

**Track 56: Section 1b, lines 149 to 312**

In this meeting of the Eternal's mingling masques,  
150 This tangle-dance of passionate contraries  
Locking like lovers in a forbidden embrace  
The quarrel of their lost identity,  
Through this wrestle and wrangle of the extremes of Power  
Earth's million roads struggled towards deity.

155 All stumbled on behind a stumbling Guide,  
Yet every stumble is a needed pace  
On unknown routes to an unknowable goal.  
  
All blundered and straggled towards the One Divine.

As if transmuted by a titan spell  
160 The eternal Powers assumed a dubious face:  
Idols of an oblique divinity,  
They wore the heads of animal or troll,  
Assumed ears of the faun, the satyr's hoof,  
Or harboured the demoniac in their gaze:  
165 A crooked maze they made of thinking mind,  
They suffered a metamorphosis of the heart,  
Admitting bacchant revellers from the Night  
Into its sanctuary of delights,  
As in a Dionysian masquerade.

170 On the highways, in the gardens of the world  
They wallowed oblivious of their divine parts,  
As drunkards of a dire Circean wine  
Or a child who sprawls and sports in Nature's mire.

Even wisdom, hewer of the roads of God,  
175 Is a partner in the deep disastrous game:  
Lost is the pilgrim's wallet and the scrip,  
She fails to read the map and watch the star.

A poor self-righteous virtue is her stock  
And reason's pragmatic grope or abstract sight,  
180 Or the technique of a brief hour's success  
She teaches, an usher in utility's school.

On the ocean surface of vast Consciousness  
Small thoughts in shoals are fished up into a net  
But the great truths escape her narrow cast;  
185 Guarded from vision by creation's depths,  
Obscure they swim in blind enormous gulfs  
Safe from the little sounding leads of mind,  
Too far for the puny diver's shallow plunge.

Our mortal vision peers with ignorant eyes;  
190 It has no gaze on the deep heart of things.

Our knowledge walks leaning on Error's staff,  
A worshipper of false dogmas and false gods,  
Or fanatic of a fierce intolerant creed  
Or a seeker doubting every truth he finds,  
195 A sceptic facing Light with adamant No  
Or chilling the heart with dry ironic smile,  
A cynic stamping out the god in man;  
A darkness wallows in the paths of Time  
Or lifts its giant head to blot the stars;

200 It makes a cloud of the interpreting mind  
And intercepts the oracles of the Sun.  
Yet Light is there; it stands at Nature's doors:  
It holds a torch to lead the traveller in.  
It waits to be kindled in our secret cells;  
205 It is a star lighting an ignorant sea,  
A lamp upon our poop piercing the night.  
As knowledge grows Light flames up from within:  
It is a shining warrior in the mind,  
An eagle of dreams in the divining heart,  
210 An armour in the fight, a bow of God.  
Then larger dawns arrive and Wisdom's pomps  
Cross through the being's dim half-lighted fields;  
Philosophy climbs up Thought's cloud-bank peaks  
And Science tears out Nature's occult powers,  
215 Enormous djinns who serve a dwarf's small needs,  
Exposes the sealed minutiae of her art  
And conquers her by her own captive force.  
On heights unreached by mind's most daring soar,  
Upon a dangerous edge of failing Time  
220 The soul draws back into its deathless Self;  
Man's knowledge becomes God's supernal Ray.  
There is the mystic realm whence leaps the power  
Whose fire burns in the eyes of seer and sage;  
A lightning flash of visionary sight,  
225 It plays upon an inward verge of mind:  
Thought silenced gazes into a brilliant Void.  
A voice comes down from mystic unseen peaks:  
A cry of splendour from a mouth of storm,  
It is the voice that speaks to night's profound,  
230 It is the thunder and the flaming call.  
Above the planes that climb from nescient earth,  
A hand is lifted towards the Invisible's realm,  
Beyond the superconscient's blinding line  
And plucks away the screens of the Unknown;  
235 A spirit within looks into the Eternal's eyes.  
It hears the Word to which our hearts were deaf,  
It sees through the blaze in which our thoughts grew blind;  
It drinks from the naked breasts of glorious Truth,  
It learns the secrets of eternity.  
240 Thus all was plunged into the riddling Night,  
Thus all is raised to meet a dazzling Sun.  
O Death, this is the mystery of thy reign.  
In earth's anomalous and magic field  
Carried in its aimless journey by the sun  
245 Mid the forced marches of the great dumb stars,  
A darkness occupied the fields of God,  
And Matter's world was governed by thy shape.  
Thy mask has covered the Eternal's face,  
The Bliss that made the world has fallen asleep.

250 Abandoned in the Vast she slumbered on:  
An evil transmutation overtook  
Her members till she knew herself no more.

Only through her creative slumber flit  
Frail memories of the joy and beauty meant

255 Under the sky's blue laugh mid green-scarfed trees  
And happy squanderings of scents and hues,  
In the field of the golden promenade of the sun  
And the vigil of the dream-light of the stars,  
Amid high meditating heads of hills,

260 On the bosom of voluptuous rain-kissed earth  
And by the sapphire tumbings of the sea.

But now the primal innocence is lost  
And Death and Ignorance govern the mortal world  
And Nature's visage wears a greyer hue.

265 Earth still has kept her early charm and grace,  
The grandeur and the beauty still are hers,  
But veiled is the divine Inhabitant.

The souls of men have wandered from the Light  
And the great Mother turns away her face.

270 The eyes of the creatrix Bliss are closed  
And sorrow's touch has found her in her dreams.

As she turns and tosses on her bed of Void,  
Because she cannot wake and find herself  
And cannot build again her perfect shape,

275 Oblivious of her nature and her state,  
Forgetting her instinct of felicity,  
Forgetting to create a world of joy,  
She weeps and makes her creatures' eyes to weep;  
Testing with sorrow's edge her children's breasts,

280 She spends on life's vain waste of hope and toil  
The poignant luxury of grief and tears.

In the nightmare change of her half-conscious dream,  
Tortured herself and torturing by her touch,  
She comes to our hearts and bodies and our lives

285 Wearing a hard and cruel mask of pain.

Our nature twisted by the abortive birth  
Returns wry answers to life's questioning shocks,  
An acrid relish finds in the world's pangs,  
Drinks the sharp wine of grief's perversity.

290 A curse is laid on the pure joy of life:  
Delight, God's sweetest sign and Beauty's twin,  
Dreaded by aspiring saint and austere sage,  
Is shunned, a dangerous and ambiguous cheat,  
A specious trick of an infernal Power

295 It tempts the soul to its self-hurt and fall.

A puritan God made pleasure a poisonous fruit,  
Or red drug in the market-place of Death,  
And sin the child of Nature's ecstasy.

Yet every creature hunts for happiness,

300 Buys with harsh pangs or tears by violence  
From the dull breast of the inanimate globe

Some fragment or some broken shard of bliss.

Even joy itself becomes a poisonous draught;  
Its hunger is made a dreadful hook of Fate.

305 All means are held good to catch a single beam,  
Eternity sacrificed for a moment's bliss:  
Yet for joy and not for sorrow earth was made  
And not as a dream in endless suffering Time.

310 Although God made the world for his delight,  
An ignorant Power took charge and seemed his Will  
And Death's deep falsity has mastered Life.

All grew a play of Chance simulating Fate.