

Track 11: Canto Four, Section 2, lines 127 to 341

But all is screened, subliminal, mystical;
It needs the intuitive heart, the inward turn,
It needs the power of a spiritual gaze.

130 Else to our waking mind's small moment look
A goalless voyage seems our dubious course
Some Chance has settled or hazarded some Will,
Or a Necessity without aim or cause
Unwillingly compelled to emerge and be.

135 In this dense field where nothing is plain or sure,
Our very being seems to us questionable,
Our life a vague experiment, the soul
A flickering light in a strange ignorant world,
The earth a brute mechanic accident,

140 A net of death in which by chance we live.
All we have learned appears a doubtful guess,
The achievement done a passage or a phase
Whose farther end is hidden from our sight,
A chance happening or a fortuitous fate.

145 Out of the unknown we move to the unknown.
Ever surround our brief existence here
Grey shadows of unanswered questionings;
The dark Inconscient's signless mysteries
Stand up unsolved behind Fate's starting-line.

150 An aspiration in the Night's profound,
Seed of a perishing body and half-lit mind,
Uplifts its lonely tongue of conscious fire
Towards an undying Light for ever lost;
Only it hears, sole echo of its call,

155 The dim reply in man's unknowing heart
And meets, not understanding why it came
Or for what reason is the suffering here,
God's sanction to the paradox of life
And the riddle of the Immortal's birth in Time.

160 Along a path of aeons serpentine
In the coiled blackness of her nescient course
The Earth-Goddess toils across the sands of Time.
A Being is in her whom she hopes to know,
A Word speaks to her heart she cannot hear,

165 A Fate compels whose form she cannot see.
In her unconscious orbit through the Void
Out of her mindless depths she strives to rise,
A perilous life her gain, a struggling joy;
A Thought that can conceive but hardly knows

170 Arises slowly in her and creates
The idea, the speech that labels more than it lights;
A trembling gladness that is less than bliss
Invades from all this beauty that must die.
Alarmed by the sorrow dragging at her feet

175 And conscious of the high things not yet won,
Ever she nurses in her sleepless breast
An inward urge that takes from her rest and peace.
Ignorant and weary and invincible,
She seeks through the soul's war and quivering pain

180 The pure perfection her marred nature needs,
A breath of Godhead on her stone and mire.
A faith she craves that can survive defeat,
The sweetness of a love that knows not death,
The radiance of a truth for ever sure.

185 A light grows in her, she assumes a voice,
Her state she learns to read and the act she has done,
But the one needed truth eludes her grasp,
Herself and all of which she is the sign.
An inarticulate whisper drives her steps

190 Of which she feels the force but not the sense;
A few rare intimations come as guides,
Immense divining flashes cleave her brain,
And sometimes in her hours of dream and muse
The truth that she has missed looks out on her

195 As if far off and yet within her soul.
A change comes near that flees from her surmise
And, ever postponed, compels attempt and hope,
Yet seems too great for mortal hope to dare.
A vision meets her of supernal Powers

200 That draw her as if mighty kinsmen lost
Approaching with estranged great luminous gaze.
Then is she moved to all that she is not
And stretches arms to what was never hers.
Outstretching arms to the unconscious Void,

205 Passionate she prays to invisible forms of Gods
Soliciting from dumb Fate and toiling Time
What most she needs, what most exceeds her scope,
A Mind unvisited by illusion's gleams,
A Will expressive of soul's deity,

210 A Strength not forced to stumble by its speed,
A Joy that drags not sorrow as its shade.
For these she yearns and feels them destined hers:
Heaven's privilege she claims as her own right.
Just is her claim the all-witnessing Gods approve,

215 Clear in a greater light than reason owns:
Our intuitions are its title-deeds;
Our souls accept what our blind thoughts refuse.
Earth's winged chimaeras are Truth's steeds in Heaven,
The impossible God's sign of things to be.

220 But few can look beyond the present state
Or overleap this matted hedge of sense.
All that transpires on earth and all beyond
Are parts of an illimitable plan
The One keeps in his heart and knows alone.

225 Our outward happenings have their seed within,
And even this random Fate that imitates Chance,
This mass of unintelligible results,
Are the dumb graph of truths that work unseen:
The laws of the Unknown create the known.

230 The events that shape the appearance of our lives
Are a cipher of subliminal quiverings
Which rarely we surprise or vaguely feel,
Are an outcome of suppressed realities

That hardly rise into material day:
235 They are born from the spirit's sun of hidden powers
Digging a tunnel through emergency.
But who shall pierce into the cryptic gulf
And learn what deep necessity of the soul
Determined casual deed and consequence?

240 Absorbed in a routine of daily acts,
Our eyes are fixed on an external scene;
We hear the crash of the wheels of Circumstance
And wonder at the hidden cause of things.
Yet a foreseeing Knowledge might be ours,
245 If we could take our spirit's stand within,
If we could hear the muffled daemon voice.
Too seldom is the shadow of what must come
Cast in an instant on the secret sense
Which feels the shock of the invisible,
250 And seldom in the few who answer give
The mighty process of the cosmic Will
Communicates its image to our sight,
Identifying the world's mind with ours.
Our range is fixed within the crowded arc
255 Of what we observe and touch and thought can guess
And rarely dawns the light of the Unknown
Waking in us the prophet and the seer.
The outward and the immediate are our field,
The dead past is our background and support;
260 Mind keeps the soul prisoner, we are slaves to our acts;
We cannot free our gaze to reach wisdom's sun.
Inheritor of the brief animal mind,
Man, still a child in Nature's mighty hands,
In the succession of the moments lives;
265 To a changing present is his narrow right;
His memory stares back at a phantom past,
The future flees before him as he moves;
He sees imagined garments, not a face.
Armed with a limited precarious strength,
270 He saves his fruits of work from adverse chance.
A struggling ignorance is his wisdom's mate:
He waits to see the consequence of his acts,
He waits to weigh the certitude of his thoughts,
He knows not what he shall achieve or when;
275 He knows not whether at last he shall survive,
Or end like the mastodon and the sloth
And perish from the earth where he was king.
He is ignorant of the meaning of his life,
He is ignorant of his high and splendid fate.

280 Only the Immortals on their deathless heights
Dwelling beyond the walls of Time and Space,
Masters of living, free from the bonds of Thought,
Who are overseers of Fate and Chance and Will
And experts of the theorem of world-need,
285 Can see the Idea, the Might that change Time's course,
Come maned with light from undiscovered worlds,
Hear, while the world toils on with its deep blind heart,

The galloping hooves of the unforeseen event,
Bearing the superhuman Rider, near
290 And, impassive to earth's din and startled cry,
Return to the silence of the hills of God;
As lightning leaps, as thunder sweeps, they pass
And leave their mark on the trampled breast of Life.

Above the world the world-creators stand,
295 In the phenomenon see its mystic source.
These heed not the deceiving outward play,
They turn not to the moment's busy tramp,
But listen with the still patience of the Unborn
For the slow footsteps of far Destiny
300 Approaching through huge distances of Time,
Unmarked by the eye that sees effect and cause,
Unheard mid the clamour of the human plane.

Attentive to an unseen Truth they seize
A sound as of invisible augur wings,
305 Voices of an unplumbed significance,
Mutterings that brood in the core of Matter's sleep.
In the heart's profound audition they can catch
The murmurs lost by Life's uncaring ear,
A prophet-speech in Thought's omniscient trance.

310 Above the illusion of the hopes that pass,
Behind the appearance and the overt act,
Behind this clock-work Chance and vague surmise,
Amid the wrestle of force, the trampling feet,
Across the cries of anguish and of joy,
315 Across the triumph, fighting and despair,
They watch the Bliss for which earth's heart has cried
On the long road which cannot see its end
Winding undetected through the sceptic days
And to meet it guide the unheeded moving world.

320 Thus will the masked Transcendent mount his throne.
When darkness deepens strangling the earth's breast
And man's corporeal mind is the only lamp,
As a thief's in the night shall be the covert tread
Of one who steps unseen into his house.

325 A Voice ill-heard shall speak, the soul obey,
A Power into mind's inner chamber steal,
A charm and sweetness open life's closed doors
And beauty conquer the resisting world,
The Truth-Light capture Nature by surprise,
330 A stealth of God compel the heart to bliss
And earth grow unexpectedly divine.

In Matter shall be lit the spirit's glow,
In body and body kindled the sacred birth;
Night shall awake to the anthem of the stars,
335 The days become a happy pilgrim march,
Our will a force of the Eternal's power,
And thought the rays of a spiritual sun.

A few shall see what none yet understands;
God shall grow up while the wise men talk and sleep;
340 For man shall not know the coming till its hour
And belief shall be not till the work is done.