husbandry,
Amidst the sea-drift of my soul,
My self.

The ark aground:

When land appears
And the only recourse is to disembark
I look towards a vacant earth
And see a journey thus far filled with turmoil:
And what will be
And what has been
Remind me of my heavy tread
From ark to earth.
I feel my feet
upon the ground.

The mountain-top:

My prayer is this:
May I descend from here
Remembering,
And promise
To return.

Daniel Racicot

33.

The Answer

Then what is the answer?— Not to be deluded by dreams.

To know that great civilizations have broken down into violence, and
their tyrants come, many times before.

When open violence appears, to avoid it with honor or choose the least
ugly faction; these evils are essential.

To keep one's own integrity, be merciful and uncorrupted and not wish for evil; and not
be duped

By dreams of universal justice or happiness. These dreams will not be
fulfilled.

To know this, and to know that however ugly the parts appear the
whole remains beautiful. A severed hand

Is an ugly thing, and a man dissevered from the earth and stars and his
history . . . for contemplation or in fact . . .

Often appears atrociously ugly. Integrity is wholeness, the greatest
beauty is

Organic wholeness, the wholeness of life and things, the divine beauty
of the universe. Love, not man

Apart from that, or else you will share man's pitiful confusions, or drown in despair when
his days darken.

Robinson Jeffers

34.

Morality

We cannot kindle when we will
The fire which in the heart resides;
The spirit bloweth and is still,
In mystery our soul abides.
 But tasks in hours of insight will'd
 Can be through hours of gloom fulfill'd.

With aching hands and bleeding feet
We dig and heap, lay stone on stone;
We bear the burden and the heat
Of the long day, and wish 'twere done.
 Not till the hours of light return,
 All we have built do we discern.

Then, when the clouds are off the soul,
When thou dost bask in Nature's eye,
Ask, how she view'd thy self-control,
Thy struggling, task'd morality--
 Nature, whose free, light, cheerful air,
 Oft made thee, in thy gloom, despair.

And she, whose censure thou dost dread,
Whose eye thou wast afraid to seek,
See, on her face a glow is spread,
A strong emotion on her cheek!
 "Ah, child!" she cries, "that strife divine,
 Whence was it, for it is not mine?"

"There is no effort on my brow--
I do not strive, I do not weep;
I rush with the swift spheres and glow
In joy, and when I will, I sleep.
 Yet that severe, that earnest air,
 I saw, I felt it once--but where?"

"I knew not yet the gauge of time,
Nor wore the manacles of space;
I felt it in some other clime,
I saw it in some other place.

'Twas when the heavenly house I trod,
And lay upon the breast of God."

Matthew Arnold

35.

“The props assist the house ...”

The props assist the house
Until the house is built,
And then the props withdraw –
And adequate, erect,
The house supports itself;
Ceasing to recollect
The auger and the carpenter.
Just such a retrospect
Hath the perfected life,
A past of plank and nail,
And slowness, – then the scaffolds drop –
Affirming it a soul.

Emily Dickenson

36.

Kuan-tzu

If you reverently clean its abode
It will come of itself.
You will recover your own true nature,
It will be fixed in you once and for all.

tr. Stephen Karcher

37.

Lao-tzu

Push far enough towards the Void,
Hold fast enough to Quietness,
And of the ten thousand things none can but be worked on by
you.

I have beheld them wither they go back.
See, all things howsoever they flourish
Return to the root from which they grew.
This return to the root is called Quietness;
Quietness is called submission to Fate;
What has submitted to Fate has become part of the always-so.
To know the always-so is to be illumined....

Lao-tse

38.

I Am Not I

I am not I.

I am this one
walking beside me whom I do not see,
whom at times I manage to visit,
and whom at other times I forget;
who remains calm and silent while I talk,
and forgives gently, when I hate,
who walks where I am not,
who will remain standing when I die.

Juan Ramón Jiménez

39.

Work station

As if mentally punching a time clock
which rings with triggered, impersonal resolution,
I crouch to some task, adhere to a list, and check
items off, releasing the sudden out-thrown
breath that says “Now, that’s done!”

With every ordering, each neatness—
dust waxed from the surface, a long overdue letter
written and faxed—snow accumulates,
clocks tick. I scissor stems, put roots in a jar,
advance pale rootlets into the future.

Then suddenly feathered, crest-risen, I peer down
at my turtle’s inch from the blue sky’s vantage point,
eavesdropping on the man at my work station
as I check my messages or run a work count,
evolved to the level of an ant.

Ever again, will jonquils or poetry break
the crust of these well-scrubbed quotidian
satisfactions? When will I read, unassigned, a book,
again? Loft a dry fly, drift on breezes that quicken?
Give up all effort—and awaken?

Richard Tillinghast

40.

“When he sleeps ...”

When he sleeps, he sleeps.

When he eats, he eats.

When he works, he works.

When he meditates, he meditates.

Richard Tillinghast

41.

WAXWINGS

Four Tao philosophers as cedar waxwings
chat on a February berry bush
in sun, and I am one.

Such merriment and such sobriety--
the small wild fruit on the tall stalk--
was this not always my true style?

Above an elegance of snow, beneath
a silk-blue sky a brotherhood of four
birds. Can you mistake us?

To sun, to feast, and to converse
and all together--for this I have abandoned
all my other lives.

Robert Francis

42.

62

now does our world descend
the path to nothingness
(cruel now cancels kind;
friends turn to enemies)
therefore lament, my dream
and don a doer's doom

create is now contrive;
imagined, merely know
(freedom: what makes a slave)
there, my life, lie down
and more by most endure
all that you never were

hide, poor dishonoured mind
who thought yourself so wise;
and much could understand
concerning no and yes:
if they've become the same
it's time you unbecame

where climbing was and bright
is darkness and to fall
(now wrong's the only right
since brave are cowards all)
therefore despair, my heart
and die into the dirt

but from this endless end
of briefer each our bliss—
where seeing eyes go blind
(where lips forget to kiss)
where everything's nothing
—arise, my soul; and sing

e. e. cummings

43.

Summer Solstice

We gathered in the early dawn under
the filbert trees and the eaves of the school,
against the drizzling rain,
that seemed at first an intruder,
as if we knew what the day should be.

And waited, we did not know for what;
watching the gray, amorphous sky,
and in the distance-the distance we faced-
a streak of pink appeared, turned orange
and revealed a breath of light, far far away.

The singers sang to that and the light inside-
ancient songs of praise to the sun and the season.
And the light.

The piano in the schoolyard, covered with an
Oriental rug against the rain, seemed
to say something, we could not tell what-
perhaps about a relationship that existed
long ago between man and nature-
when man knew what it was he wished
to be related to, in ceremonies since lost
and forgotten, that we, now, in our presence
yearned to renew.

The music, scored for our search, accompanied
the dancers in a Movement that seemed written
for the sun. Or was it the wind. Or the rain that
having abated, began again when the dancers
moved into their places.

And when their arms took the first raised position
we knew that all things join that are related,
and all that is related is one and comes from one,
and must be reblended again with the source.

And in the wish that was in the faces
of the dancers, we found our own wish
and in it our relationship to God.

44.

GOD SAYS YES TO ME

I asked God if it was okay to be melodramatic
and she said yes
I asked her if it was okay to be short
and she said it sure is
I asked her if I could wear nail polish
or not wear nail polish
and she said honey
she calls me that sometimes
she said you can do just exactly
what you want to
Thanks God I said
And is it even okay if I dont paragraph
my letters
Sweetcakes God said
who knows where she picked that up
what I'm telling you is
Yes Yes Yes

Kaylin Haught

45.

IN A HARD INTELLECTUAL LIGHT

In a hard intellectual light
I will kill all delight,
And I will build a citadel
Too beautiful to tell

O too austere to tell
And far too beautiful to see,
Whose evident distance
I will call the best of me.

And this light of intellect
Will shine on all my desires,
It will my flesh protect
And flare my bold constant fires,

For the hard intellectual light
Will lay the flesh with nails.
And it will keep the world bright
And closed the body's soft jails.

And from this fair edifice
I shall see, as my eyes blaze,
The moral grandeur of man
Animating all his days.

And peace will marry purpose,
And purity married to grace
Will make the human absolute
As sweet as the human face.

Until my hard vision blears,
And Poverty and Death return
In organ music like the years,
Making the spirit leap, and burn

For the hard intellectual light
That kills all delight
And brings the solemn, inward pain
Of truth into the heart again.

Richard Eberhart

46.

Lost

Stand still. The trees ahead and bushes beside you
Are not lost. Wherever you are is called Here,
And you must treat it as a powerful stranger,
Must ask permission to know it and be known.
The forest breathes. Listen. It answers
I have made this place around you.
If you leave it, you may come back again, saying Here.

David Wagoner

47.

“Taittireeya-Upanishad”

I am the food, I am the food, I am the food; I am the eater, I am the eater, I am the eater; I am the link between, I am the link between, I am the link between....
I am this world and I eat this world. Who knows this, knows.

tr. Swami and Yeats

48.

A Bit of Poetry

Everything beckons to us to perceive it,
murmurs at every turn, "Remember me!"
A day we passed, too busy to receive it,
will yet unlock us all its treasury.

Who shall compute our harvest? Who shall bar
us from the former years, the long-departed?
What have we learnt from living since we started,
except to find in others what we are?

Except to re-enkindle commonplace?
O house, O sloping field, O setting sun!
Your features form into a face, you run,
you cling to us, returning our embrace!

One space spreads through all creatures equally -
inner-world-space. Birds quietly flying go
flying through us. O, I that want to grow!
the tree I look outside it's growing in me!

I have a house within when I need care.
I have a guard within when I need rest.
The love that I have had! - Upon my breast
the beauty of the world clings, to weep there.

Rainer Maria Rilke

49.

A Green-Water Stream

To reach the Yellow-Flowered River
Go by the Green-Water Stream.
A thousand twists and turns of mountain
But the way there can't be many miles.
The sound of water falling over rocks
And deep colour among pines.
Gently green floating water-plants.
Bright the mirrored reeds and rushes.
I am a lover of true quietness.
Watching the flow of clear water
I dream of sitting on the uncarved rock
casting a line on the endless stream.

Wang Wei

50.

when mortals are alive

When mortals are alive, they worry about death.
When they're full, they worry about hunger.
Theirs is the Great Uncertainty.

But sages don't consider the past.
And they don't worry about the future.
Nor do they cling to the present.
And from moment to moment they follow the Way.

Bodhidharma

51.

“The egoist’s trick...”

The egoist's trick for everlasting service
Well-rendered unto one of quenchless need
Lies in the art of chilling by degrees
And leeching out the fire-blooded column
Into its bulb earth-sunken, numb and nerveless
And slowly entering the calming freeze
Before the dervish appetites can kick
And batter all life's trophies in their greed.
With ashen face, impassive as a golem
Full mindful of the smallest jot and tittle
The egoist tames his hands to serve, his quick
Crusted in rime as sharp as shale, and brittle.
But if that gelid mantle were to crack:

Then one might draw within
The lungs wind, and wail
Such a wailing
As the world could not begin
To will away,
Although so keen and frail
A word as this,
Weird-woven for a day
Of final failing,
Seems scarcely to exist
And scarce to kiss
The heart and hollow ears
Before it disappears
Into the wayward and the wind-strewn mist.

Yet none would hear if one should cry, Alack!
And ever, ever I am at your service,
For it is meet, God-willed, and all my purpose.

David De Boe

ANIMAL TRANQUILITY AND DECAY

The little hedgerow birds,
That peck along the roads, regard him not.
He travels on, and in his face, his step,
His gait, is one expression: every limb,
His look and bending figure, all bespeak
A man who does not move with pain, but moves
With thought.--He is insensibly subdued
To settled quiet: he is one by whom
All effort seems forgotten; one to whom
Long patience hath such mild composure given,

That patience now doth seem a thing of which
He hath no need. He is by nature led
To peace so perfect that the young behold
With envy, what the Old Man hardly feels.

William Wordsworth

53.

Ode to Death

in the end
we all bid
farewell
to ourselves
in the cold
the world a stage
everybody has
to play no,
not Shakespeare's
suggested single role
but a double role
master and slave

this physique
that stoically
bids us
do its chores
for all its needs
physical, spiritual
the most exacting partner
one would ever get
a quiet stoic bullier
and after all the slavery tasks
the master leaves
the slave in the cold
a cold that freezes
in the finest of weather
without the snow
the blizzard
deep into everybody's heart, soul

the master and slave
a marriage made in heaven
till death do us part

John Tiong Chunghoo

54.

Octaves

I

We thrill too strangely at the master's touch;
We shrink too sadly from the larger self
Which for its own completeness agitates
And undetermines us; we do not feel --
We dare not feel it yet -- the splendid shame
Of uncreated failure; we forget,
The while we groan, that God's accomplishment
Is always and unfailingly at hand.

II

Tumultuously void of a clean scheme
Whereon to build, whereof to formulate,
The legion life that riots in mankind
Goes ever plunging upward, up and down,
Most like some crazy regiment at arms,
Undisciplined of aught but Ignorance,
And ever led resourcelessly along
To brainless carnage by drunk trumpeters.

III

To me the groaning of world-worshippers
Rings like a lonely music played in hell
By one with art enough to cleave the walls
Of heaven with his cadence, but without
The wisdom or the will to comprehend
The strangeness of his own perversity,
And all without the courage to deny
The profit and the pride of his defeat.

IV

While we are drilled in error, we are lost
Alike to truth and usefulness. We think
We are great warriors now, and we can brag
Like Titans; but the world is growing young,
And we, the fools of time, are growing with it: --
We do not fight to-day, we only die;
We are too proud of death, and too ashamed
Of God, to know enough to be alive.

XVIII

Like a white wall whereon forever breaks
Unsatisfied the tumult of green seas,
Man's unconjectured godliness rebukes
With its imperial silence the lost waves
Of insufficient grief. This mortal surge
That beats against us now is nothing else
Than plangent ignorance. Truth neither shakes
Nor wavers; but the world shakes, and we shriek.

Edward Arlington Robinson

READING BUDDHIST CLASSICS WITH ZHAO AT HIS TEMPLE IN THE EARLY MORNING

I clean my teeth in water drawn from a cold well;
And while I brush my clothes, I purify my mind;
Then, slowly turning pages in the Tree-Leaf Book,
I recite, along the path to the eastern shelter.
...The world has forgotten the true fountain of this teaching
And people enslave themselves to miracles and fables.
Under the given words I want the essential meaning,
I look for the simplest way to sow and reap my nature.
Here in the quiet of the priest's temple courtyard,
Mosses add their climbing color to the thick bamboo;
And now comes the sun, out of mist and fog,
And pines that seem to be new-bathed;
And everything is gone from me, speech goes, and reading,
Leaving the single unison.

Liu Zongyuan

56.

JIASHENG

When the Emperor sought guidance from wise men, from exiles,
He found no calmer wisdom than that of young Jia
And assigned him the foremost council-seat at midnight,
Yet asked him about gods, instead of about people.

Li Shangyin

57.

**WHILE VISITING ON THE SOUTH STREAM
THE TAOIST priest CHANG**

Walking along a little path,
I find a footprint on the moss,
A white cloud low on the quiet lake,
Grasses that sweeten an idle door,
A pine grown greener with the rain,
A brook that comes from a mountain source --
And, mingling with Truth among the flowers,
I have forgotten what to say.

Liu Changing

58.

**FAREWELL TO A JAPANESE BUDDHIST priest
BOUND HOMEWARD**

You were foreordained to find the source.
Now, tracing your way as in a dream
There where the sea floats up the sky,
You wane from the world in your fragile boat....
The water and the moon are as calm as your faith,
Fishes and dragons follow your chanting,
And the eye still watches beyond the horizon
The holy light of your single lantern.

Qian Qi

59.

A CERTAIN MAN

A certain man wishes to be a prince
Of this earth; he also wants to be
A saint and master of the being-world.
Conscience cannot exist in the first.:
The second cannot exist without conscience
To be disturbed but not enough to be
Compelled, can neither reject the one
Nor follow the other...

Jean Toomer

60.

IF ALL THE HURT

If all the hurt
Of all the years
Were on the scale
It would not balance
Now
this moment of
Indifference

Delia Blythe

61.

29

He whom I enclose with my name is weeping in this dungeon. I am ever busy building this wall all around; and as this wall goes up into the sky day by day I lose sight of my true being in its dark shadow.

I take pride in this great wall, and I plaster it with dust and sand lest a least hole should be left in this name; and for all the care I take I lose sight of my true being.

Rabindranath Tagore

62.

Louise Welch

The keen attention of your blue eyes penetrates time,
Like the sunburst pin you wear on your royal blue shoulder.
It stabs my flesh like the beam of my own conscience
Stirring up dust in the cellars of my soul.

Martha Heyneman

63.

Even after all this time

Even

after all this time

the sun never says to the earth,

"You owe me"

Look

what happens

with a love like that-

It lights the whole

world.

Hafiz

64.

Between the conscious and the unconscious

Between the conscious and the unconscious, the mind has put up a swing:
all earth creatures, even the supernovas, sway between these two trees,
and it never winds down.

Angels, animals, humans, insects by the million, also the wheeling sun and moon;
ages go by, and it goes on

Everything is swinging: heaven, earth, water, fire,
and the secret one slowly growing a body.

Kabir saw that for fifteen seconds, and it made him a servant for life.

Kabir

65.

The Atheist's Prayer

Here my petition you, God who do not exist
And into your nothingness gather these my griefs
again
You who never abandoned unhappy men
Without the consolation of illusion. Do not resist

Our petition; may our longing by you be dressed
When you remove yourself furthest from my sight,
The fairy-tales to sweeten my sad night
Told by my soul, I then remember best.

How great you are my God! So great you are
That you are not, except as an idea.
How narrow the reality, though it expands so far

In order to include you. I suffer from your mere
Non-existence, God, since if it were that you
Were to exist, then I would really too

Miguel de Unamuno y Jugo

66.

i thank You God

i thank You God for most this amazing
day: for the leaping greenly spirits of trees
and a blue true dream of sky; and for everything
which is natural which is infinite which is yes

(i who have died am alive again today,
and this s the sun's birthday; this is the birth
day of life and of love and wings: and of the gay
great happening illimitably earth)

how should tasting touching hearing seeing
breathing any -- lifted from the no
of all nothing -- human merely being
doubt unimaginable You?

(now the ears of my eyes awake and
now the eyes of my eyes are opened)

e. e. cummings

67.

PRAYING

It doesn't have to be
the blue iris, it could be
weeds in a vacant lot, or a few
small stones; just
pay attention, then patch

a few words together and don't try
to make them elaborate, this isn't
a contest but the doorway

into thanks, and a silence in which
another voice may speak.

Mary Oliver

THE DIAMOND TAKES SHAPE

Some parrots
Have become so skilled with
The human voice

They could give a brilliant discourse
About freedom and God

And an unsighted man nearby might
Even begin applauding with
The thought:

I just heard jewels fall from a
Great saint's mouth,

Though my Master used to say,

"The diamond takes shape slowly
With integrity's great force,

And from

The profound courage to never relinquish love."

Some parrots have become so skilled
With words,

The blind turn over their gold
And lives to caged

Feathers.

Hafiz

The Doppler Effect

WOW!
Until a second ago
I heard nothing.
Felt nothing.

And now --
Dogs are barking angrily,
Grasshoppers are happily chirping.
(How happy can a grasshopper get?)
The sound of a train whistle
A high sound and t h e n l o w
As the train approaches, then recedes.
Why?

This was clearly explained
By Herr Professor Doktor Doppler
In 1842.

These days
We apply the effect
Even to light spectra
Of galaxies and stars

But I digress.

Let us go back
To dogs and grasshoppers,
To approaching and receding trains;
Even to the sound
Of the words
"Herr professor Doktor Doppler."

Delicious.

Queen Mab V

'Thus do the generations of the earth
Go to the grave and issue from the womb,
Surviving still the imperishable change
That renovates the world; even as the leaves
Which the keen frost-wind of the waning year
Has scattered on the forest-soil and heaped
For many seasons there -though long they choke,
Loading with loathsome rottenness the land,
All germs of promise, yet when the tall trees
From which they fell, shorn of their lovely shapes,
Lie level with the earth to moulder there,
They fertilize the land they long deformed;
Till from the breathing lawn a forest springs
Of youth, integrity and loveliness,
Like that which gave it life, to spring and die.
Thus suicidal selfishness, that blights
The fairest feelings of the opening heart,
Is destined to decay, whilst from the soil
Shall spring all virtue, all delight, all love,
And judgment cease to wage unnatural war
With passion's unsubduable array.
Twin-sister of Religion, Selfishness!
Rival in crime and falsehood, aping all
The wanton horrors of her bloody play;
Yet frozen, unimpassioned, spiritless,
Shunning the light, and owning not its name,
Compelled by its deformity to screen
With flimsy veil of justice and of right
Its unattractive lineaments that scare
All save the brood of ignorance; at once
The cause and the effect of tyranny;
Unblushing, hardened, sensual and vile;
Dead to all love but of its abjectness;
With heart impassive by more noble powers
Than unshared pleasure, sordid gain, or fame;
Despising its own miserable being,
Which still it longs, yet fears, to disentrall.

'Hence commerce springs, the venal interchange
Of all that human art or Nature yield;
Which wealth should purchase not, but want demand,
And natural kindness hasten to supply
From the full fountain of its boundless love,
Forever stifled, drained and tainted now.
Commerce! beneath whose poison-breathing shade
No solitary virtue dares to spring,
But poverty and wealth with equal hand
Scatter their withering curses, and unfold
The doors of premature and violent death
To pining famine and full-fed disease,
To all that shares the lot of human life,
Which, poisoned body and soul, scarce drags the chain
That lengthens as it goes and clanks behind.

'Commerce has set the mark of selfishness,
The signet of its all-enslaving power,
Upon a shining ore, and called it gold;
Before whose image bow the vulgar great,
The vainly rich, the miserable proud,
The mob of peasants, nobles, priests and kings,
And with blind feelings reverence the power
That grinds them to the dust of misery.
But in the temple of their hireling hearts
Gold is a living god and rules in scorn
All earthly things but virtue.

'Since tyrants by the sale of human life
Heap luxuries to their sensualism, and fame
To their wide-wasting and insatiate pride,
Success has sanctioned to a credulous world
The ruin, the disgrace, the woe of war.
His hosts of blind and unresisting dupes
The despot numbers; from his cabinet
These puppets of his schemes he moves at will,
Even.. as the slaves by force or famine driven,
Beneath a vulgar master, to perform
A task of cold and brutal drudgery; -Hardened to hope, insensible to fear,
Scarce living pulleys of a dead machine,
Mere wheels of work and articles of trade,
That grace the proud and noisy pomp of wealth!

'The harmony and happiness of man
Yields to the wealth of nations; that which lifts
His nature to the heaven of its pride,
Is bartered for the poison of his soul;
The weight that drags to earth his towering hopes,
Blighting all prospect but of selfish gain,
Withering all passion but of slavish fear,
Extinguishing all free and generous love
Of enterprise and daring, even the pulse
That fancy kindles in the beating heart
To mingle with sensation, it destroys, -
Leaves nothing but the sordid lust of self,
The grovelling hope of interest and gold,
Unqualified, unmingled, unredeemed
Even by hypocrisy.

'And statesmen boast
Of wealth! The wordy eloquence that lives
After the ruin of their hearts, can gild
The bitter poison of a nation's woe;
Can turn the worship of the servile mob
To their corrupt and glaring idol, fame,
From virtue, trampled by its iron tread, -
Although its dazzling pedestal be raised
Amid the horrors of a limb-strewn field,
With desolated dwellings smoking round.
The man of ease, who, by his warm fireside,
To deeds of charitable intercourse
And bare fulfilment of the common laws
Of decency and prejudice confines
The struggling nature of his human heart,
Is duped by their cold sophistry; he sheds
A passing tear perchance upon the wreck
Of earthly peace, when near his dwelling's door
The frightful waves are driven, -when his son
Is murdered by the tyrant, or religion
Drives his wife raving mad. But the poor man
Whose life is misery, and fear and care;
Whom the morn wakens but to fruitless toil;
Who ever hears his famished offspring's scream;
Whom their pale mother's uncomplaining gaze
Forever meets, and the proud rich man's eye
Flashing command, and the heart-breaking scene
Of thousands like himself; -he little heeds
The rhetoric of tyranny; his hate
Is quenchless as his wrongs; he laughs to scorn
The vain and bitter mockery of words,
Feeling the horror of the tyrant's deeds,
And unrestrained but by the arm of power,
That knows and dreads his enmity.

'The iron rod of penury still compels
Her wretched slave to bow the knee to wealth,
And poison, with unprofitable toil,
A life too void of solace to confirm
The very chains that bind him to his doom.
Nature, impartial in munificence,
Has gifted man with all-subduing will.
Matter, with all its transitory shapes,
Lies subjected and plastic at his feet,
That, weak from bondage, tremble as they tread.
How many a rustic Milton has passed by,
Stifling the speechless longings of his heart,
In unremitting drudgery and care!
How many a vulgar
Cato has compelled
His energies, no longer tameless then,
To mould a pin or fabricate a nail!
How many a Newton, to whose passive ken
Those mighty spheres that gem infinity
Were only specks of tinsel fixed in heaven
To light the midnights of his native town!

'Yet every heart contains perfection's germ.
The wisest of the sages of the earth,
That ever from the stores of reason drew
Science and truth, and virtue's dreadless tone,
Were but a weak and inexperienced boy,
Proud, sensual, unimpassioned, unimbued
With pure desire and universal love,
Compared to that high being, of cloudless brain,
Untainted passion, elevated will,
Which death (who even would linger long in awe
Within his noble presence and beneath
His changeless eye-beam) might alone subdue.
Him, every slave now dragging through the filth
Of some corrupted city his sad life,
Pining with famine, swoln with luxury,
Blunting the keenness of his spiritual sense
With narrow schemings and unworthy cares,
Or madly rushing through all violent crime
To move the deep stagnation of his soul, -
Might imitate and equal.

'But mean lust

Has bound its chains so tight about the earth
That all within it but the virtuous man
Is venal; gold or fame will surely reach
The price prefixed by Selfishness to all
But him of resolute and unchanging will;
Whom nor the plaudits of a servile crowd,
Nor the vile joys of tainting luxury,
Can bribe to yield his elevated soul
To Tyranny or Falsehood, though they wield
With blood-red hand the sceptre of the world.

'All things are sold: the very light of heaven
Is venal; earth's unsparing gifts of love,
The smallest and most despicable things
That lurk in the abysses of the deep,
All objects of our life, even life itself,
And the poor pittance which the laws allow
Of liberty, the fellowship of man,
Those duties which his heart of human love
Should urge him to perform instinctively,
Are bought and sold as in a public mart
Of undisguising Selfishness, that sets
On each its price, the stamp-mark of her reign.
Even love is sold; the solace of all woe
Is turned to deadliest agony, old age
Shivers in selfish beauty's loathing arms,
And youth's corrupted impulses prepare
A life of horror from the blighting bane
Of commerce; whilst the pestilence that springs
From unenjoying sensualism, has filled
All human life with hydra-headed woes.

'Falsehood demands but gold to pay the pangs
Of outraged conscience; for the slavish priest
Sets no great value on his hireling faith;
A little passing pomp, some servile souls,
Whom cowardice itself might safely chain
Or the spare mite of avarice could bribe
To deck the triumph of their languid zeal,
Can make him minister to tyranny.
More daring crime requires a loftier meed.
Without a shudder the slave-soldier lends
His arm to murderous deeds, and steels his heart,
When the dread eloquence of dying men,
Low mingling on the lonely field of fame,
Assails that nature whose applause he sells
For the gross blessings of the patriot mob,
For the vile gratitude of heartless kings,

And for a cold world's good word, -viler still!
'There is a nobler glory which survives
Until our being fades, and, solacing
All human care, accompanies its change;
Deserts not virtue in the dungeon's gloom,
And in the precincts of the palace guides
Its footsteps through that labyrinth of crime;
Imbues his lineaments with dauntlessness,
Even when from power's avenging hand he takes
Its sweetest, last and noblest title -death;-
The consciousness of good, which neither gold,
Nor sordid fame, nor hope of heavenly bliss,
Can purchase; but a life of resolute good,
Unalterable will, quenchless desire
Of universal happiness, the heart
That beats with it in unison, the brain
Whose ever-wakeful wisdom toils to change
Reason's rich stores for its eternal weal.

'This commerce of sincerest virtue needs
No meditative signs of selfishness,
No jealous intercourse of wretched gain,
No balancings of prudence, cold and long;
In just and equal measure all is weighed,
One scale contains the sum of human weal,
And one, the good man's heart.

'How vainly seek
The selfish for that happiness denied
To aught but virtue!
Blind and hardened, they,
Who hope for peace amid the storms of care,
Who covet power they know not how to use,
And sigh for pleasure they refuse to give, -
Madly they frustrate still their own designs;
And, where they hope that quiet to enjoy
Which virtue pictures, bitterness of soul,
Pining regrets, and vain repentances,
Disease, disgust and lassitude pervade
Their valueless and miserable lives.

'But hoary-headed selfishness has felt
Its death-blow and is tottering to the grave;
A brighter morn awaits the human day,
When every transfer of earth's natural gifts
Shall be a commerce of good words and works;
When poverty and wealth, the thirst of fame,
The fear of infamy, disease and woe,
War with its million horrors, and fierce hell,
Shall live but in the memory of time,
Who, like a penitent libertine, shall start,
Look back, and shudder at his younger years.'

Percy Bysshe Shelly

THE TASK

To a Buffalo GURDJIEFF WORK Group,
a task was given for the summer 2005:

“Locate poetry that expresses Work Ideas.”

accounts, making & keeping	group work	"real I"
accumulator (batteries)	habits	reciprocal feeding
aim	hanbledzoin	remorse
as above, so below	hasnamuss help	responsibility
associations	hopefulness	scale
attention	idée fixée	schools (super effort)
attitudes, right	identification	self-calming
automatism and intention	identification, non-	self-observation
Beginning, return to	imagination	self-pity
bodies	imagination, negative	self-remembering
buffers	impressions	self-study
carriage, horse, driver, master	influences	separation of myself from myself
center, instinctive	intention	sensation, thought, feelings
centered work, one-	in the moment	service
centers, wrong work	in the moment, work	serving the higher
conscience	Law of Seven	shocks
conscious love	Law of Three	silence
considering, external	like what it does not like	sincerity
considering, internal	lying	sitting
cosmoses	movements	sleep and awakening
crystallization	multiplicity of i's	small i's
desires and non-desires (likes and dislikes)	negative emotions	stopping thoughts
disease of tomorrow	obedience (allowing direction of another's will)	striving
efforts	personality	struggle
ego	preparation	two rivers
egoist, conscious	proportion, sense of	unnecessary talking
essence		valuation
		world maintenance

We would like to thank Mrs. Martha Heyneman.
for her contribution and advice.

The title of this collection comes from an adaptation by
Mrs. Heyneman of Rilke's *Letters on Life*, as quoted
in *Parabola 30:3 – Body and Soul*



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- Rainer Maria Rilke, from a letter to Halewicz, *Duinio Elegies*, from *Letters on Life*.

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We Are Many

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