

**Track 47: Canto Six, Section 1, lines 1 to 79**

As one who between dim receding walls  
Towards the far gleam of a tunnel's mouth,  
Hoping for light, walks now with freer pace  
And feels approach a breath of wider air,  
5 So he escaped from that grey anarchy.  
Into an ineffectual world he came,  
A purposeless region of arrested birth  
Where being from non-being fled and dared  
To live but had no strength long to abide.  
10 Above there gleamed a pondering brow of sky  
Tormented, crossed by wings of doubtful haze  
Adventuring with a voice of roaming winds  
And crying for a direction in the void  
Like blind souls looking for the selves they lost  
15 And wandering through unfamiliar worlds;  
Wings of vague questioning met the query of Space.  
After denial dawned a dubious hope,  
A hope of self and form and leave to live  
And the birth of that which never yet could be,  
20 And joy of the mind's hazard, the heart's choice,  
Grace of the unknown and hands of sudden surprise  
And a touch of sure delight in unsure things:  
To a strange uncertain tract his journey came  
Where consciousness played with unconscious self  
25 And birth was an attempt or episode.  
A charm drew near that could not keep its spell,  
An eager Power that could not find its way,  
A Chance that chose a strange arithmetic  
But could not bind with it the forms it made,  
30 A multitude that could not guard its sum  
Which less than zero grew and more than one.  
Arriving at a large and shadowy sense  
That cared not to define its fleeting drift,  
Life laboured in a strange and mythic air  
35 Denuded of her sweet magnificent suns.  
In worlds imagined, never yet made true,  
A lingering glimmer on creation's verge,  
One strayed and dreamed and never stopped to achieve:  
To achieve would have destroyed that magic Space.  
40 The marvels of a twilight wonderland  
Full of a beauty strangely, vainly made,  
A surge of fanciful realities,  
Dim tokens of a Splendour sealed above,  
Awoke the passion of the eyes' desire,  
45 Compelled belief on the enamoured thought  
And drew the heart but led it to no goal.  
A magic flowed as if of moving scenes  
That kept awhile their fugitive delicacy  
Of sparing lines limned by an abstract art  
50 In a rare scanted light with faint dream-brush  
On a silver background of incertitude.  
An infant glow of heavens near to morn,  
A fire intense conceived but never lit,

Caressed the air with ardent hints of day.

55 The perfect longing for imperfection's charm,  
The illumined caught by the snare of Ignorance,  
Ethereal creatures drawn by body's lure  
To that region of promise, beating invisible wings,  
Came hungry for the joy of finite life

60 But too divine to tread created soil  
And share the fate of perishable things.

The Children of the unembodied Gleam  
Arisen from a formless thought in the soul  
And chased by an imperishable desire,

65 Traversed the field of the pursuing gaze.  
A Will that unpersisting failed, worked there:  
Life was a search but finding never came.  
There nothing satisfied, but all allured,  
Things seemed to be that never wholly are,

70 Images were seen that looked like living acts  
And symbols hid the sense they claimed to show,  
Pale dreams grew real to the dreamer's eyes.

The souls came there that vainly strive for birth,  
And spirits entrapped might wander through all time,

75 Yet never find the truth by which they live.  
All ran like hopes that hunt a lurking chance;  
Nothing was solid, nothing felt complete:  
All was unsafe, miraculous and half-true.  
It seemed a realm of lives that had no base.