

~~3~~

~~no man, if men are gods, but if gods must  
be men, the sometimes only man is this  
(most common, for each anguish is his grief,  
and, for his joy is more than joy, most rare)~~

~~and if fiends speak truth, if angels burn~~

~~by their own generous completely light,  
an angel, or (as various worlds he'll spurn  
rather than fail immeasurable fate)  
toward clown, traitor, idiot, dreamer, beast~~

~~such was a poet and shall be and is~~

~~who'll solve the depths of horror to defend  
a sunbeam's architecture with his life.  
and carve immortal jungles of despair  
to hold a mountain's heartbeat in his hand~~

# ee cummings (Side #1)

## Religious Leanings

1

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

2

~~i am a little church (no great cathedral)  
far from the splendor and squalor of hurrying cities  
i do not worry if briefer days grow briefer  
i am not sorry when sun and rain make a pill~~

~~my life is the life of the reaper and the sower  
my prayers are prayers of earth's own clumsily striving  
(finding and losing and laughing and crying) children  
whose any sadness or joy is my grief or my gladness~~

# ee Cummings (Side #2)

the hours rise up putting off stars and it is  
dawn  
into the street of the sky light walks scattering poems

on earth a candle is  
extinguished the city  
wakes  
with a song upon her  
mouth having death in her eyes

and it is dawn  
the world  
goes forth to murder dreams....

i see in the street where strong  
men are digging bread  
and i see the brutal faces of  
people contented hideous hopeless cruel happy

and it is day,

in the mirror  
i see a frail  
man  
dreaming  
dreams  
dreams in the mirror

and it  
is dusk on earth

a candle is lighted  
and it is dark.  
the people are in their houses  
the frail man is in his bed  
the city

sleeps with death upon her mouth having a song in her eyes  
the hours descend,  
putting on stars....

in the street of the sky night walks scattering poems

~~2~~

~~but the other  
day i was passing a certain  
gate, rain  
fell (as it will~~

~~in spring)  
ropes  
of silver gliding from sunny  
thunder into freshness~~

~~as if god's flowers were  
pulling upon bells of  
gold i looked  
up~~

~~and  
thought to myself Death  
and will You with  
elaborate fingers possibly touch~~

~~the pink hollyhock existence whose  
pansy eyes look from morning till  
night into the street  
unchangingly the always~~

~~D.C.~~

~~Roosters worn wooden dentures  
pine & thimbles embroidery hoops  
greenbacks & silver snuff & silver~~

~~brontosaurus bones couched on Smithsonian velvet~~

~~A bloodless finger pointing to heaven, you say,  
is surely no more impossible than this city.  
A no man's land, a capital askew,  
a poster framed by imported blossoms  
and now this outrageous cue stick  
lying, reflected, on a black table.~~

~~Leaving his chair under the giant knee cap,  
he prowls the edge of the prime black water.  
Down the lane of clipped trees, a ghost trio  
plays Dixie. His slaves have outlived him  
in this life, too. Harmonicas breathe in,  
the gray palms clap. "De broomstick's jumped, the world's  
not wide."~~

## Rita Dove (Side #3)

### *Planning the Perfect Evening*

I keep him waiting, tuck in the curtains,  
buff my nails (such small pink eggshells).  
As if for the last time, I descend the stair.

He stands penguin-stiff in a room  
that's so quiet we forget it is there.  
Now nothing, not even breath, can come

between us, not even the aroma of punch  
and sneakers as we dance the length  
of the gymnasium and crepe paper streams

down like cartoon lightning. Ah,  
Augustus, where did you learn to samba?  
And what is that lump below your cummerbund?

Stardust. The band folds up  
resolutely, with plum-dark faces.  
The night still chirps. Sixteen cars

caravan to Georgia for a terrace,  
beer and tacos. Even this far south  
a thin blue ice shackles the moon,

and I'm happy my glass sizzles with stars.  
How far away the world! And how hulking  
you are, my dear, my sweet black bear!

~~When I learn~~  
~~as age advances,~~  
~~relentless pillager,~~  
~~is that we shrink~~  
~~inside our shirts~~  
~~and trousers,~~  
~~or we spread~~  
~~beyond the seams.~~  
~~The hair we cherished~~  
~~disappears~~

~~Sometimes I hold~~  
~~my warm seed~~  
~~up to my mouth~~  
~~and kiss it~~

# Essex Hemphill (Side #4)

## Object Lessons

If I am comfortable  
on the pedestal  
you are looking at,  
if I am indolent and content  
to lay here on my stomach,  
my determinations  
indulged and glistening  
in baby oil and sweat,  
if I want to be here, a pet,  
to be touched, a toy,  
if I choose  
to be liked in this way,  
if I desire to be object,  
to be sexualized  
in this object way,  
by one or two at a time,  
for a night or a thousand days,  
for money or power,  
for the awesome orgasms  
to be had, to be coveted,  
or for my own selfish wantonness,  
for the feeling of being  
pleasure, being touched.  
The pedestal was here,  
so I climbed up.  
I located myself.  
I appropriated this context.  
It was my fantasy,  
my desire to do so

and lie here  
on my stomach.  
Why are you looking?  
What do you wanna  
do about it?

## ~~Invitations All Around~~

~~if he is your lover,~~  
~~never mind.~~  
~~Perhaps, if we ask~~  
~~he will join us.~~

# Roberto Bolaño (Side #s)

## 10. THERE WAS NOTHING

~~There are no police stations, no hospitals, nothing. At least there's nothing money can buy. "We act on instantaneous impulses" ... This is the kind of thing that destroys the unconscious, and then we'll be left hanging ... "Remember that joke about the bullfighter who steps out into the ring and there's no bull, no ring, nothing?" ... The policemen drank anarchic breezes. Someone started to clap.~~

## 11. AMONG THE HORSES

~~I dreamed of a woman with no mouth, says the man in bed. I couldn't help smiling. The piston forces the images up again. Look, he tells her, I know another story that's just as sad. He's a writer who lives on the edge of town. He makes a living working at a riding school. He's never asked for much, all he needs is a room and time to read. But one day he meets a girl who lives in another city and he falls in love. They decide to get married. The girl will come to live with him. The first problem arises: finding a place big enough for the two of them. The second problem is where to get the money to pay for it. Then one thing leads to another: a job with a steady income (at the tables he works on commission, plus room, board, and a small monthly stipend), getting his papers in order, registering with social security, etc. But for now, he needs money to get to the city where his fiancée lives. A friend suggests the possibility of writing articles for a magazine. He calculates that the first four would pay for the bus trip there and back and maybe a few days at a cheap hotel. He writes his girlfriend to tell her he's coming. But he can't finish a single article. He spends the evenings sitting outdoors at the bar of the riding school where he works, trying to write, but he can't. Nothing comes out, as they say in common parlance. The man realizes that he's finished. All he writes are short crime stories. The trip recedes from his future, is lost, and he remains listless, inert, going automatically about his work among the horses.~~