

**Track 31: Section 2, lines 256 to 358**

Then journeying forward through the self's wide hush  
She came into a brilliant ordered Space.  
There Life dwelt parked in an armed tranquillity;  
A chain was on her strong insurgent heart.  
260 Tamed to the modesty of a measured pace,  
She kept no more her vehement stride and rush;  
She had lost the careless majesty of her muse  
And the ample grandeur of her regal force;  
Curbed were her mighty pomps, her splendid waste,  
265 Sobered the revels of her bacchant play,  
Cut down were her squanderings in desire's bazaar,  
Coerced her despot will, her fancy's dance,  
A cold stolidity bound the riot of sense.  
A royalty without freedom was her lot;  
270 The sovereign throned obeyed her ministers:  
Her servants mind and sense governed her house:  
Her spirit's bounds they cast in rigid lines  
And guarding with a phalanx of armoured rules  
The reason's balanced reign, kept order and peace.  
275 Her will lived closed in adamant walls of law,  
Coerced was her force by chains that feigned to adorn,  
Imagination was prisoned in a fort,  
Her wanton and licentious favourite;  
Reality's poise and reason's symmetry  
280 Were set in its place sentinelled by marshalled facts,  
They gave to the soul for throne a bench of Law,  
For kingdom a small world of rule and line:  
The ages' wisdom, shrivelled to scholiast lines,  
Shrank patterned into a copy-book device.  
285 The Spirit's almighty freedom was not here:  
A schoolman mind had captured life's large space,  
But chose to live in bare and paltry rooms  
Parked off from the too vast dangerous universe,  
Fearing to lose its soul in the infinite.  
290 Even the Idea's ample sweep was cut  
Into a system, chained to fixed pillars of thought  
Or rivetted to Matter's solid ground:  
Or else the soul was lost in its own heights:  
Obeying the Ideal's high-browed law  
295 Thought based a throne on unsubstantial air  
Disdaining earth's flat triviality:  
It barred reality out to live in its dreams.  
Or all stepped into a systemed universe:  
Life's empire was a managed continent,  
300 Its thoughts an army ranked and disciplined;  
Uniformed they kept the logic of their fixed place  
At the bidding of the trained centurion mind.  
Or each stepped into its station like a star

Or marched through fixed and constellated heavens  
305 Or kept its feudal rank among its peers  
In the sky's unchanging cosmic hierarchy.  
Or like a high-bred maiden with chaste eyes  
Forbidden to walk unveiled the public ways,  
She must in close secluded chambers move,  
310 Her feeling in cloisters live or gardened paths.  
Life was consigned to a safe level path,  
It dared not tempt the great and difficult heights  
Or climb to be neighbour to a lonely star  
Or skirt the danger of the precipice  
315 Or tempt the foam-curl'd breakers' perilous laugh,  
Adventure's lyrist, danger's amateur,  
Or into her chamber call some flaming god,  
Or leave the world's bounds and where no limits are  
Meet with the heart's passion the Adorable  
320 Or set the world ablaze with the inner Fire.  
A chastened epithet in the prose of life,  
She must fill with colour just her sanctioned space,  
Not break out of the cabin of the idea  
Nor trespass into rhythms too high or vast.  
325 Even when it soared into ideal air,  
Thought's flight lost not itself in heaven's blue:  
It drew upon the skies a patterned flower  
Of disciplined beauty and harmonic light.  
A temperate vigilant spirit governed life:  
330 Its acts were tools of the considering thought,  
Too cold to take fire and set the world ablaze,  
Or the careful reason's diplomatic moves  
Testing the means to a prefigured end,  
Or at the highest pitch some calm Will's plan  
335 Or a strategy of some High Command within  
To conquer the secret treasures of the gods  
Or win for a masked king some glorious world,  
Not a reflex of the spontaneous self,  
340 An index of the being and its moods,  
A winging of conscious spirit, a sacrament  
Of life's communion with the still Supreme  
Or its pure movement on the Eternal's road.  
Or else for the body of some high Idea  
A house was built with too close-fitting bricks;  
345 Action and thought cemented made a wall  
Of small ideals limiting the soul.  
Even meditation mused on a narrow seat;  
And worship turned to an exclusive God,  
To the Universal in a chapel prayed  
350 Whose doors were shut against the universe;  
Or kneeled to the bodiless Impersonal  
A mind shut to the cry and fire of love:  
A rational religion dried the heart.

355 It planned a smooth life's acts with ethics' rule  
Or offered a cold and flameless sacrifice.  
The sacred Book lay on its sanctified desk  
Wrapped in interpretation's silken strings:  
A credo sealed up its spiritual sense.