

Track 30: Canto Three, Section 1, lines 1 to 90

An uneven broad ascent now lured his feet.
Answering a greater Nature's troubled call
He crossed the limits of embodied Mind
And entered wide obscure disputed fields
5 Where all was doubt and change and nothing sure,
A world of search and toil without repose.
As one who meets the face of the Unknown,
A questioner with none to give reply,
Attracted to a problem never solved,
10 Always uncertain of the ground he trod,
Always drawn on to an inconstant goal
He travelled through a land peopled by doubts
In shifting confines on a quaking base.
In front he saw a boundary ever unreached
15 And thought himself at each step nearer now,—
A far retreating horizon of mirage.
A vagrancy was there that brooked no home,
A journey of countless paths without a close.
Nothing he found to satisfy his heart;
20 A tireless wandering sought and could not cease.
There life is the manifest Incalculable,
A movement of unquiet seas, a long
And venturous leap of spirit into Space,
A vexed disturbance in the eternal Calm,
25 An impulse and passion of the Infinite.
Assuming whatever shape her fancy wills,
Escaped from the restraint of settled forms
She has left the safety of the tried and known.
Unshepherded by the fear that walks through Time,
30 Undaunted by Fate that dogs and Chance that springs,
She accepts disaster as a common risk;
Careless of suffering, heedless of sin and fall,
She wrestles with danger and discovery
In the unexplored expanses of the soul.
35 To be seemed only a long experiment,
The hazard of a seeking ignorant Force
That tries all truths and, finding none supreme,
Moves on unsatisfied, unsure of its end.
As saw some inner mind, so life was shaped:
40 From thought to thought she passed, from phase to phase,
Tortured by her own powers or proud and blest,
Now master of herself, now toy and slave.
A huge inconsequence was her action's law,
As if all possibility must be drained,
45 And anguish and bliss were pastimes of the heart.
In a gallop of thunder-hooved vicissitudes
She swept through the race-fields of Circumstance,
Or, swaying, she tossed between her heights and deeps,
Uplifted or broken on Time's inconstant wheel.
50 Amid a tedious crawl of drab desires
She writhed, a worm mid worms in Nature's mud,
Then, Titan-statured, took all earth for food,

Ambitioned the seas for robe, for crown the stars
And shouting strode from peak to giant peak,
55 Clamouring for worlds to conquer and to rule.
Then, wantonly enamoured of Sorrow's face,
She plunged into the anguish of the depths
And, wallowing, clung to her own misery.
In dolorous converse with her squandered self
60 She wrote the account of all that she had lost,
Or sat with grief as with an ancient friend.
A romp of violent raptures soon was spent,
Or she lingered tied to an inadequate joy
Missing the turns of fate, missing life's goal.
65 A scene was planned for all her numberless moods
Where each could be the law and way of life,
But none could offer a pure felicity;
Only a flickering zest they left behind
Or the fierce lust that brings a dead fatigue.
70 Amid her swift untold variety
Something remained dissatisfied, ever the same
And in the new saw only a face of the old,
For every hour repeated all the rest
And every change prolonged the same unease.
75 A spirit of her self and aim unsure,
Tired soon of too much joy and happiness,
She needs the spur of pleasure and of pain
And the native taste of suffering and unrest:
She strains for an end that never can she win.
80 A perverse savour haunts her thirsting lips:
For the grief she weeps which came from her own choice,
For the pleasure yearns that racked with wounds her breast;
Aspiring to heaven she turns her steps towards hell.
Chance she has chosen and danger for playfellows;
85 Fate's dreadful swing she has taken for cradle and seat.
Yet pure and bright from the Timeless was her birth,
A lost world-rapture lingers in her eyes,
Her moods are faces of the Infinite:
Beauty and happiness are her native right,
90 And endless Bliss is her eternal home.

Track 31: Section 2, lines 91 to 155

This now revealed its antique face of joy,
A sudden disclosure to the heart of grief
Tempting it to endure and long and hope.
Even in changing worlds bereft of peace,
95 In an air racked with sorrow and with fear
And while his feet trod on a soil unsafe,
He saw the image of a happier state.
In an architecture of hieratic Space
Circling and mounting towards creation's tops,
100 At a blue height which never was too high
For warm communion between body and soul,
As far as heaven, as near as thought and hope,
Glimmered the kingdom of a griefless life.
Above him in a new celestial vault

105 Other than the heavens beheld by mortal eyes,
As on a fretted ceiling of the gods,
An archipelago of laughter and fire,
Swam stars apart in a rippled sea of sky.
Towered spirals, magic rings of vivid hue
110 And gleaming spheres of strange felicity
Floated through distance like a symbol world.
On the trouble and the toil they could not share,
On the unhappiness they could not aid,
Impervious to life's suffering, struggle, grief,
115 Untarnished by its anger, gloom and hate,
Unmoved, untouched, looked down great visioned planes
Blissful for ever in their timeless right.
Absorbed in their own beauty and content,
Of their immortal gladness they live sure.

120 Apart in their self-glory plunged, remote
Burning they swam in a vague lucent haze,
An everlasting refuge of dream-light,
A nebula of the splendours of the gods
Made from the musings of eternity.

125 Almost unbelievable by human faith,
Hardly they seemed the stuff of things that are.
As through a magic television's glass
Outlined to some magnifying inner eye
They shone like images thrown from a far scene
130 Too high and glad for mortal lids to seize.
But near and real to the longing heart
And to the body's passionate thought and sense
Are the hidden kingdoms of beatitude.
In some close unattained realm which yet we feel,
135 Immune from the harsh clutch of Death and Time,
Escaping the search of sorrow and desire,
In bright enchanted safe peripheries
For ever wallowing in bliss they lie.
In dream and trance and muse before our eyes,
140 Across a subtle vision's inner field,
Wide rapturous landscapes fleeting from the sight,
The figures of the perfect kingdom pass
And behind them leave a shining memory's trail.
Imagined scenes or great eternal worlds,
145 Dream-caught or sensed, they touch our hearts with their depths;
Unreal-seeming, yet more real than life,
Happier than happiness, truer than things true,
If dreams these were or captured images,
Dream's truth made false earth's vain realities.

150 In a swift eternal moment fixed there live
Or ever recalled come back to longing eyes
Calm heavens of imperishable Light,
Illumined continents of violet peace,
Oceans and rivers of the mirth of God
155 And griefless countries under purple suns.