

Track 51: Section 2, lines 95 to end

95 There is a morning twilight of the gods;
 Miraculous from sleep their forms arise
 And God's long nights are justified by dawn.

 There breaks a passion and splendour of new birth
 And hue-winged visions stray across the lids,
100 Heaven's chanting heralds waken dim-eyed Space.

 The dreaming deities look beyond the seen
 And fashion in their thoughts the ideal worlds
 Sprung from a limitless moment of desire
 That once had lodged in some abysmal heart.

105 Passed was the heaviness of the eyeless dark
 And all the sorrow of the night was dead:
 Surprised by a blind joy with groping hands
 Like one who wakes to find his dreams were true,
 Into a happy misty twilit world
110 Where all ran after light and joy and love
 She slipped; there far-off raptures drew more close
 And deep anticipations of delight,
 For ever eager to be grasped and held,
 Were never grasped, yet breathed strange ecstasy.

115 A pearl-winged indistinctness fleeting swam,
 An air that dared not suffer too much light.

 Vague fields were there, vague pastures gleamed, vague trees,
 Vague scenes dim-hearted in a drifting haze;
 Vague cattle white roamed glimmering through the mist;
120 Vague spirits wandered with a bodiless cry,
 Vague melodies touched the soul and fled pursued
 Into harmonious distances unseized;
 Forms subtly elusive and half-luminous powers
 Wishing no goal for their unearthly course
125 Strayed happily through vague ideal lands,
 Or floated without footing or their walk
 Left steps of reverie on sweet memory's ground;
 Or they paced to the mighty measure of their thoughts
 Led by a low far chanting of the gods.

130 A ripple of gleaming wings crossed the far sky;
 Birds like pale-bosomed imaginations flew
 With low disturbing voices of desire,
 And half-heard lowings drew the listening ear,
 As if the Sun-god's brilliant kine were there
135 Hidden in mist and passing towards the sun.

 These fugitive beings, these elusive shapes
 Were all that claimed the eye and met the soul,
 The natural inhabitants of that world.

 But nothing there was fixed or stayed for long;
140 No mortal feet could rest upon that soil,
 No breath of life lingered embodied there.

 In that fine chaos joy fled dancing past
 And beauty evaded settled line and form
 And hid its sense in mysteries of hue;
145 Yet gladness ever repeated the same notes
 And gave the sense of an enduring world;
 There was a strange consistency of shapes,
 And the same thoughts were constant passers-by
 And all renewed unendingly its charm
150 Alluring ever the expectant heart
 Like music that one always waits to hear,

Like the recurrence of a haunting rhyme.

One touched incessantly things never seized,
A skirt of worlds invisibly divine.

155 As if a trail of disappearing stars
There showered upon the floating atmosphere
Colours and lights and evanescent gleams
That called to follow into a magic heaven,
And in each cry that fainted on the ear
160 There was the voice of an unrealised bliss.

An adoration reigned in the yearning heart,
A spirit of purity, an elusive presence
Of faery beauty and ungrasped delight
Whose momentary and escaping thrill,
165 However unsubstantial to our flesh,
And brief even in imperishableness,
Much sweeter seemed than any rapture known
Earth or all-conquering heaven can ever give.

Heaven ever young and earth too firm and old
170 Delay the heart by immobility:
Their raptures of creation last too long,
Their bold formations are too absolute;
Carved by an anguish of divine endeavour
They stand up sculptured on the eternal hills,
175 Or quarried from the living rocks of God
Win immortality by perfect form.

They are too intimate with eternal things:
Vessels of infinite significances,
They are too clear, too great, too meaningful;
180 No mist or shadow soothes the vanquished sight,
No soft penumbra of incertitude.

These only touched a golden hem of bliss,
The gleaming shoulder of some godlike hope,
The flying feet of exquisite desires.

185 On a slow trembling brink between night and day
They shone like visitants from the morning star,
Satisfied beginnings of perfection, first
Tremulous imaginings of a heavenly world:
They mingle in a passion of pursuit,
190 Thrilled with a spray of joy too slight to tire.

All in this world was shadowed forth, not limned,
Like faces leaping on a fan of fire
Or shapes of wonder in a tinted blur,
Like fugitive landscapes painting silver mists.

195 Here vision fled back from the sight alarmed,
And sound sought refuge from the ear's surprise,
And all experience was a hasty joy.

The joys here snatched were half-forbidden things,
Timorous soul-bridals delicately veiled
200 As when a goddess' bosom dimly moves
To first desire and her white soul transfigured,
A glimmering Eden crossed by faery gleams,
Trembles to expectation's fiery wand,
But nothing is familiar yet with bliss.

205 All things in this fair realm were heavenly strange
In a fleeting gladness of untired delight,
In an insistency of magic change.

Past vanishing hedges, hurrying hints of fields,

Mid swift escaping lanes that fled her feet
210 Journeying she wished no end: as one through clouds
Travels upon a mountain ridge and hears
Arising to him out of hidden depths
Sound of invisible streams, she walked besieged
By the illusion of a mystic space,
215 A charm of bodiless touches felt and heard
A sweetness as of voices high and dim
Calling like travellers upon seeking winds
Melodiously with an alluring cry.

As if a music old yet ever new,
220 Moving suggestions on her heart-strings dwelt,
Thoughts that no habitation found, yet clung
With passionate repetition to her mind,
Desires that hurt not, happy only to live
Always the same and always unfulfilled
225 Sang in the breast like a celestial lyre.

Thus all could last yet nothing ever be.

In this beauty as of mind made visible,
Dressed in its rays of wonder Satyavan
Before her seemed the centre of its charm,
230 Head of her loveliness of longing dreams
And captain of the fancies of her soul.

Even the dreadful majesty of Death's face
And its sombre sadness could not darken nor slay
The intangible lustre of those fleeting skies.

235 The sombre Shadow sullen, implacable
Made beauty and laughter more imperative;
Enhanced by his grey, joy grew more bright and dear;
His dark contrast edging ideal sight
Deepened unuttered meanings to the heart;
240 Pain grew a trembling undertone of bliss
And transience immortality's floating hem,
A moment's robe in which she looked more fair,
Its antithesis sharpening her divinity.

A comrade of the Ray and Mist and Flame,
245 By a moon-bright face a brilliant moment drawn,
Almost she seemed a thought mid floating thoughts,
Seen hardly by a visionary mind
Amid the white inward musings of the soul.

Half-vanquished by the dream-happiness around,
250 Awhile she moved on an enchantment's soil,
But still remained possessor of her soul.

Above, her spirit in its mighty trance
Saw all, but lived for its transcendent task,
Immutable like a fixed eternal star.

End of Canto One