

Horace and Baudelaire

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Le Revenant

Comme les anges à l'oeil fauve,
Je reviendrai dans ton alcôve
Et vers toi glisserai sans bruit
Avec les ombres de la nuit;

Et je te donnerai, ma brune,
Des baisers froids comme la lune
Et des caresses de serpent
Autour d'une fosse rampant.

Quand viendra le matin livide,
Tu trouveras ma place vide,
Où jusqu'au soir il fera froid.

Comme d'autres par la tendresse,
Sur ta vie et sur ta jeunesse,
Moi, je veux régner par l'effroi.

The Ghost

Like angels with wild beast's eyes
I shall return to your bedroom
And silently glide toward you
With the shadows of the night;

And, dark beauty, I shall give you
Kisses cold as the moon
And the caresses of a snake
That crawls around a grave.

When the livid morning comes,
You'll find my place empty,
And it will be cold there till night.

I wish to hold sway over
Your life and youth by fear,
As others do by tenderness.

— William Aggeler, *The Flowers of Evil*
(Fresno, CA: Academy Library Guild, 1954)

The Ghost

Like angels fierce and tawny-eyed,
Back to your chamber I will glide,
And noiselessly into your sight
Steal with the shadows of the night.

And I will bring you, brown delight,
Kisses as cold as lunar night
And the caresses of a snake
Revolving in a grave. At break

Of morning in its livid hue,
You'd find I had bequeathed to you
An empty place as cold as stone.

Others by tenderness and ruth
Would reign over your life and youth,
But I would rule by fear alone.

— Roy Campbell, *Poems of Baudelaire*
(New York: Pantheon Books, 1952)

The Revenant

Like angels with bright savage eyes
I will come treading phantom-wise
Hither where thou art wont to sleep,
Amid the shadows hollow and deep.

And I will give thee, my dark one,
Kisses as icy as the moon,
Caresses as of snakes that crawl
In circles round a cistern's wall.

When morning shows its livid face
There will be no-one in my place,
And a strange cold will settle here

Others, not knowing what thou art,
May think to reign upon thy heart
With tenderness; I trust to fear.

— George Dillon, *Flowers of Evil*
(NY: Harper and Brothers, 1936)

The Ghost

Like angels that have monster eyes,
Over your bedside I shall rise,
Gliding towards you silently
Across night's black immensity.
O darksome beauty, you shall swoon
At kisses colder than the moon
And fondlings like a snake's who coils
Sinuous round the grave he soils.

When livid morning breaks apace,
You shall find but an empty place,
Cold until night, and bleak, and drear:
As others do by tenderness,
So would I rule your youthfulness
By harsh immensities of fear.

— Jacques LeClercq, *Flowers of Evil*
(Mt Vernon, NY: Peter Pauper Press, 1958)

Spleen

Pluviôse, irrité contre la ville entière,
De son urne à grands flots verse un froid ténébreux
Aux pâles habitants du voisin cimetière
Et la mortalité sur les faubourgs brumeux.

Mon chat sur le carreau cherchant une litière
Agite sans repos son corps maigre et galeux;
L'âme d'un vieux poète erre dans la gouttière
Avec la triste voix d'un fantôme frileux.

Le bourdon se lamente, et la bûche enfumée
Accompagne en fausset la pendule enrhumée
Cependant qu'en un jeu plein de sales parfums,

Héritage fatal d'une vieille hydropique,
Le beau valet de coeur et la dame de pique
Caudent sinistrement de leurs amours défunts.

Spleen

January, irritated with the whole city,
Pours from his urn great waves of gloomy cold
On the pale occupants of the nearby graveyard
And death upon the foggy slums.

My cat seeking a bed on the tiled floor
Shakes his thin, mangy body ceaselessly;
The soul of an old poet wanders in the rain-pipe
With the sad voice of a shivering ghost.

The great bell whines, the smoking log
Accompanies in falsetto the snuffling clock,
While in a deck of cards reeking of filthy scents,

My mortal heritage from some dropsical old woman,
The handsome knave of hearts and the queen of spades
Converse sinisterly of their dead love affair.

— William Aggeler, *The Flowers of Evil*
(Fresno, CA: Academy Library Guild, 1954)

Spleen

The Month of Rains, incensed at life, outpours
Out of her urn, a dark chill, like a penance,
Over the graveyards and their wan, grey tenants
And folk in foggy suburbs out of doors.

My cat seeks out a litter on the ground
Twitching her scrawny body flecked with mange.
The soul of some old poet seems to range
The gutter, with a chill phantasmal sound.

The big bell tolls: damp hearth-logs seem to mock,
Whistling, the snuffle-snuffle of the clock,
While in the play of odours stale with must,

Reminders of a dropsical old crone,
The knave of hearts and queen of spades alone
Darkly discuss a passion turned to dust.

— Roy Campbell, *Poems of Baudelaire*
(New York: Pantheon Books, 1952)

Late January

Pluviose, hating all that lives, and loathing me,
Distills his cold and gloomy rain and slops it down
Upon the pallid lodgers in the cemetery
Next door, and on the people shopping in the town.

My cat, for sheer discomfort, waves a sparsely-furred
And shabby tail incessantly on the tiled floor;
And, wandering sadly in the rain-spout, can be heard
The voice of some dead poet who had these rooms before.

The log is wet, and smokes; its hissing high lament
Mounts to the bronchial clock on the cracked mantel there;
While (heaven knows whose they were — some dropsical old maid's)

In a soiled pack of cards that reeks of dirty scent,
The handsome jack of hearts and the worn queen of spades
Talk in suggestive tones of their old love-affair.

— Edna St. Vincent Millay, *Flowers of Evil*
(NY: Harper and Brothers, 1936)

Spleen

November, vexed with all the capital,
whelms in a death-chill from her gloomy urn
the cold pale dead beneath the graveyard wall,
the death-doomed who in dripping houses yearn.

Grimalkin prowls, a gaunt and scurvy ghoul,
seeking a softer lair for her sojourn;
along the eaves an ancient poet's soul
shivers and wails, a ghost no eyes discern.

the whining church-bell and the log a-sputter
repeat the rheumy clock's falsetto mutter;
while in a pack of cards, scent-filled and vile,

grim relic of a dropsical old maid,
the queen of spades and knave of hearts parade
their dead amours, with many an evil smile.

— Lewis Piaget Shanks, *Flowers of Evil*
(New York: Ives Washburn, 1931)

Les Sept vieillards

À *Victor Hugo*

Fourmillante cité, cité pleine de rêves,
Où le spectre en plein jour raccroche le passant!
Les mystères partout coulent comme des sèves
Dans les canaux étroits du colosse puissant.

Un matin, cependant que dans la triste rue
Les maisons, dont la brume allongeait la hauteur,
Simulaient les deux quais d'une rivière accrue,
Et que, décor semblable à l'âme de l'acteur,

Un brouillard sale et jaune inondait tout l'espace,
Je suivais, roidissant mes nerfs comme un héros
Et discutant avec mon âme déjà lasse,
Le faubourg secoué par les lourds tombereaux.

Tout à coup, un vieillard dont les guenilles jaunes
Imitaient la couleur de ce ciel pluvieux,
Et dont l'aspect aurait fait pleuvoir les aumônes,
Sans la méchanceté qui luisait dans ses yeux,

M'apparut. On eût dit sa prunelle trempée
Dans le fiel; son regard aiguïsait les frimas,
Et sa barbe à longs poils, roide comme une épée,
Se projetait, pareille à celle de Judas.

Il n'était pas voûté, mais cassé, son échine
Faisant avec sa jambe un parfait angle droit,
Si bien que son bâton, parachevant sa mine,
Lui donnait la tournure et le pas maladroit

D'un quadrupède infirme ou d'un juif à trois pattes.
Dans la neige et la boue il allait s'empêtrant,
Comme s'il écrasait des morts sous ses savates,
Hostile à l'univers plutôt qu'indifférent.

Son pareil le suivait: barbe, oeil, dos, bâton, loques,
Nul trait ne distinguait, du même enfer venu,
Ce jumeau centenaire, et ces spectres baroques
Marchaient du même pas vers un but inconnu.

À quel complot infâme étais-je donc en butte,
Ou quel méchant hasard ainsi m'humiliait?
Car je comptai sept fois, de minute en minute,
Ce sinistre vieillard qui se multipliait!

Que celui-là qui rit de mon inquiétude
Et qui n'est pas saisi d'un frisson fraternel
Songe bien que malgré tant de décrépitude
Ces sept monstres hideux avaient l'air éternel!

Aurais-je, sans mourir, contemplé le huitième,
Sosie inexorable, ironique et fatal
Dégoutant Phénix, fils et père de lui-même?
— Mais je tournai le dos au cortège infernal.

Exaspéré comme un ivrogne qui voit double,
Je rentrai, je fermai ma porte, épouvanté,
Malade et morfondu, l'esprit fiévreux et trouble,
Blessé par le mystère et par l'absurdité!

Vainement ma raison voulait prendre la barre;
La tempête en jouant déroutait ses efforts,
Et mon âme dansait, dansait, vieille gabarre
Sans mâts, sur une mer monstrueuse et sans bords!

The Seven Old Men

To Victor Hugo

Teeming, swarming city, city full of dreams,
Where specters in broad day accost the passer-by!
Everywhere mysteries flow like the sap in a tree
Through the narrow canals of the mighty giant.

One morning, while in a gloomy street the houses,
Whose height was increased by the mist, simulated
The quais of a swollen river, and while
— A setting that was like the actor's soul —

A dirty yellow fog inundated all space,
I was following, steeling my nerves like a hero,
Arid arguing with my already weary soul,
A squalid street shaken by the heavy dump-carts.

Suddenly an old man whose tattered yellow clothes
Were of the same color as the rainy heavens,
And whose aspect would have brought him showers of alms
If his eyes had not gleamed with so much wickedness,

Appeared to me. One would have said his eyes were drenched
With gall; his look sharpened the winter's chill,
And his long shaggy beard, like that of Judas,
Projected from his chin as stiffly as a sword.

He was not bent over, but broken; his back-bone
Made with his legs a perfect right angle,
So that his stick, completing the picture,
Gave him the appearance and clumsy gait

Of a lame quadruped or a three-legged Jew.
He went hobbling along in the snow and the mud
As if he were crushing the dead under his shoes;
Hostile, rather than indifferent to the world,

His likeness followed him: beard, eye, back, stick, tatters,
No mark distinguished this centenarian twin,
Who came from the same hell, and these baroque specters
Were walking with the same gait toward an unknown goal.

Of what infamous plot was I then the object,
Or what evil chance humiliated me thus?
For I counted seven times in as many minutes
That sinister old man who multiplied himself!

Let him who laughs at my disquietude,
And who is not seized with a fraternal shudder,
Realize that in spite of such decrepitude
Those hideous monsters had an eternal look!

Could I, without dying, have regarded the eighth,
Unrelenting Sosia, ironic and fatal,
Disgusting Phoenix, son and father of himself?
— But I turned my back on that hellish procession.

Exasperated like a drunk who sees double,
I went home; I locked the door, terrified,
Chilled to the bone and ill, my mind fevered, confused,
Hurt by that mysterious and absurd happening!

Vainly my reason tried to take the helm;
The frolicsome tempest baffled all its efforts,
And my soul, old sailing barge without masts,
Kept dancing, dancing, on a monstrous, shoreless sea!

— William Aggeler, *The Flowers of Evil*
(Fresno, CA: Academy Library Guild, 1954)

The Seven Old Men

To Victor Hugo

Ant-seething city, city full of dreams,
Where ghosts by daylight tug the passer's sleeve.
Mystery, like sap, through all its conduit-streams,
Quickens the dread Colossus that they weave.

One early morning, in the street's sad mud,
Whose houses, by the fog increased in height,
Seemed wharves along a riverside in flood:
When with a scene to match the actor's plight,

Foul yellow mist had filled the whole of space:
Steeling my nerves to play a hero's part,
I coaxed my weary soul with me to pace
The backstreets shaken by each lumbering cart.

A wretch appeared whose tattered, yellow clothing,
Matching the colour of the raining skies,
Could make it shower down alms — but for the loathing
Malevolence that glittered in his eyes.

The pupils of his eyes, with bile injected,
Seemed with their glance to make the frost more raw.
Stiff as a sword, his long red beard projected,
Like that of Judas, level with his jaw.

He was not bent, but broken, with the spine
Forming a sharp right-angle to the straight,
So that his stick, to finish the design,
Gave him the stature and the crazy gait

Of a three-footed Jew, or crippled hound.
He plunged his soles into the slush as though
To crush the dead; and to the world around
Seemed less of an indifferent than a foe.

His image followed him, (back, stick, and beard
In nothing differed) spawned from the same hole,
A centenarian twin. Both spectres steered
With the same gait to the same unknown goal.

To what foul plot was I exposed? of what
Humiliating hazard made the jeer?
For seven times, (I counted) was begot
This sinister, self multiplying fear!

Let him mark well who laughs at my despair
With no fraternal shudder in reply...
Those seven loathsome monsters had the air,
Though rotting through, of what can never die.

Disgusting Phoenix, his own sire and father!
Could I have watched an eighth instalment spawn
Ironic, fateful, grim — nor perished rather?
But from that hellish cortege I'd withdrawn.

Perplexed as drunkards when their sight is doubled,
I locked my room, sick, fevered, chilled with fright:
With all my spirit sorely hurt and troubled
By so ridiculous yet strange a sight.

Vainly my reason for the helm was striving:
The tempest of my efforts made a scorn.
My soul like a dismayed wreck went driving
Over a monstrous sea without a bourn.

— Roy Campbell, Poems of Baudelaire
(New York: Pantheon Books, 1952)

The Seven Old Men

City swarming with people, how full you are of dreams!
Here in broad daylight, surely, the passerby may meet
A specter, — be accosted by him! Mystery seems
To move like a thick sap through every narrow street.

I thought (daybreak, it was, in a sad part of town)
“These houses look much higher in the fog!” — they stood
Like two gray quays between which a muddy stream flows down;
The setting of the play matched well the actor’s mood.

All space became a dirty yellow fog; I tried
To fight it off; I railed at my poor soul, whose feet,
Weary already, dragged and stumbled at my side.
Big wagons, bound for market, began to shake the street.

Suddenly there beside me an old man — all in holes
His garments were, and yellow, like the murky skies,
A sight to wring a rain of coins from kindly souls,
Save for a certain malice gleaming in his eyes,

Appeared. You would have said those eyeballs, without doubt,
Were steeped in bile — they sharpened the sleet they looked upon.
His beard, with its long hairs, stiff as a sword stood out
Before him, as the beard of Judas must have done.

He stooped so when he walked, his spine seemed not so much
Bending as broken, — truly, his leg with his backbone
Made a right angle; and his stick, the finishing touch,
Gave him the awkward gait — now rearing, now half-thrown —

Of a three-legged Jew, or some lame quadruped.
It crossed my mind, as through the mud and snow he went,
“He walks like someone crushing the faces of the dead.
Hostile, that’s what he is; he’s not indifferent.”

A man exactly like him followed him. From beard
To stick they were the same, had risen from the same hell.
These centenarian twins kept step in rhythmic weird
Precision, toward some goal which doubtless they knew well.

“What ugly game is this?” I said; “what horseplay’s here?
Am I the butt of knaves, or have I lost my mind?”
For seven times — I counted them — there did appear
This sinister form, which passed, yet left itself behind.

Let anyone who smiles at my distress, whose heart
No sympathetic horror grips, consider well:
Though these old monsters seemed about to fall apart,
Somehow I knew they were eternal, — I could tell!

Had I beheld one more of them, I think indeed
I should have died! — for each, in some disgusting way,
Had spawned himself, lewd Phoenix, from his own foul seed,
Was his own son and father, — I fled — I could not stay.

Angry, bewildered, like a drunken man by whom
All objects are seen double, I locked my door, and heard
My frozen heart cry out with dread in the hot room, —
That what was so mysterious should be so absurd!

My reason fought to gain the bridge and take the helm;
The tempest thrust it back; and rudderless, unrigged,
A hull which the waves wash but will not overwhelm,
My soul upon a shoreless sea of horror jiggled.

— Edna St. Vincent Millay, *Flowers of Evil*
(NY: Harper and Brothers, 1936)

Le Vin de chiffonniers

Souvent à la clarté rouge d'un réverbère
Dont le vent bat la flamme et tourmente le verre,
Au coeur d'un vieux faubourg, labyrinthe fangeux
Où l'humanité grouille en ferments orageux,

On voit un chiffonnier qui vient, hochant la tête,
Butant, et se cognant aux murs comme un poète,
Et, sans prendre souci des mouchards, ses sujets,
Epanche tout son coeur en glorieux projets.

Il prête des serments, dicte des lois sublimes,
Terrasse les méchants, relève les victimes,
Et sous le firmament comme un dais suspendu
S'enivre des splendeurs de sa propre vertu.

Oui, ces gens harcelés de chagrins de ménage
Moulus par le travail et tourmentés par l'âge
Ereintés et pliant sous un tas de débris,
Vomissement confus de l'énorme Paris,

Reviennent, parfumés d'une odeur de futailles,
Suivis de compagnons, blanchis dans les batailles,
Dont la moustache pend comme les vieux drapeaux.
Les bannières, les fleurs et les arcs triomphaux

Se dressent devant eux, solennelle magie!
Et dans l'étourdissante et lumineuse orgie
Des clairons, du soleil, des cris et du tambour,
Ils apportent la gloire au peuple ivre d'amour!

C'est ainsi qu'à travers l'Humanité frivole
Le vin roule de l'or, éblouissant Pactole;
Par le gosier de l'homme il chante ses exploits
Et règne par ses dons ainsi que les vrais rois.

Pour noyer la rancoeur et bercer l'indolence
De tous ces vieux maudits qui meurent en silence,
Dieu, touché de remords, avait fait le sommeil;
L'Homme ajouta le Vin, fils sacré du Soleil!

The Rag-Picker's Wine

Often, in the red light of a street-lamp
Of which the wind whips the flame and worries the glass,
In the heart of some old suburb, muddy labyrinth,
Where humanity crawls in a seething ferment,

One sees a rag-picker go by, shaking his head,
Stumbling, bumping against the walls like a poet,
And, with no thought of the stool-pigeons, his subjects,
He pours out his whole heart in grandiose projects.

He takes oaths, dictates sublime laws,
Lays low the wicked and succors victims;
Beneath the firmament spread like a canopy
He gets drunk with the splendor of his own virtues.

Yes, these people harassed by domestic worries,
Ground down by their work, distorted by age,
Worn-out, and bending beneath a load of debris,
The commingled vomit of enormous Paris,

Come back, smelling of the wine-cask,
Followed by companions whitened by their battles,
And whose moustaches bang down like old flags;
Banners, flowers, and triumphal arches

Rise up before them, a solemn magic!
And in the deafening, brilliant orgy
Of clarions and drums, of sunlight and of shouts,
They bring glory to the crowd drunk with love!

It is thus that throughout frivolous Humanity
Wine, the dazzling Pactolus, carries flakes of gold;
By the throats of men he sings his exploits
And reigns by his gifts like a veritable king.

To drown the bitterness and lull the indolence
Of all these accursed old men who die in silence,
God, touched with remorse, had created sleep;
Man added Wine, divine child of the Sun!

— William Aggeler, *The Flowers of Evil*
(Fresno, CA: Academy Library Guild, 1954)

The Wine of the Rag Pickers

Often, in some red street-lamp's glare, whose flame
The wind flaps, rattling at its glassy frame,
In the mired labyrinth of some old slum
Where crawling multitudes ferment their scum —

With judge-like nods, a rag-picker comes reeling,
Bumping on walls, like poets, without feeling,
And scorning cops, now vassals of his state,
Begins on glorious subjects to dilate,

Takes royal oaths, dictates his laws sublime,
Exalts the injured, and chastises crime,
And, spreading his own dais on the sky,
Is dazzled by his virtues, starred on high.

Yes, these folk, badgered by domestic care,
Ground down by toil, decrepitude, despair,
Buckled beneath the foul load that each carries,
The motley vomit of enormous Paris —

Come home, vat-scented, trailing clouds of glory,
Followed by veteran comrades, battle-hoary,
Whose whiskers stream like banners as each marches.
— Flags, torches, flowers, and steep triumphal arches

Rise up for them in magic hues and burn,
Since through this dazzling orgy they return,
While drums and clarions daze the sun above,
With glory to a nation drunk with love!

Thus Wine, through giddy human life, is rolled,
Like Pactolus, a stream of burning gold;
Through man's own throat his exploits it will sing
And reign by gifts, as best befits a king.

To lull their laziness and drown their rancour,
For storm-tossed wrecks a temporary anchor,
God, in remorse, made sleep. Man added Wine,
Child of the Sun, immortal and divine!

— Roy Campbell, Poems of Baudelaire
(New York: Pantheon Books, 1952)

Paysage

Je veux, pour composer chastement mes églogues,
Coucher auprès du ciel, comme les astrologues,
Et, voisin des clochers écouter en rêvant
Leurs hymnes solennels emportés par le vent.
Les deux mains au menton, du haut de ma mansarde,
Je verrai l'atelier qui chante et qui bavarde;
Les tuyaux, les clochers, ces mâts de la cité,
Et les grands ciels qui font rêver d'éternité.

Il est doux, à travers les brumes, de voir naître
L'étoile dans l'azur, la lampe à la fenêtre
Les fleuves de charbon monter au firmament
Et la lune verser son pâle enchantement.
Je verrai les printemps, les étés, les automnes;
Et quand viendra l'hiver aux neiges monotones,
Je fermerai partout portières et volets
Pour bâtir dans la nuit mes féeriques palais.
Alors je rêverai des horizons bleuâtres,
Des jardins, des jets d'eau pleurant dans les albâtres,
Des baisers, des oiseaux chantant soir et matin,
Et tout ce que l'Idylle a de plus enfantin.
L'Émeute, tempêtant vainement à ma vitre,
Ne fera pas lever mon front de mon pupitre;
Car je serai plongé dans cette volupté
D'évoquer le Printemps avec ma volonté,
De tirer un soleil de mon cœur, et de faire
De mes pensers brûlants une tiède atmosphère.

Landscape

I would, to compose my eclogues chastely,
Lie down close to the sky like an astrologer,
And, near the church towers, listen while I dream
To their solemn anthems borne to me by the wind.
My chin cupped in both hands, high up in my garret
I shall see the workshops where they chatter and sing,
The chimneys, the belfries, those masts of the city,
And the skies that make one dream of eternity.

It is sweet, through the mist, to see the stars
Appear in the heavens, the lamps in the windows,
The streams of smoke rise in the firmament
And the moon spread out her pale enchantment.
I shall see the springtimes, the summers, the autumns;
And when winter comes with its monotonous snow,
I shall close all the shutters and draw all the drapes
So I can build at night my fairy palaces.
Then I shall dream of pale blue horizons, gardens,
Fountains weeping into alabaster basins,
Of kisses, of birds singing morning and evening,
And of all that is most childlike in the Idyl.
Riot, storming vainly at my window,
Will not make me raise my head from my desk,
For I shall be plunged in the voluptuousness
Of evoking the Springtime with my will alone,
Of drawing forth a sun from my heart, and making
Of my burning thoughts a warm atmosphere.

— William Aggeler, *The Flowers of Evil*
(Fresno, CA: Academy Library Guild, 1954)

The Landscape

More chasteness to my eclogues it would give,
Sky-high, like old astrologers to live,
A neighbour of the belfries: and to hear
Their solemn hymns along the winds career.
High in my attic, chin in hand, I'd swing
And watch the workshops as they roar and sing,
The city's masts — each steeple, tower, and flue —
And skies that bring eternity to view.

Sweet, through the mist, to see illumed again
Stars through the azure, lamps behind the pane,
Rivers of carbon irrigate the sky,
And the pale moon pour magic from on high.
I'd watch three seasons passing by, and then
When winter came with dreary snows, I'd pen
Myself between closed shutters, bolts, and doors,
And build my fairy palaces indoors.

A dream of blue horizons I would garble
With thoughts of fountains weeping on to marble,
Of gardens, kisses, birds that ceaseless sing,
And all the Idyll holds of childhood's spring.
The riots, brawling past my window-pane,
From off my desk would not divert my brain.
Because I would be plunged in pleasure still,
Conjuring up the Springtime with my will,
And forcing sunshine from my heart to form,
Of burning thoughts, an atmosphere that's warm.

— Roy Campbell, *Poems of Baudelaire*
(New York: Pantheon Books, 1952)

Landscape

I want to write a book of chaste and simple verse,
Sleep in an attic, like the old astrologers,
Up near the sky, and hear upon the morning air
The tolling of the bells. I want to sit and stare,
My chin in my two hands, out on the humming shops,
The weathervanes, the chimneys, and the steepletops
That rise like masts above the city, straight and tall,
And the mysterious big heavens over all.

I want to watch the blue mist of the night come on,
The windows and the stars illumined, one by one,
The rivers of dark smoke pour upward lazily,
And the moon rise and turn them silver. I shall see
The springs, the summers, and the autumns slowly pass;
And when old Winter puts his blank face to the glass,
I shall close all my shutters, pull the curtains tight,
And build me stately palaces by candlelight.

And I shall dream of luxuries beyond surmise,
Gardens that are a stairway into azure skies,
Fountains that weep in alabaster, birds that sing
All day — of every childish and idyllic thing.
A revolution thundering in the street below
Will never lure me from my task, I shall be so
Lost in that quiet ecstasy, the keenest still,
Of calling back the springtime at my own free will,
Of feeling a sun rise within me, fierce and hot,
And make a whole bright landscape of my burning thought.

— George Dillon, *Flowers of Evil*
(NY: Harper and Brothers, 1936)

Odes 1.2

Iam satis terris nivis atque dirae
grandinis misit pater et rubente
dextera sacras iaculatus arcis
terrui urbem,

terrui gentis, grave ne rediret
saeculum Pyrrhae nova monstra questae,
omne cum Proteus pecus egit altos
visere montis,

piscium et summa genus haesit ulmo,
nota quae sedes fuerat columbis,
et superiecto pavidae natarunt
aequore dammae.

vidimus flavum Tiberim retortis
litore Etrusco violenter undis
ire deiectum monumenta regis
templaque Vestae,

Iliae dum se nimium querenti
iactat ultorem, vagus et sinistra
labitur ripa Iove non probante u-
xorius amnis.

audiet civis acuisse ferrum,
quo graves Persae melius perirent,
audiet pugnas vitio parentum
rara iuventus.

quem vocet divum populus ruentis
imperi rebus? prece qua fatigent
virgines sanctae minus audientem
carmina Vestam?

cui dabit partis scelus expiandi
Iuppiter? tandem venias precamur
nube candentis umeros amictus
augur Apollo;

sive tu mavis, Erycina ridens,

quam Iocus circum volat et Cupido;
sive neglectum genus et nepotes
respicis, auctor

heu nimis longo satiate ludo,
quem iuvat clamor galeaeque leves
acer et Marsi peditis cruentum
voltus in hostem;

sive mutata iuvenem figura
ales in terris imitaris almae
filius Maiaae, patiens vocari
Caesaris ultor:

serus in caelum redeas diuque
laetus intersis populo Quirini
neve te nostris vitiis iniquum
ocior aura

tollat; hic magnos potius triumphos,
hic ames dici pater atque princeps
neu sinas Medos equitare inultos
te duce, Caesar.

Odes 1.2

Enough of snow and hail at last
The sire has sent in vengeance down:
His bolts, at his own temple cast,
Appall'd the town,

Appall'd the lands, lest Pyrrha's time
Return, with all its monstrous sights,
When Proteus led his flocks to climb
The flatten'd heights,

When fish were in the elm-tops caught,
Where once the stock-dove went to bide,
And does were floating, all distraught,
Adown the tide.

Old Tiber, hurl'd in tumult back
From mingling with the Etruscan main,
Has threaten'd Numa's court with wrack
And Vesta's fane.

Roused by his Ilia's plaintive woes,
He vows revenge for guiltless blood,
And, spite of Jove, his banks o'erflows,
Uxorious flood.

Yes, Fame shall tell of civic steel
That better Persian lives had spilt,
To youths, whose minish'd numbers feel
Their parents' guilt.

What god shall Rome invoke to stay
Her fall? Can suppliance overbear
The ear of Vesta, turn'd away
From chant and prayer?

Who comes, commission'd to atone
For crime like ours? at length appear,
A cloud round thy bright shoulders thrown,
Apollo seer!

Or Venus, laughter-loving dame,
Round whom gay Loves and Pleasures fly;
Or thou, if slighted sons may claim
A parent's eye,

O weary with thy long, long game,
Who lov'st fierce shouts and helmets bright,
And Moorish warrior's glance of flame
Or e'er he smite!

Or Maia's son, if now awhile
In youthful guise we see thee here,
Caesar's avenger—such the style
Thou deign'st to bear;

Late be thy journey home, and long
Thy sojourn with Rome's family;
Nor let thy wrath at our great wrong
Lend wings to fly.

Here take our homage, Chief and Sire;
Here wreath with bay thy conquering brow,
And bid the prancing Mede retire,
Our Caesar thou!

Odes 2.6

Septimi, Gadis aditure mecum et
Cantabrum indoctum iuga ferre nostra et
barbaras Syrtis, ubi Maura semper
aestuat unda:

Tibur Argeo positum colono
sit meae sedes utinam senectae,
sit modus lasso maris et viarum
militiaeque.

unde si Parcae prohibent iniquae,
dulce pellitis ovibus Galaesi
flumen et regnata petam Laconi
rura Phalantho

ille terrarum mihi praeter omnis
angulus ridet, ubi non Hymetto
mella decedunt viridique certat
baca Venafro,

ver ubi longum tepidasque praebet
Iuppiter brumas et amicus Aulon
fertili Baccho minimum Falernis
invidet uvis;

ille te mecum locus et beatæ
postulant arces: ibi tu calentem
debita sparges lacrima favillam
vatis amici.

Odes 2.6

Septimius, who with me would brave
Far Gades, and Cantabrian land
Untamed by Rome, and Moorish wave
That whirls the sand;

Fair Tibur, town of Argive kings,
There would I end my days serene,
At rest from seas and travellings,
And service seen.

Should angry Fate those wishes foil,
Then let me seek Galesus, sweet
To skin-clad sheep, and that rich soil,
The Spartan's seat.

O, what can match the green recess,
Whose honey not to Hybla yields,
Whose olives vie with those that bless
Venafrum's fields?

Long springs, mild winters glad that spot
By Jove's good grace, and Aulon, dear
To fruitful Bacchus, envies not
Falernian cheer.

That spot, those happy heights desire
Our sojourn; there, when life shall end,
Your tear shall dew my yet warm pyre,
Your bard and friend.

Odes 2.7

O saepe mecum tempus in ultimum
deducte Bruto militiae duce,
quis te redonavit Quiritem
dis patriis Italoque caelo,

Pompei, meorum prime sodalium,
cum quo morantem saepe diem mero
fregi, coronatus nitentis
malobathro Syrio capillos?

tecum Philippos et celerem fugam
sensi relicta non bene parmula,
cum fracta virtus, et minaces
turpe solum tetigere mento;

sed me per hostis Mercurius celer
denso paventem sustulit aere,
te rursus in bellum resorbens
unda fretis tulit aestuosis.

ergo obligatam redde Iovi dapem
longaque fessum militia latus
depone sub lauru mea nec
parce cadis tibi destinatis.

oblivioso levia Massico
ciboria exple, funde capacibus
unguenta de conchis. quis udo
deproperare apio coronas

curatve myrto? quem Venus arbitrum
dicet bibendi? non ego sanius
bacchabor Edonis: recepto
dulce mihi furere est amico.

Odes 2.7

O, oft with me in troublous time
Involved, when Brutus warr'd in Greece,
Who gives you back to your own clime
And your own gods, a man of peace,
Pompey, the earliest friend I knew,
With whom I oft cut short the hours
With wine, my hair bright bathed in dew
Of Syrian oils, and wreathed with flowers?
With you I shared Philippi's rout,
Unseemly parted from my shield,
When Valour fell, and warriors stout
Were tumbled on the inglorious field:
But I was saved by Mercury,
Wrapp'd in thick mist, yet trembling sore,
While you to that tempestuous sea
Were swept by battle's tide once more.
Come, pay to Jove the feast you owe;
Lay down those limbs, with warfare spent,
Beneath my laurel; nor be slow
To drain my cask; for you 'twas meant.
Lethe's true draught is Massic wine;
Fill high the goblet; pour out free
Rich streams of unguent. Who will twine
The hasty wreath from myrtle-tree
Or parsley? Whom will Venus seat
Chairman of cups? Are Bacchants sane?
Then I'll be sober. O, 'tis sweet
To fool, when friends come home again!

Odes 2.12

O saepe mecum tempus in ultimum
deducte Bruto militiae duce,
quis te redonavit Quiritem
dis patriis Italoque caelo,

Pompei, meorum prime sodalium,
cum quo morantem saepe diem mero
fregi, coronatus nitentis
malobathro Syrio capillos?

tecum Philippos et celerem fugam
sensi relicta non bene parmula,
cum fracta virtus, et minaces
turpe solum tetigere mento;

sed me per hostis Mercurius celer
denso paventem sustulit aere,
te rursus in bellum resorbens
unda fretis tulit aestuosis.

ergo obligatam redde Iovi dapem
longaque fessum militia latus
depone sub lauru mea nec
parce cadis tibi destinatis.

oblivioso levia Massico
ciboria exple, funde capacibus
unguenta de conchis. quis udo
deproperare apio coronas

curatve myrto? quem Venus arbitrum
dicet bibendi? non ego sanius
bacchabor Edonis: recepto
dulce mihi furere est amico.

Odes 2.12

The weary war where fierce Numantia bled,
Fell Hannibal, the swoln Sicilian main
Purpled with Punic blood—not mine to wed
These to the lyre's soft strain,

Nor cruel Lapithae, nor, mad with wine,
Centaur, nor, by Herculean arm o'ercome,
The earth-born youth, whose terrors dimm'd the shine
Of the resplendent dome

Of ancient Saturn. You, Maecenas, best
In pictured prose of Caesar's warrior feats
Will tell, and captive kings with haughty crest
Led through the Roman streets.

On me the Muse has laid her charge to tell
Of your Licymnia's voice, the lustrous hue
Of her bright eye, her heart that beats so well
To mutual passion true:

How nought she does but lends her added grace,
Whether she dance, or join in bantering play,
Or with soft arms the maiden choir embrace
On great Diana's day.

Say, would you change for all the wealth possest
By rich Achaemenes or Phrygia's heir,
Or the full stores of Araby the blest,
One lock of her dear hair,

While to your burning lips she bends her neck,
Or with kind cruelty denies the due
She means you not to beg for, but to take,
Or snatches it from you?