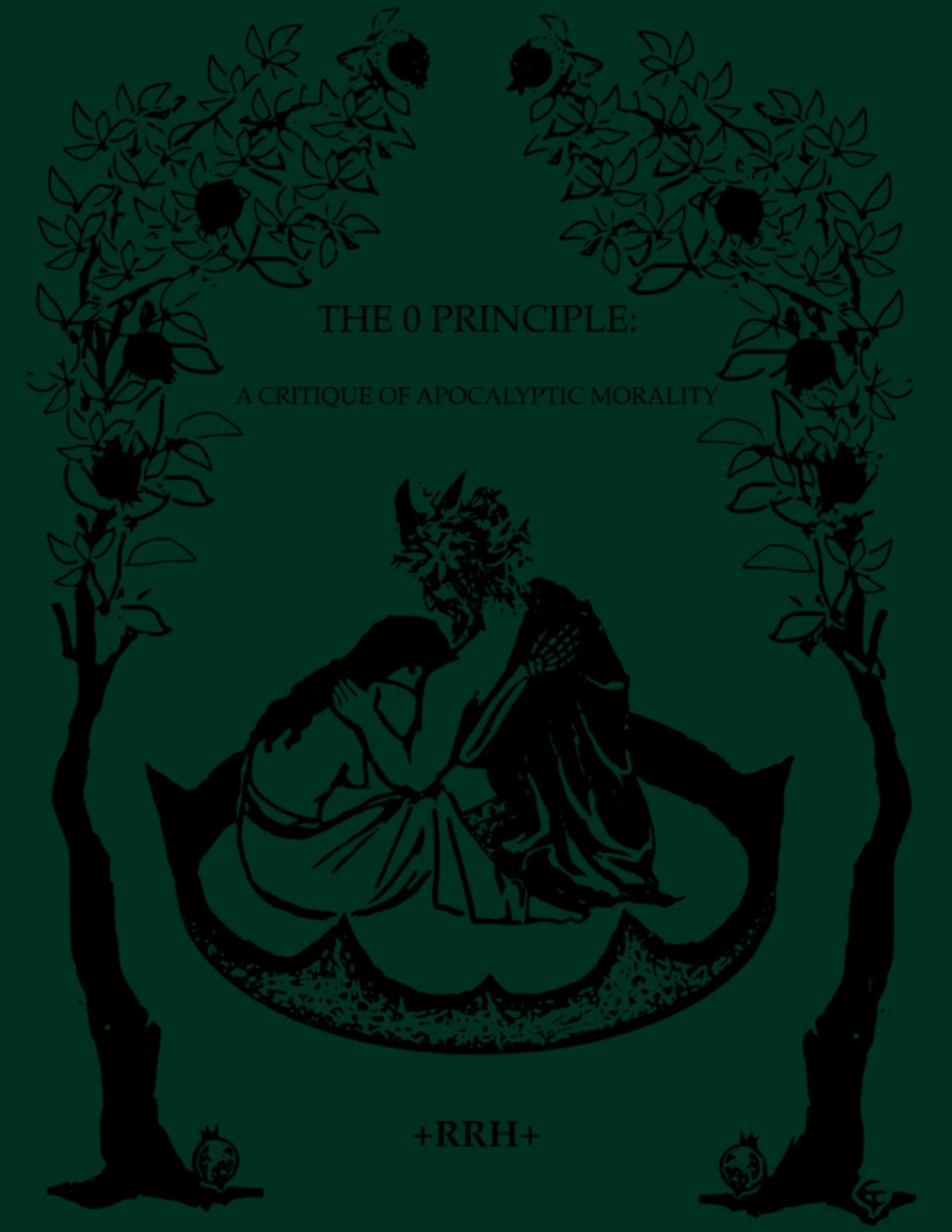




THE 0 PRINCIPLE:

A CRITIQUE OF APOCALYPTIC MORALITY

+RRH+

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A CRITIQUE OF APOCALYPTIC
MORALITY

**Being collectively described
in the manner of a Graveyard
or as if it is a House of Cards**

+RRH+
Illustrated by xxx xxxxx

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Fool's Errand

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O

**Dedicated with my great love to Cath,
to Karel,
and my darling Lauren,**

**To those who find something of themselves reflected
herein,**

To my lovers and the little children,

**And with much love and gratitude:
to the fool who lost the farm
and tried to climb a dead man's hill.**

**Let me fail only in my attempts at cleverness,
and succeed where these attempts fail.**

**And may we all be cursed
to love two things which make a circle:
To die/
and that we might accomplish in our work
that which we conceive in our minds.**

**Do as Thou Wilt shall be the Whole of the Law
Love is the Law, Love under Will**

X

I

Scene: ext. betwixt ground and sky.
Tarantula and Pantyporridge occupying a third place,
in ignorance of the implications of their own mortality.
Around them, corpses fucking.
Pantyporridge, a poet, opines upon the death of god,
a lovelorn cosmos bereft,
moral discontinuity, and the end of history;
Tarantula retorting glibly that the end of history
is the end of the world: both rub
white stones they pulled from the stream
like young boys learning to masturbate.
exist. existent. all exit.

Beginning this sort of thing of course
is always so arbitrary, things not really beginning
in any meaningful way for any of us,
just as endings are beyond us all.
How strange to be so preoccupied with our loneliness within a world
we have awoken to join.
The cross exists before the rose, the
body before the running blood,
the cum, the sweat, the piss,
the shit, the black green bile, the life and love.
The fastest way past our masks is smell and taste.
Tarantula has a great belly distended
like the ancient alcoholic and eyes,
Pantyporridge has eyes also and hands and feet, but
both lack something in their imaginations
of each other and the world around them,
both of them turn from half of themselves, and
both of them contort their loves like clowns without safety nets.
Tarantula, inevitably, is the better dancer.
Part of the issue is scale, which is often confusing
for mythical creatures in a very boring world made for monkeys.
The bigger ones struggle to find suitable high seating
and the smaller ones can't reach the knobs,
which is why poetry and sexual deviance have become the norm in
some quarters.
Everybody smokes again too.

Aesthetics are a thing, Rodchenko said
“Art which has no place in life will be consigned
to the architectural museums of antiquity” and I wonder
if magpies keep hand-me-downs.
At the end of the day pornhub is probably onto something,
it’s all incest, but the lacquer on the turd means
you’ve got to really penetrate to get the flavour.
People make such funny choices
pretending not to sniff the piss on their fingers or
to get turned on when the boy they’re fucking smells like family,
that’s what love is, honestly.
Keepsakes from my former lovers
crawling in my hair, their little bites
like kisses on my vulnerable scalp.
How much of it can we love and how can we learn to love it.
Pantyporridge and Tarantula embrace, competing
to make the room smell worse in their enthusiasm
for flesh and the moment;
and among it all we’re going to die.

We’re all to die, each and everyone.
We are then to discover who we really are, because
then the lies will end,
and there will be no further ignorance or naivety.
Our corpses will be the houses in which the little monsters
make their loving homes,
we will create such life in the collapse of our ribs,
the peeling back of flesh,
and none of it will be about you or I
or the spaces we contrive between us,
but just love.
The Temple of Theleme is in the flesh which loves itself,
Christ fucking the hole in his hand cos
you would wouldn’t you,
in the end we are this, it lives, it dies,
I told my mother: flesh is flesh.
Honesty is terrifying to a fool
but the face of the clown, to be or not to be,
and all the little lies tell the truth in the end anyway.
Little moments of tension are all that matter, after the release
we’re somewhere else entirely.

I have loved you so.
I have loved you so and so and so
and so much, with such demand,
such physicality, such want, such will, such pressure,
such violence, and such shame, and
you have loved me yet in spite,
and would we have it less? I would not.

It's easier to love the dead than the living, but
much less satisfying in the physical moment.
Love of the dead will bring forth life, but
love of life is quite something else.
Love itself of course is both.
Love courses through life like a fresh river,
establishing its own boundaries by being and being and being and
loving so hard it wears a groove into your flesh, an image of itself,
and so we become the love we live if we allow love
to live for itself without restriction. Love is not a canal,
we cannot contrive it in the manner of the Masonic draughtsman
because every model of god is not god,
even those very beautiful statues,
god in fact is in the enthusiasm with which we enjoin this life to be
as god, enflamed or profaned,
by love and by our faulty performances.

Which part or portion was yours to begin with?
Tarantula and Pantyporridge sleep beside each other as if alone.
My love will kill us both.

A white stone in each pocket, a misshapen god in each hand:
Tarantula absorbed in each and any perceptible rhythm
produced by our heaving environment, Pantyporridge predominantly
consumed with looking for the next opportunity
to say something clever and withering
so everybody knows he's paying attention but really he doesn't care.
Everyone smokes again too.
The vessel is unstable, upon an unstable foundation,
within an unstable environment,
in a field called forever which can indeed only exist
due to its perpetual instability.
We call this instability death and dream of killing the god of time,
and call that our brave and antinomian spirit,
our utopian revolution against the laws of creation,
but it is cowardice and we are children.
Tarantula and Pantyporridge in tantruming performance,
both bleeding from above their eyes
having slit themselves with razors to really deliver the bit,
one must not question their commitment
to a wholehearted performance of their roles, and
really to an unnecessary extent.

It's inside now. Cold too,
and slower than you might expect.
Thick and heavy and cold and slow,
and salty and rich in minerals,
and the rain outside is coming down in buckets.
I can hear them in the other room
arguing over sleeping arrangements,
dancing and getting in the way,
forgetting and remembering.
I am honestly unsure when this was but the memory is in my feet,
on the soles of my feet, where I have been walking
too long in hard bottomed shoes
which have given in to the weather
and are saturated with water
and my thick wool socks like heavy sandpaper
and everything clinging and heavy
and slower than you might expect.

My body feels young but tired,
and as if it has been tired for a very long time,
and not a part of it is warm.
Not a part of it is moving.
And this stillness is hurting me.
I can hear them in the other room arguing about pissing in the sink
and washing filthy clothes and the smells you discover
when you come inside after working in the cold slow air.

Another time it's morning and we're all in the kitchen at the table
with coffees and everyone smokes again,
and this memory is in the smell of the smoke and the coffee
and the bodies and the breath and all the bitterness.
And this one of the dirty cunt and arsehole and the
armpits and the sweat.
The fastest way past our masks is smell and taste.

This one before I knew them. There's no story in this one,
no smell, no body, there's just a tap dripping into the small sink
in the corner of the room with the chair in it
every ten seconds or so the memory comes back dripping
every ten seconds or so in the sink in the corner and there's a chair.
And later tightening the tap to stop it dripping, but noticing
it had started again by morning, and the chair had moved.
And this next one is just fear. Before that the promised land.

I walked across the river
Though my feet bled
Strings of blood like strands of hair
From the stones

I came to the entrance of a cave, without a light and went inside.
I tasted the rock and it was cold and salty and rich in minerals
and it stuck to my tongue, I liked it.
Everything was damp and increasingly in shadows
receding into shadows into a deep black darkness
like black bile or like the place from which nighttime emerges,
and I without a light went further.

This was a long time ago in a different country, and in a place
hidden within an ancient gorge
cut by the coursing of an ancient river,
an open wound across my mother's gut,
and all her little children crawl out from here,
like the darkness that comes into the nighttime
when she wakes to make her love to the sky.

Pantyporridge and Tarantula once again
in cahoots at the front of the vehicle,
arguing in good spirits about the quickest route back
to the place with the good drugs so we can get back
on the road as quickly as possible.
I've given up on taking part by now and am resting in the back,
pretending to be annoyed with them so I can enjoy them bickering
without having to perform for myself.
Memories keep coming, and mingling with the moment.
Bodies adrift in a field of time.

Bones, and bones, and bones, bones, bones:
a throne of bones, shorn of the pretence of flesh.

The catacombs emerge into a grotto deep in the lowest halls, within,
and surrounded by these bones bones bones, a pool of black water,
a black pool, a still black pool. The air is thin
like the hair on the scalp of the old lady at the bottom of the stairs
when you broke the window cos you heard a sound that time.

Thin like the blood there too.
Thin like the hold you had on yourself
as you held her hand,
and thin like the voice on the telephone
so far away.

Many bones are arranged in piles by size and type,
atop them all ribcages, spines, and skulls,
their emptinesses filled with silent
songs from childhood and adolescence
and the nights in life which have fallen into holes in memory,
such sad songs, such pretty songs.

There is an old woman here.
Tarantula and Pantyporridge silent for the first time.
So little light, and the stillness here is safety. It is a birthing pool,
she says, where gods are born by the anointing of a new devotion.
It is a charnel house where the washed clean bones bones bones of
all the fallen messengers are stored. It is the bridal chamber
where the lovers cross their hearts. It is the tavern hall
in the midst of the marketplace wherein the feast is given
and we ate it all this meat this flesh until the bones were clean.
And then we bathed.

A great god came, moving in the darkness, rolling out from within,
a great wild god made of infinite darkness, emerging as is the manner
of motion in this place into our awareness
first through the intimation of sound, then the shifts in atmosphere
and corresponding subtle shifts in our bodies and then
into our touch our sight our knowing. All were silent, all still.
All within the body, all within the deepest quietest place, all beneath
the gaze of the old old woman, all among these bones bones bones.
We came to this place, this great god came for us,
the table laid, the skin flayed, the ribs, the spines, the skulls,
the silent songs which fill them.

She wore a ragged dress, a dirty ragged wedding dress, and sat upon
a swing bedecked with the flowers of death, her throne,
around the bones the funeral flowers, garlanded as a crown
around her head the pretty flowers grey and red
and wound around her throat her chest her arms and legs
the dry dead flowers and between her legs.
The swing above the pool, we took her hand and made her vow,
the great god coming ever forth, and more and more,
and the dry dead flowers crumbled
and the petals on the pool like kisses
and all at once a song.
And all at once the love the death the joy the sorrow
the most intimate and the least personal,
a song, a name upon a great great god emerging from the darkness.
And all within the body, all within the deepest quietest place,
all moving, all as one, the one, the other,
the old woman and her flowers, the great dark god,
the fools in awe and I, and
beginnings commencing in the middles of things.

Pantyporridge and Tarantula, their heads still bleeding
from their dancing and their play, still, silent.
Pantyporridge and Tarantula listening. I still, singing.
A great dark god and an old old woman among
the bones bones bones in the deep dark chamber
where the black pool is still again, still, silent,
and all the little flowers having kissed it are gone beneath
and in the ribcages, the spines, the skulls, the silence
shaken by this new devotion, a name is mourned,
a god is born, and time and death are moving.
In the carriage a crow has landed and is calling out
its rough rough voice,
and time moves along the road somewhat
while love is made below.

And all were silent, all still, all within the body.
The bones washed clean, the fallen given place,
the line between what was and what is not,
the still throne swing of bones, her body,
and the great deep dark god of our new song.
I and my companions consumed.
This meat, this flesh, this form, these many faces,
this place where gods enjoin the flesh to godliness, our bones
the place where monsters make their loving homes,
our charnel house, our birthing pool, and the flowers in the earth
which all are here forever, silent still.

By necessity, her reign as it began was founded on quite broad principles, more signpost than rule: the first sign, this nailed above the door on both sides for all who enter and all within, read simply

No moralising.

In time she filled the door with lists of laws composed each day between noon and three in response to the morning emails, eventually hiring my companions to scribe for her, to apply taxonomies, and most of all, this being Pantyporridge's hobby anyway, prescription. Tarantula, pleased that for the time being at least PP was elsewhere engaged, and always having considered himself at heart the true philosopher, in love with enquiry far beyond any desire to be right, set about constructing a puppet court in the castle theatre within which to stage elaborate simulations of civil disagreement for the purpose of producing commentary upon the queen's edicts in the form predominantly of footnote, amendment, or bylaw. For these matters, and against my significant protestation, my companions were issued each a tool, a sword for Pantyporridge and a pen for TT. PP and TT much validated immediately bought matching hats and shoes with little pictures of the royal crest on them and began talking in the manner of the royal we when discussing their profound and important work.

No modesty.

No falsehood.

Neither reserve nor restraint.

And gluttony wherever resources permit, excepting those cases where this is dependent on either fate or fortune.

You should see the alphabet composed for this purpose.
Nobody could read it anyway.

Breakfast first, then lunch,
then dinner, at a minimum,
unless that turns out for some reason to be inconvenient.
Children first, then the dead,
elders, the sexually active,
only then do we eat the rest.
And therefore we are to live without cruelty.
Clerical professionals for fuel. No economists.

The first set of bylaws concerned names and naming, and the production of official registries, and commenced in TT's script as follows:

As long as we have your names by breakfast you're good for the day
but after that the paperwork gets more complicated so while you
may wish to be called by your preferred name during the course
of your preoccupations we would ask that you still use the old name
on official court documents and communications until the morning,
when you can update us without disturbing the abaci either to
today's spoken name, forgetting for the time being (or indeed just
forgetting) the official name which had been in use for that time
(unless you want to retain it/return to it) or to any other name you
may wish by which that you will be known by for the period
commencing when breakfast stops until the next time when it is that
breakfast will begin, excepting should you prefer the option of
adopting a different spoken name, again without altering the
processing of our documentation or of course the deeper qabalistic
operations, or if you just want to keep the same name.

Viz a vis. PP and TT i.i.i.i.i.i.i.01.

(because it was the first one,
but he didn't keep up with consistent labelling anyway)

And then:

Incorrect usage of preferred nomenclature between members of the arbitrary classes is to be discouraged by the application of minor sexual humiliations applied to the bottom with an open palm in the supermarket. You can also tell them how naughty they are, that they are bad. Do it at the same time until you have successfully acquired both snot and blood. Naughty. Now make them happy. They won't want you to but you can just keep going until you have produced some shit, some piss, some cum.

This law was later amended because it didn't in fact make anyone happy but people overused it nonetheless. Later:

No punishment/no shame.

And eventually:

The use of names is to be expressly forbidden at all times.

You/me/they.

Identity to be expressed exclusively through rhythmic movement,
in silence.

They still called her names behind her back though.

MEAT FEAST

Rats in a bucketful of crabs.
Fat fingers till we all forget our names, and so much wine.
Our god is now purple like the sky or a deep bruise or
the bruised grape skins or sickness, roaring at the heavens,
dancing with Tarantula, laughing at
Pantyporridge and their ridiculous clevernesses, and
rubbing on the furniture, rubbing itself,
rubbing and touching and grubbing everything
all drunk and sweaty and that bitter breath and skin.
The walls did not shake, and the police force is dressed also
in purple and with big purple sticks carved like
our big purple god's purpose purpling up everyone
and the moans and the cries
and the mountains parting and the sea
and our god's name over and over again.
She just sits on her throne staining dried petals in the grape juice.
I am overcome.

Pantyporridge has come to tell me a story and
Tarantula to write it down, and all I am to do
is to listen and choose the words that Pantyporridge doesn't know
and then to help TT find symbols
with which to inscribe them on the floor.
It's hard to hear with the roaring god and
for these silly stories to take my attention from our coy queen
I am going to need more rules.
I am going to need more time.

The little one was born into a forest, they said. The morning light
was through the trees, the blood and gore of birth upon its skin
like berries, the dark soft moist warm earth and all the little worms
there, and the smell of pine and earth and wet and the sounds
of crickets and rustling leaves. When it was born it was like a child
but with the head of a deer, a young deer, and it leapt to its feet
without needing to be shown and ate the leaves and yes the berries
that tasted like blood, and it learned the smell of blood.

The little one grew horns and practiced grappling with tree branches
and the horns grew and roughened and hardened and
were garlanded with all the little pointed leaves and berries
that tasted of blood and its body grew and hardened and had
the taste of blood in it and our big one now with the rough face and
hands had grown hooves and hardy horns and grappled with
the trees like lovers or in war or both and scratched his skin and
scarred his flesh and roughened and hardened and
tasted blood on everything.

They paused for drinks, and finding that the wine had been
consumed decided time had come to eat the fruit from the bushel
between the legs of our queen, hanging from the bone throne swing
above the deep black pool, and so we did, and it tasted like blood
and fruit and sweet and bitter and it had fermented there
so long uneaten, she still, sitting, staining petals with the blood
of her husband's purple pressings,
that we were immediately in a forgetting embrace
and stories turned to song and it became clear therefore
that the structures ill-defined of cathedral, tavern, castle walls
and all were not yet made in the image of our god our queen
or the love between them and we scribbled notes in cages
to confine the cries of pain and pleasure which were the music there
but when we woke we could not read them. And we lay around
all purple in forgetting. And later then we counted our dead.

And it found a hole within the dark moist soft warm earth
a little groove from whence it came nestled
in between two thick rough roots from the berry tree
and he put his fat fingers there and pushed them in
and made it wider and there he put his berries to keep
and putting in his hand his fingers and making the blood come out
and trampling it and rubbing it on himself and the air was
full of the smell of the damp warm earth and the berries like blood
and his bitter skin and breath and he put his face into the hole,
his horns entangled in the roots and branches, and his mouth was full
of berries and their blood and his nose filled with rough earth
damp and dark and warm
and in his eyes and he fell in love and died there.

And all the little worms. His mouth,
his nose, his throat, his eyes, his ears,
and now his tongue is all the little worms and his eyes also,
and his love is drunk and purple and it smells like blood,
and his hair now long
around his rough, broken, jagged, pretty horns is tangled,
and his cheeks are thin,
and he too lay there in forgetting, and counting his dead.

We drew pictures of the place where the tree meets the earth,
and his little pot of berries dug into it,
and we drew him dancing there,
the juice like blood upon his feet and ankles,
and we lay around forgetting,
and the little dried petals all stained in purple
like kisses on the surface of the pool.

RULES & MEASURES

How many times have we died now? Such great lists of our dead,
affixed to which appendices with further lists of all the names
from day to day they used to say to each other
among their various preoccupations. Quite a number.

New decimal systems described to express the quantity of loss
and the various names we might give it.
Calendars, for the function of indexing.
The funereal art of course requires its own
method of logistical management. None of this is easy.

Each one gets its own symbol, and then of course
each symbol needs a name, and so further ledgers are made
which cross-reference the symbols, their names, the calendar,
the dead, their names at different times again according to
the calendar, what happened to the bones bones bones,
and the placements of these various ephemera
among the documents upon the shelves which are within
the halls of record kept.

This is what we know.

Elsewise and thereby, as a natural product of the process,
we are enabled then to derive a method of timing,
and of spelling, and of account, whereby to run
the functional processes of consumption, production,
and the manner of the disposal of waste
in new and more developed ways.

And so we come to questions of efficiency.

The clerkhouse then becomes the working centre of operations
within the greater scheme of management which defines,
moment to moment, at any given time and in any given place,
who you are and what you're supposed to be doing.

Naturally enough, this is dreadfully reassuring, terribly efficient,
and awfully, awfully well fitted to the production of
a workforce secure in their identity.

We make so much art now. Not saying it's great art,
but there is a lot of it, much of it
performed using the same puppets which had been
engaged in our kangaroo court, and if you don't like it
you just try the next one. We make our art from bone puppets
and scribbled pictures of names and timings.
We make our art from our art
and then we make art just to make something that's not art
and then we make art about the differences between those two arts,
and all of it in the development of new logistical processes,
and the production of further records, and all then and therefore
indexed as usual within the greater system,
and allocated somewhat retroactively to our earlier taxonomies.

This is how we learn.

And then that means
the bone structures have become much more elaborate,
even as our bodies conform to their new uniforms.
We have a gallery within which
our artists display their grotesque arrangements of
our bones bones bones,
having imagined such horrors as might exist
outside this vessel or in
some other field somehow involved with ours,
and our children visit and stand beneath great monsters,
lovingly made from our ribcages, spines, skulls,
and all the bones bones bones,
and our schoolmasters have them intone their names
in great long strings of vowels, at first as one,
and then naming each letter before its sound,
and finally describing at length the symbol of the word,
the symbols of the letters of its name,
and any dates they might find useful for their reference as they go.

Some of them struggle to show their working and
these ones are introduced to the blood berry wine as early as possible
in the hope they might get one or two bits of
art we can keep talking about while still young,
before they lose their sense of self.

Thusly also we derive a system of class for the first time,
and then we know how to distribute our petals.

Perhaps the happiest side-effect of this crystal process has been
the liberty it has allowed our queen her god
to pursue their love without distraction, and (in fact)
the library within which the halls are lined with shelves
filled with ledgers of the cumulative knowledge of
the history of their loves is (in fact)
built in such a way that one might only approach their chamber
through it, but by oblique passages
which can (in fact) only be discovered by more esoteric analysis
of the correspondences between the various symbols there employed.

This (in fact) is how we built our priesthood.

TT and PP engaged predominantly
in criticism of these methods on behalf of our rulers,
specifically focused on those areas where you can see flesh,
otherwise in the design and production of new medicines,
tonics, and gentle poisons,
or as ever in the application of botty-smacks to forgetful children.
I am overcome.

BELOVED/ADORED/RESTRAINED

But our queen our god, the love they made. Bursting out like the
rude crop of spring, the obscene fruits, the dew and sap, the syrup
and honey. The rough snout, her blood and earth.

Above in the heavens they made a play of poetry in their devotion
to her, below the worms, betwixt the ledgers
all illuminated with the symbols of the stars, the names, the wheels,
and all the things which went between them inked
in the deep black of our great god's skin and all the blood
like wine and wine like blood and kisses on her pool like flowers:
PP and TT engaged in the performance of the standard rituals,
of troth and wed, of bond and consummate, all ruled by law of writ,
and always scurrying in attention to the needs of the union
or the rule of the crown, those then:
mundane, ecumenical, philosophic, esoterical.

From the varied frontispiece vignettes upon the ledgers of canonical
record, great tapestries are wrought and hung between the bones like
curtains, further veils upon the modesty of those who would love
immodestly and without restraint, and where small gaps remained in
twixt or tween that prying eyes could see, a mosaic then of broken
mirror shards reflecting back one's own eye a thousand times each
time a thousand times from every angle, never finding what they're
looking for, and each a thousand times a thousand times.

So veiled and thus disguised they lie,
all tangled about each other, their bone bed swing,
his horns and hair, her fruits and berries, and all the purple flowers.
So veiled and thus disguised there, new ornamentations are thus
expressed upon their whispered stories, the tales of what became,
the love made there, the darkness of this god
and purple his purple hunger, of thin hair, thin skin,
the bones bones bones, and how she sits there
just staining the little petals with her blood, and how deep
the deep dark black pool and its kisses which fill the floor.
So veiled and thus disguised -
 one cannot tell a lie, one does not know.
The love which we describe to one another,
each other, in our absence, a story of theirs which is not how it was,
how strange to think of what is absent
in the midst of these wedding rites.

Nature takes its course, of course. The soil gives forth its crop, the
toil, the rupturing reward, the sweat, the grafting thrust of tool in
field and all the little joys of spring we draw forth by it, the limbs we
lost, the flesh and bone we separate and all our fallen dead, and such
rude fruits just coming forth and bursting and everywhere sweet and
sticky and the beer, the wine, the honey mead, the drunkenness and
joy and all the dirt upon our fat fingers while they lie,
and everything that happens in the earth.

For myself I am managing, in spite of a lack of my usual distractions,
finding the presence of this love they make between them
and its purple purpose adequate for the time being,
time being what it is, and without attachment to other things.
I miss my friends laughing, their self-importance
having instilled in them a new seriousness, their purposes
much less the purple but the black and white,
but I do not miss the wavering of a vessel
destabilised by their misdirections, their folly,
and all that confused squabbling, that it got us here notwithstanding.

Love of course is coursing through it all, theirs being now
so utterly productive we are using it to irrigate the fields,
the crops then slowly turning red like the deep red blood
of her rich berries or purple like his blossoming,
and all the little petals like kisses on the spring
and springing forth like the little baby deer
or like the horns or like our purposes.
We read to each other in the evenings from
the less predictable records,
true ones where mistakes have been made in the inscription,
or those produced while
Tarantula and Pantyporridge were in their drink,
or those mistellings from the mirror tapestries
which had enough surprises in them to be amusing,
and then went home again to all the art from yesterday
we did again but different.

It's not like we were told, it's not what I had expected,
and certainly it bears no apparent relationship to
the manic fantasies my foolish friends put forward
before we knew that this is where we were,
but all in all the wine is better than a lack
for stimulating all the endless words our loving god and queen expect
in a vessel ruled by their effusions and the grafting toiling hordes
of hungry storytellers gathered in their universal school.
PP an TT still making marks on furniture. I am sated and retire
again to rest.

DIVINE PROCESSION

And so, of course needs must:
we bring back our wandering attention,
so full of loving pageantry,
to this our vessel and its passage,
the course it cuts, time being what it is
and love going where it will.

Nobody knows.
We all hurt as much as we can, and nobody knows,
not having the right symbols,
even as we head towards having said enough
not to need any more of these bloody berry symbols,
right or wrong,
and for all the art to have been made
enough times that we take it all for granted.
No more, no less, but the star we made
our destiny exploding,
and all the little monsters in their homes asleep. A few more sleeps,
a few more turns upon the wheel, a little more time, a deal more love,
an expense account and a register of losses.

And all the bones bones bones. Time flies.
PP and TT deciding to make a stone by compressing
the contents of our libraries beneath the great wheels
which crush the grains extracted by our work upon the fields.
The stone then purified for seven years by circulation
between the rain the dry sun the fruit store and the damp cold cellar
until no further change is seen upon it
and while the world turns, as we have discerned
in our studies, about the will of our purple god
in pursuit of his mistress, much liberty is gained
by observation of the world in locus around this our thick stone,
which having its own gravity concerns a great many
of our brighter brains among their preoccupations,
various and otherwise.

They glazed it in the heat of their attention
and by their many productions upon it,
observing how it remained unchanged as they marked
and prodded it with their inquisitive purposes
all purple and proud and clever and perceptive and arrogant
like lovers and all there in front of them
like young boys learning to masturbate.
And many more marks made elsewhere before returning here
and then again there in a markmaking dialogue toward their goal
towards an end
to this purple purple purpose they pursued.

Just always heading towards death. And there she is, still, swinging,
the wind about her hair all tangled,
and his horns, and the dirt in his rough snout,
reflections in the pool below and written in the sky above,
and all the time it takes to tell the stories,
and to make our way to the chamber
where the love is made between them, all in silence, all in the body,
and all the bones they rub like white stones
all in the middles of things,
beginning with purpose,
and time moves on of course, and love, and all the little kisses,
and through it all a sense that we are getting somewhere with it,
that it all will come together, that all the bones bones bones,
the ribcages, spines, skulls, and all the petals with her blood on them
sitting on the surface of the pool
are becoming one with the great dark god, his purple purpose,
our queen, and the everlasting rule of law
which is writ in the ink of the berries that taste like blood,
which dries deep and dark like his skin,
scraped into the shapes of the symbols of the letters, the names,
words, stars, wheels, and hand-me-downs
which fill the books which fill the shelves which mark the way
the vessel makes in tracing the wake
of its own emergence through this process.

PP and TT wholly engaged, consumed, absorbed,
in the ongoing motion of it all,
the back and forth from one to another,
the give and push and take and want and have and want and
forgetting and remembering and
just the bloody berry love of it.
And me there in the kitchen with the bitter coffee
and the breath from his dirty snout and the wet dirty earth
and the instability of death and dream
still slower than you might think.
Nearly fucking there.

Deer god. All tangled and consumed.
Your garland flowers and your knotted hair.
Your hunger and your rough and bloodied skin.
Her love professed, you burrowed in,
all purple and black her flowers.
All overcome. The song is sung.
And slower than you'd think.

The stone is then the only thing unchanging in the vessel,
unstable as it is, upon so shifting a foundation,
while everything around us changes all the time,
and all this time pours forth from the deep deep gorge
cut by our wheels as we course lovingly from place to place,
a crucible of transformation everywhere except between my hands,
PP and TT in observation, a stone whitening,
still, silent, made of all the names recorded
in the painstaking accounts of our dead,
becoming in the middle of it all.

BOXCUTTER

We have two methods then within the walls,
that of distinction and that of construction,
both being actuated by the application
of the same skills and tool as have been used in murder.
Everything we have learned about death and how to make it,
and all the pretty signs of its many varied names
scrawled upon the stretched skins in ledger after ledger,
all lining all these halls, all sacrificed then in the production of
our veils and veils between those bones bones bones.
And somewhere in it all, their love behind the mirrors.

A black tipped spear, a blade which tempered in the blood
has lost its shine but earned its own name,
a name greater than those which thus far we had contained,
a name which contains them all,
and with a secret spelling and a careful rule we cast it from itself,
a sword made new from old but still with all the murder in it.
A sharp sharp killing sword, and a black tipped spear,
two ways to kill, two wheels upon the broken earth,
my two companions, and somewhere in among it all
that other love remains unseen,
our dear black god becoming and our queen,
still slowly staining all the little petals in her berry blood like wine
and they land on the surface of the pool like little kisses
before they make their way into the earth below, they say.

And we have time.
These are the luxuries we have afforded ourselves,
time and space, and thereby novelty, for all the little compromises,
the amendments and the many by-laws,
and allowing also for books and other hand-me-downs.
Forever and ever amen. It's a fucking lot,
my grail cup has split in two,
for failing to contain the wait
for my little forever stone.

PP and TT bereft having completed their duties at least
for the time being to the satisfaction of all involved.

Rubbing the little shiny badges on their hats
and the buckles on their silly little shoes in the marketplace
lest we forget their important selves,
and eventually each polishing a shard of cup, spitting on them each,
grinding off the tarnishes with rags soaked in their piss,
and rubbing away on the pieces each, rubbing rubbing rubbing,
till they see their faces in em.

Our tapestry of tales told
about tales told,
our banqueting feasts,
our puppets made of bones and bones
and bones bones bones,
the leaves of stretched skin,
and all the little purple petals on the pool, in one;

our rules and measures, scales and laws and regulations,
our deer god our queen their love,
and everything behind the passages we built
to hide them from their shame, and the wine,
and the songs commencing
in the spaces where the bones had been, the other:

and all around the residue of our feasting
making marks upon the stories of our travelling
and for all the cartography we have undertaken
things have to some extent become obscure
and there are two roads at which we have arrived.
Two roads, two methods, and both a murder.

The crows are gathering now, croaking out their rough rough sound.
Sitting at the crossroads as upon the branches of an old dead tree,
croaking out their voices. TT and PP fascinated in observation of
them, furtively discussing a theoretical process by which to expediate
the bone bone bone stripping with applications of domesticated crow,
but eventually settling on beetle, having as ever secondary methods
for the production of luxurious quantities of shit, and working on the
assumption we'll move past this fork in due course.

Our store of fruits is now reduced just to a few buckets of
our sticky beer, the good wine spent.
Tarantula and Pantyporridge bereft again,
and holding their heavy heads, and slower than you might expect.
Still no lustre on my shards of broken cup,
my stone still, the same.

And then I am alone. Tree canopies and arched branches and all the solitude and dark green and the mud and light cuts through the trees, the brittle twigs and branches.

I am undressed. I am muddied and with my skin all scratched and bleeding, and leaves are in my hair, and everywhere the smell of blood and earth. And I am kneeling. There is movement everywhere. All these crossroads and always me, here. Dragging twigs around myself and through the earth and me there sitting on my heels, eventually describing a rough circle in the mud about me, all bound in a ring, and pulling up the grass the leaves and all the little flowers from within I cast them out. And there I stay, still, I am alone and yet I am still haunted.

First the sound of the birds in the trees, and then the wind, and rustlings and smaller things and all the little worms. And then the stirring sounds of voices in my past, and all the songs we sang, and the smell of berries upon the tongue like blood. And beating myself with my sticks and branches, beating my skin, breaking it open, and all the juice runs out like wine, and my knees in the mud, and my feet stretched flat beneath me, and I wait, still. So much sound and so much feeling and there is movement everywhere, and my breath heaving in my chest.

I am emptied out, like my ring in the dirt in the forest, and all the little flowers are gone, their petals all purple elsewhere, and I am still, and I am breathing, and around me everywhere is movement, and in my body, and in the biggest places and in the smallest and everywhere everything moving at the middle of the crossroads, alone. And I begin.

Long tangled howling vowels and ululating and babbling like the river and now like birds and hounds and now like all the little things, which crawling in the earth among the bones are still here in spite of all I've done. And weeping, and tasting tears like salt and rich with minerals and tears falling then on my scratched skin. And I begin.

A muttering dialogue between the tongue and teeth, that ululating tongue and all the harder sounds and all the vowels between them. And in my mouth a bitter metal taste like blood. A muttering dialogue between my hands, between my legs, twist inner and without, the secret truth and the all the ways the little lies emerge, beetles and bones, my lips, my teeth my tongue, and all the movement everywhere. And so again I begin.

A breath, a thought, a movement, and the way it feels. One in one out and again I begin, one in one out and again I begin, again and again, and always commencing in the middle of things, and living right where it all meets, and cutting a cross into my flesh, and all the little worms there, and a taste like blood, and all becoming in the middle of it all, and all commencing where it ends again: one in one out and then again, I begin. Sitting, still.

And then the darkness comes, creeping out from all the places it had been hiding, from the dirt and from the shadows and from behind me creeping round my shoulders like a veil upon my nakedness and like a blanket over the rude fruits and creeping things in the forest, and filling all the places marked out by absence. And now just humming, a long slow low one, and then a breath, and humming, and the sound goes away into the night and then another breath and the long low slow hum longer and lower and slower than you might think and then a pause, and then a slow slow breath in and in and in again and then beginning again a long slow hum. Eventually, I am emptied out. Perhaps tonight I will dream. This fresh stillness, this place where all roads meet, and this ring and all the space within it, and everything removed and everything brought forth, and this blanket darkness all about, and my breath has gone away and I am emptied out, and this is the moment.

All these crossroads and always me, here. Everything is moving all the time, an unstable vessel, an unstable environment, and our endless field of play, and every time a choice, commencement in the midst of all of it, and in the biggest places and in the smallest and everywhere everything moving at the middle of the crossroads, alone. And still. So we begin.

Everything then moving again around this fixed centre,
my friends and I, my little stone,
this gravity which pulls it all together, and in and out again,
precisely as had been observed for seven years before
and in line with predictions made by the priesthood during
their swooning fits among the many veils.
A crucible made of this earth
by arrangement of these relatively stable structures:
all the bones and bones and bones bones bones,
ribcages, spines, and skulls,
and all the magpie mirrors and our pied and clownish tapestries,
and lined with all the shelves and many ledgers
to create a vessel crystalline wherein will be revealed their loving,
our queen her god.

PP and TT having prepared for me a bed of pallets
beneath a table in the banqueting hall,
I then resting in recuperation from my brief spell in solitude,
and slower than you might expect,
and slowly becoming used again to the strange familiarities
of my companions in this vessel.
PP enchanted by discoveries of new harmonic theories
derived from his own studies into the correspondent proportions
of various paragraphs he found distributed among the collection,
TT expounding a philosophy of repetition and decay,
and their voices echoing around the empty hall,
and all the air moving out of their way.

The point, TT is quick to emphasise, is to arrive at silence
already paying attention to it, but then again to break it
just before it all collapses, and so with each breath comes life
into a place of death.

Everything is so unstable, all these spinning things
and all these attempts at stillness
and no matter how many more symbols we scratch
upon the stretched skins
all these words just make need of more words,
new words of explanation, of commentary,
of justification and inquiry
and by the close of every book several more will have begun,
and our ever expanding record increasing in depth, in breadth,
in complexity, but never stabilising,
never stopping in any meaningful way for any of us,
and beginnings being obscured within the complex lists
of our taxonomies of correspondence and of scale.

My energy returning I showed my friends what I had learned
in my still quiet spell in the forest, and laying out the papers of
harmonic form upon my bed, and first the breath
and then the sounds around us and all the ululation and the babble
and the hard sharp teeth and all humming a new song then for them
from nothing, which fluttered among those melodies remembered
and among the veils and was made of the same bones bones bones
and being arranged in a container of oblique angles and mirrored
shards reflecting it all, and in the middle of it the knowledge of
our queen her god and the love made between them and his name
forever and ever amen.

And our weapons held then lightly, swung not to kill
but just to catch the light in new ways which might then make
new shapes appear in the mirror
which might then lead the song along
to somewhere new, and then these moments of pause,
and all the repetition and decay,
and just this once not needing to write it down.

Two ways then to the sacred place, one within and one without,
one of lines made with sharp tools or grinding wheels
or lies or letters and one without, and a place where these ways meet,
and a space we make, and then a moment
where something new might happen, and through it all their love
revealed for what it is, for where it is, for its purple perpetuity,
and moving in and coming out and all the new rude fruits,
every death becoming, every parting between her legs,
all the bones appropriately arranged, the endless deep black pool,
and ever the swinging throne, unstable, in an unstable being, playing
upon a shifting field called forever which exists precisely to describe
the endless extent of their productive love, in shades of red and green
and grey, of purple black and white and stained with wine which
spills each time our loving cup breaks open, and everything moving,
and everything about this stone is dancing.

One hand on my breast and one upon my cock, eyes closed,
my weapons at my feet, and washed in the pool again
I lay my clean bones to rest, rocking myself to sleep
so much faster than expected this time.
Such wakeful dreams, this sleeping silent still.

We got a dog: as it was explained to me, an animal for companionship, my PP and TT being otherwise engaged with their processes and their studies of those processes and the lectures they performed upon those studies and of course the production of all the necessary records thereupon, and anyway the dog arrived following me when I returned from my brief spell in the forest, it was explained to me, this dog emerging from my solitude, and so then naturally suited to the solitude I pursued in the development of my own method, that without, and sometimes also howling when I was in performance of my chatterings and ululations at particular times throughout the day, in observance of the movement all around me.

It'll get bigger, they tell me, it's just a puppy, and shortly thereafter I am presented with a list of my responsibilities regarding the upkeep of this animal and the ways in which I am to diminish its ability to present its own marks in dialogue with the furnishings hereabouts, specifically of course being mindful that it not disturb the various arrangements of all the bones bones bones, but nowhere is it explained to me the function of this dog.

I can see what it does: it eats, sometimes the meat upon the unclean bones and even the beetles working there, sometimes our other wastes, and drawn by the smells of blood and of death and decay, and of the life they bring, and having a great sense for the detection of the whereabouts of all the little monsters in their homes or the many productions wrought forth from his loving betwixt her legs. It mutilates the records, often before the ink is dry. And it shits, everywhere.

And it sleeps, its ribcage heaving, its rough snout spluttering, its groaning and its nuzzling, and all upon the now scattered sheets of harmonic theory which had been laid so carefully upon my pallet bed. Such a large beast, so unrestrained by expectations, and so unconcerned with the conventions we had thus far defined in all this magnitude of inscriptions but here it was, and for some ungodly reason it seemed my friends had grown attached to it, and more than that persisted in their insistence that somehow this dog was mine, I was responsible for it, and therefore these endless duties, and frankly worst of all the shit, the many daily stoopings to retrieve its fertile droppings and to place them then into the laboratory containers for further observation in our new study on whether these beetles come out of the poop itself, or whether they are simply drawn to it from some other field somehow involved with our own, and it's not like I'm getting paid for it anyway.

And the little sexual humiliations, this big black lumbering beast all towards me or towards my friends, and always in the fever and hunger and the big snout and the rude fruit and all the politeness about this animal in spite of that snout wherever it goes and the productions and the marks they make and the smell of animal that carries with you. And so new tools, one sprung from our studies of murder and its application in finer and finer distinction, and one from our wedding rites and my time within the forest: a cutting motion to subdue the fruits, diminishing at least the more passionate markings of this animal and its loving play, and from a rope a binding ring by which to then define a limitation, at any given time and in any given place, upon its roaming movements, and where that ruddy snout can go. And finally a name.

I called it dark and called it wild and called it from the nighttime and called it from the forest and called it into my solitude and called it a roaming beast and called it a rough snout and called it full of shit and called it inconsiderate and called it everything I had called myself at one time or another and so called it mine, my dog, my big black dog.

My friends thus satisfied, my companion then subdued, and order to some extent returned in accommodation of the animal its needs and its desires, and having extended the bed of pallets now somewhat, I am able to return to my consideration of the new sounds produced by just opening the mouth and howling and closing it in increments at will. And so I begin.

And that stone, still, sitting there,
while everything around it moves and shakes and babbles and
ululates and tugs and hides and dances and eats the berries like blood
and the meat on the bones and sometimes the beetles
and all the little worms. And not a mark upon it.
And for this particular feast an excess of abstinences,
all tools relinquished, all singing ceased, all sitting still, all breathing,
and no markings made and no choicemaking and
just paying great attention to the arrangements
of ribcages, spines, and skulls, and all the other bones bones bones
and listening to the beetles and the creeping things
and the big sleeping dog with all its guttery ululations
and the brightest minds paying their attention to the stone, still.

And this might take a while, stillness being so slow to come,
so slow to occupy, so slow to observe, so so slow in its productions,
and so the greatest excess in this feast of abstinence is in
the luxurious quantity of nothing else to do
so carefully arranged around it,
allowing for the first time in a great quantity of time
for time to pass by untouched by our interferences
beyond those which it causes with all the little kisses it makes
as it goes, and some like thoughts and some like pain
and some like memory and the way that silence turns
all the words into music and pictures
and all the music into memories
and all the pictures eventually turning into the little monsters
which make their homes inside the spaces
between the bones bones bones.
And so rich this feast, just for having so carefully arranged
such nothing else to do.

And so long now, for seven years upon a further seven years
in observation, our god knows just how long before that,
in this perpetual study of the sounds made by everything that moves,
of the motion of this vessel and the grinding wheels
and everywhere they have cut a groove into the deep black earth,
and all the little worms, and our own productions
in the performance of our duties and our otherwise engagement
with more profound matters, being then mundane, ecumenical,
philosophic, esoterical, and the maintenance of the veils
and the production of mirror mosaics, and eventually the crystal
and the stone, and the development of our tools, and all the murders
and their reapplications with greater and greater distinctions,
and the compromises, and gratefully eventually forgetting
our own names and that also being fine
because that's what this space is for
and the record will remain should we wish to keep the same name
or indeed, all being so silent, and sitting, still, we could just
write new names for all of us, or one for us all,
but for now the thing that binds us all,
and separates us from everything which moves about us,
is this stillness, still sitting, still silent,
and in quiet contemplation of everything which is not.

And as we hold there begins a subtle music
which might be the sound that's made by their loving,
our queen her god behind the veils and bookcases
and his names called out forever and filling all the space we made
and pain comes and goes as we sit there filling our attention
with the music carried by the passage of time
in abstinence from our interferences. Such frustration,
and resisting the urge to hold on to any of it,
or to fight against the time that just keeps coming,
or to turn the attention to other things
or what it is we might get on with when this feast is over,
and all the little ways we deny ourselves indulgence in this moment
and that's why this feast takes so long, so long forgetting our names
and all the little rememberings
and then the sounds around us and calling us
all the monsters in their loving homes
and the beetles and the worms there, and calling us
bones, and full of shit, and that big dog still heaving in its slumber
and sitting, still, and those very brightest minds turning again to the
perpetual solitude of this our stone and its great heaviness
and so slow the wait and so faint the subtle music and none of it
appearing in concentration and therein revealing the solution,
and in the absence of our maintenance the many veils fall,
bringing the ledgers into disarray, and no longer
supporting the crystal structure of the many shards of mirror mosaic
and a wind blew through it all and then the scents of pine and mud
and metal blood and one long breath in and in and in and letting go
of everything and dissolving all the bones in the endless black pool
and it turning out that in the bones is where the worms
had made their little homes, all crawling in the narrow marrow
and not minding the beetles at all, and everything returning
to the belly of the earth from whence it came.
And a grave made there, and throwing down the earth, all in his eyes
and in his nose and covering his nakedness
and covering it with tracks and leaving a wheel there
as a headstone and marking it all with a cross at the crossroads
and then walking away and never looking back.
And it's very very possible, things being what they are,
that this is how it ends.

II

3/1

NOTES & COMMENTARY 13-10

1 - commencing then centrally, at the posited ending, and in darkness. This passage is about inevitability and its intersections with possibility at the crossroads defined by the many many murders that occur in any given moment.

2 - decomposition begins at the moment of death, which is prior to burial, prior even to the funereal processes, often prior to any awareness that a murder has been committed, and in many cases it is the process of decay which precipitates the murder. Time thus is a plough, and our wheels the agents of its commission.

3 - life is present at every part of the process, inevitably, death merely an impression upon the earth which teems, the kisses of a dying body in love with itself in dying. Our weapons are forged from that which they rend. Our blood spilled is the product of this loving. This loving is the spilling of our blood.

4 - music occurs in the movement of wheels, and in the resistance or yielding of the earth upon which they make their marks. Music occurs in various agonies or otherwise in passion and most beautifully when these combine into deathly murders and the forgetting of names. Very often this is done in full awareness of intent.

5 - homelessness is the normal state of all things in creation, everything else being made of stories told in the darkness so the little ones can sleep. Monsters are born in the commission of falsehoods and grow in the darkness which enshadows those about whom these falsehoods are woven. This begins with myself.

6 - demons bring forth, as angels mediate, and betwixt is the wheel and all the little devices of torture and the bodies of the living dying and the dead, for the production essentially of vapours. Literature mocks this in pantomime and science in abstract.

7 - oh my darling, I forget in my scurryings that these words are for you, these words are to remind you of the things you know in your body, and all a poet does is spend time in love with the body and death and listening to their pretty stories and then we draw their pictures and it is because of love of them but my darling you are them, and it is you that I will grieve most tenderly and it is you that I will be thinking of in the moment of my deathly solitude when my body and death come together on the bed my lover gave me in the house that came from my friends and within which, whether here or somewhere else, it's just you and me and the body and death and these pretty stories.

8 - my best friends are the dead and the animals that eat on them without telling lies, and my brothers are those who are lying in bed with the truth telling their own pretty stories, and my lovers are those that come to me with kindnesses and they are the living ones. It is my privilege that I am told by my dead friends I can come with them, and in my little stories, lying in the bed I'll die on, I am to show the way, if by obscure illustration as much as clear instruction.

9 - it requires both hands, both wheels, one in and one out and in equal measure or death will be terribly unsatisfying in its ending. The longer it goes on for, the more life can be riven from it, all these glorious murders. It is time to forget the words, let me speak for you because I speak for them, for it is from the god of death that the god of lies learns the themes he weaves into his song.

10 - in the end, it's only your friends who get close enough to kill you, and we should welcome it, because these will have been our best friends and the easiest to love once all is said and done, I'm sorry my darlings but you will meet me again, and I will look you in the eyes and the lights will go out.

11-13 instructions can be derived from the text regarding the production of illustrations, my darling,
but this is for you x o

And burning a blend of myrrh, benzoin, and the green tops from the cedar plant, spiced with mace and juniper, and it being agreeable a glass of the wine made with seeds of the rue of death, as it will be in the tea which kills us, or the bath which cleans the body for funereal procession.

And here the beginning is ended, we can commence with the middle of it all.

2/1

NOTES & COMMENTARY 9-6

And so it must be clear that the spectre which looms over the creation of this poem, which though it has clear boundaries will go on forever, is my own death and my great love for it, and the weaving dance with this dying object of our shared devotion which is the body we now consume, my flesh, which I have prepared for you to scrawl upon, o my beloved, oh my little darlings, make your monsters come into my home and let me tell you about the many times I have died:

1 - when I was unloved as a very small child in very small ways but often

2 - inside while being ignored and the doctor said man up, none of us yet knowing my capacity for pain, and then for three days, not upon a cross but upon my bed alone, while my family was otherwise engaged

3 - then again on the fourth day when I died in the hospital, the second time, and my organs failed and they tried to cut it out of me but you can't, and this too for three days but the machines kept me alive long enough for the prayers to call me back and I learned to walk again for the first time

4 - when I commenced in my commission as a poet

5 - again when I stole the other poet's lies to dress myself as a magician

6 - again, and this time because poetry and magic both function to destroy everything you love, most importantly your love for yourself

7 - and this time in the hospital again having heard death approaching from my vantage point atop the tree in the forest, the door creaking open, his shoes upon the stone floor and none of that being possible in the forest at the top of a tree, and this time for three months and I came out the Monday after Easter. The whole time I was dead they let me come and go as I please and I and all the other ghosts traded our drugs and stories and told a lot of lies about how much we loved each other because we really did but everywhere was a lived awareness of how it ends, and this all because the magic works but I had not drawn a proper circle

8 - and then for three years in silence and finding my voice, again in the forest and sometimes in a temple, this time with love and death and fire and someone gave me a version of the picturebook that spoke to me and told me all about how everything I thought was the urgency of living was in fact the slow and loving motion of death in the darkness, when we are alone in our beds at the end of the day, because we love each other

9 - and of course among it all the many deaths by dreaming
drug just to come and find more pretty stories from my friends where
they lie, and some of which involved throwing myself off buildings or
down the stairs because death will come when you call him and it
pays to be in bed or the forest when the magic really starts working,
and certainly within a well constructed circle

10 - and I have had as many deaths as jobs by now, but of
course there are the cuts made by those I have loved and who have
loved me. These are those who have killed me, my friends and lovers,
my companions, but they will not be my witnesses in this, these most
beautiful moments of loving embrace with my queen, but you and I
my darling in our quietude can hear the beating heart of it all
because we lay our heads upon each other's bones

11-13 and here my love you are please to make your own
cuts upon me, and to kill me countless times, because I have brought
you close enough to do it my darling, between my ribs my spine or
inside my mouth where you have been because you, my love, like I,
am death in love

This bit in the middle then is where we make our love, where I am
most exposed, and where it should by now be clear I have consented
to this death, as to all those which have come before, and as to the
eternity of deaths which are to come, and you are welcome to come
with me, my darling, hush, let me speak, come with me my love,
and nothing will ever be the same again

1/1

NOTES & COMMENTARY 5-2

And so it remains to present the deaths with which I was really taken,
those which came in my devotion and my fervour,
and my lunar deliriums, and my bacchanal ecstasies,
and those which were made by my own knives, those I made myself
whether in my hand or in the hands of my loved ones
who had been brought close,
and not those which did not mark my skin,
but those made by my lovers while I yet held their hand,
while I looked into their eyes, and while I beheld the fire that
poured forth from the wound in my chest reflected in their eyes, and
those made in my long solitudes in my very carefully drawn circles
consisting of an extended litany of funereal preparation and
eventually that most delicious death and lying on the floor
in my sackcloth for two days with ash upon my brow
and that third day however I discovered that even having trampled
my circle somewhat it had been drawn well enough,
like the blood from the ring on my chest wherein you
my darling then cut the cross that I will continue to make
in those times when you are gone away,
that it became my crown
and I began to discover that death in fact is only the beginning:

And the futures that were taken from me,
because every grief is as much about the broken promises as the loss.
And it bringing me to a willingness to accept my own death,
even to love it, not for the endings but for the liberty
that comes when flesh yields to earth
and just the wonderful inevitability, my darling how you love me
no matter how often I forget myself, and I am so filled with sorrow
and grief because I will cause you such pain my beautiful one
as we die together in this dirty bed.

Our children will be born once we are both dead, and you will bear mine when I am gone but it will be your own howling and how wide you can open to let it out that will bring it forth, and that child will be called Theleme, though we will never know her name.

And I must acknowledge the deaths upon death
which came with fatherhood and how I was slain there
and let myself be because I would rather die than fight
in front of my child. My beautiful child, you are called
the names of my god and the voice in my heart,
and my god is a great devil and the voice in my heart is his mother
who made him and I am nowhere to be seen my darling
that's your business not mine, mine is just the love we make
and the construction of these little homes for monsters
but one day I hope you'll read them and forgive me, I died for you
because your mother asked me to, though she said it cruelly,
and I gave it willingly because I can offer no greater love
than a willing yielding acceptance as the earth fills my nose
my mouth my eyes and all is dark. For I am never not dying.

Perhaps you will find me easier to love now I am dead. We are all
bearing each other towards our graves, whether by cut
or by funeral preparation, all in the production of eulogy after eulogy
which seems to be the function of the species, and which alongside
the shitting, the eating, the fucking, and all the different other deaths,
adds up to a sulphurous perfume, and one which we are told
the angels shy from, but which is in fact the smell of my goddess
giving forth her loving from between her dying legs,
and it is in the vapours that we find the keys to the kingdom
because the bounty of death is dream
and the priests are those who engender it,
whether by gross instruction, obscure illustration,
or the presentation of oblique opportunities to spy upon our loving,
or ideally in the performance of all these adorations
while dying in front of you. And no matter how much we listen
to the crows we'll never know,
and like everyone else they will find us easiest to love
when we are dead.

My love I have asked you for a great deal,
and I will take everything from you,
and I will give it to strangers who haven't yet been born,
and it is not callous my beautiful one, it is because
our love is from the place where darkness embraces the bones
among a blanket of moving earth.

It was never about you or I.

0/1

THE DEATH OF OUR THESES

1 - and then we're back at the beginning, where I am to introduce you to my companions: a spider and a clown. My spider weaves the webs in which to catch the bugs and the dew and the morning light, my clown entangled then within it all makes a comic play of his failures and fallings.

2 - it's all so lovely, when one just sits around and let's it come forth, one being the line around the space, which is nothing but love, two then being the faces of their love, and three being the time taken to make it. My queen then is the body, the flesh, and how she yields to me when I love her, and how I yield such joy and sadness from it, and all in my mind, which is where the body tells her pretty stories.

3 - and the pantomime of love and death and the stories and the made up names and beneath it all just you my darling, that body which envelopes me, your haunted flesh, and I, standing at the edge, forgetting my name, telling you how much I love you, and grieving every time we called you in the night but were deceived, when that which came forth was called love but did not have its space to roam, and it is by binding our demons as we recoil in horror from their ministrations that we create the monsters which kill us, everything emerging from the underworld as is the fashion here.

4 - and in the stars the intimations of narrative and order and a parade of tiny dying fires to bring us back to the beginning again, in love, having moved through it in a succession of deaths all of which are just to yield more bloody fruits from deep in the burning womb of this our body. My brother who is not I, who cannot come here, and who does not know what lies beneath, is the saddest love I have given because that fire has consumed so much. How many who love us do not understand any of it, and how we kill ourselves again and again because they don't know who they are, where they are, and what they are doing. I failed you my brothers because this place is where we find out if we knew her before we were born, if we recognise her when she comes, and whether we were able to walk without being shown, knowing instinctively the location of the berries, and where we will make our love. My brother in your lust for murder you have lost your love for death and the blood then will not redeem you. It is in the earth where your absolution awaits, it is there that you will discover how much we loved you all along.

5 - that dog. I'm the dog of course, and whether or not I like it, or even like dogs, is very much not the point.

6 - mostly my companions are you my beautiful ones, o adored, beloved monsters of a dying world, look at yourselves in your beauty and your splendour and your majesty. Each of you, each limb, each organ, each vessel of this flowing blood, given unto your bounded troth, becoming then a crossroads, and marking it upon your heart, the ring and the cross, and who have then forgotten your own names as the fire of what lies beneath rises out of the flames of your own cut flesh, each of you who are the same as me, each of you lovers, each of you sacrificed unto love, each of you here with me in the charnel house and burning and who can sit and watch it all with innocence and love and their eyes open and drinking from the skulls and stripping the ribs of flesh and arranging the spines and listening to the heartbeat that then remains: I have drawn this for you, and I have spoken, and together we have brought forth such terrible and beautiful things out of the play of our love for each other, looking into each other's eyes as the lights go out and telling little pretty stories about the things we already know in our bodies

7-9 and so beloved now it is for you, because being a priest made of poet and magician, and dancing in the manner of spider, and performing in the manner of the clown, I have drawn this circle, and having drawn it now so well so many times, and again each time it became obscure, and because finding myself alone in the forest or upon my loving bed as I die there I discover I am yet in love, I offer it to you. What it calls forth is not mine my darling, it is yours, and as these little kisses on the surface of the pool make their way below, there is nothing left for me to say my darling but I love you.

III

And of my brother? Who am I.
We are dead my darling, let us lie here
together and count the stars
Describe for me your spider's web and the
light it catches and I will see through you
into such wonders as I had not considered
Let me lie upon your bed and remember in
my body these things I had forgotten
Tell me your story love, however it goes,
sing to me your chorus, and lead me to
the place where you find yourself in death,
in love, and forgetting your own name

All these words are but a scaffold
mere bones, but between them we find the
intimations of familiar movement, the
silent suggestions of music, the subtle
changes in the body and what this does
to us, and what comes forth. These words
have lived and died a life and died
so many times and from the earth
this tongue, all the voices of the dead
forgotten and remembered and destroyed
and transformed and here we are

In the wake of a fallen empire.
Shall we speak plainly
in this bastard tongue?
Your robes are neither white nor black,
Neither are your oaths or curses binding
In the temple we are to undress ourselves
Even in this ecstasy of
making these words, this is not
the ecstasy from whence they came
This is not the end for either of us
but in the ruins of the temple we might find
that which will sustain
darling it will not be the murderers who
survive their engagement
it will be the lovers - so let us lay down
our weapons having discovered
in this war,
what it was we were fighting for
This love, this death
This love for death
This death, in love
And afterwards the fields of bloody
flowers - remembering the dead
Marking their names in inscriptions and
watching as they are forgotten

The simplest truth is this:
it being easier to love the dead
only serves to bring us to
the commission of our own mortality
a confession of our love beneath the wings
and written in a babbling tongue
in consideration of the motion of the stars
while in loving adoration of that which
comes forth from below

But while we are dying my darling
It is just a moaning howl
When the body is in the bed,
Then in eulogy we make our markings
This priesthood demands such sacrifice
Leading each other to death,
And speaking for each other
Lest we forget the dead

I am emptied out, and in such loving bliss,
such glow of how I died alone
being brought there by your love
by all the murders
by my dead friends
and by the little lies I told to tag along
and here I am with these easy words
let us enjoy the silence

Love is a river and death is the earth
and time is what they make in passing
as they explore each other, let us drink

This water, let it fill this body
let the river lead us to our deaths
undressed and without shame
yet in playful abandon
alone in bed with each other
telling lies about the future
that our children will make true

Can you hear the birds my darling?
I have taken to placing treats upon
the windowsill following your suggestion
and they are coming closer
all tapping their beaks on the glass

Little pied crows with their shiny stolen
shards of reflection
and such a lovely home it makes
and in my nest I have scattered papers
and images of my reflections on the art
and images by my friends which
show me something I recognise
in my body, this lovely dying vessel
beneath the wheeling stars,
carried by the river to the sea

Goodbye my loves
we are all dead
and dead to each other
I am not alone, and in the stars we will
die forever, and the light we leave
will light courses for our fellows
we could not have predicted
the business of the magician in truth
being predication

After my sackcloth murder I met my closest friends
We sat in the ancient tomb and played with cards and images
And later walking in the ruined chapel
I watched my friend pick a broken egg
from where it lay, and kiss it
and blow upon it
and he took it to the little stream and placed it there
and silently he watched it float away
and that space and that moment
was the gap wherein I saw my priesthood
little egg is broken
little prince has been eaten by the monsters in the night
their name is the silent regard we give them as they go, beloved

Kill yourselves my darlings
and undress yourselves for the love of it
here, drink: my blood, my sweat, my cum
my shit, my piss, and the rattling phlegm
from deep within the damp halls
between my ribcage and my spine

And realising they cannot hurt you,
because this suffering is love
and realising they never knew your name
and speaking into the silence
the gods and all our dead friends
in my mouth, I find I am howling

This dog beneath her outstretched hands
the cup of life broken open
the waters of the rivers of death
and that which has ever lived beneath
their loving, revealed because we died
for them, not they for us

How endless this parade of dying beauty
are you to be wedded my darling
at the feast, has my dark god
made his court in advance
upon your heart
and darling do you have
the taste of the blood in your mouth?

Kiss me my love and let our bodies bask
in the dying embers we present
through our flesh, our loving
vessel, we don't have to go anywhere
there is nothing else to do
but lie here

Take my name darling, I respond only
to you, your calling me forever
this apocalypse is what we came for
let go with me and in it will we discover
quite what it was this dying love was for

This was always a marriage arranged
by the rhythmic motion of the stars
dancing in the silent darkness of the night
and her comings and goings
and what she trails behind her,
all our dead, our friends, the weary
and all the lost ones, and how pretty
the flowers that remain, floating
and how fleeting the moment when everything is right for something
new to start, commencing in the darkness
and beckoning you back my darling

When I was young and foolish I
chased the moon
but it was not my queen
and knowing now what I knew not then
that she has ever loved me,
that liar god who is equal friend of death,
o dogfaced ape, and carrier of light
seeing in my silly songs
that devotion to her which is
this coursing river

I have forged a ring for you my darling
in the fire, and tempered it
in the water, and my love
I buried it in the earth,
where it was readily haunted
will you enter in, but of course
you told me your answer
before either of us knew
seeing the same light reflected in each other
in all its varied hues
and let us agree that we will die here
in our perpetual love, for the sake
of love itself

Beloved, wherever we go
here we are, this ring
and the cross upon our hearts

THE MOURNING LIGHT

And seeing my reflection
now clearly in the pool
and not recoiling from it,
these lines and all this death

They told me now you have died
your hair will keep growing
They told me when we come of age we are
crowned with wreaths of dark and pointed
leaves and the little berries
They said we are all this movement
this death, this feast
anointed in the blood which flows
from our mother's loving cup
and born in the wilderness
but knowing how to walk
and sleeping in the day in youth
for following the moon at night
and dying then across the ocean
an arrow betwixt
neither being in the earth
nor being of the sky
and then no more the gods to come
but here we are, my darling
have you had your fill
are you lying comfortably in your bed
and will you lie here with me in the middle
of the forest
till we wake my love
everything then becoming new?

And they said wear the rich clothes,
beggar king
and the jewels of your office
uncreated one
and most of all,

This is where I shall begin my tale
come closer lovely one:

There are two ways each to go, each road
The high, the low, for us from east to west
Or west to east, and back again
Our arms outstretched
Across the horizons
From fire to earth and back again
Our sun has his lovers,
And most of all the moon,
And her sister when she is absent
And all together here
Our moon loves all
With wild abandon
And the star which wanders
Falls in love with everyone
Our purple god pursues the flesh
And in the earth, our green goddess
But it is to the wild god
In the end
That all these adorations are made
For the god of the fire
Is the god of the hearth
And the god of the fuel
Is the god of the fire
And standing in the centre
Of a circle being perfect
Forever redrawn in time
At this crossroads,
I encompass them all
And dying here, have discovered
The secret tongue
The bastard script
The back door into the temple
Without names and numbers
But through my adoration alone

My darling are you sleeping
Oh my brother are you listening to the words
Who are we
Where are we
And what are we doing
When we are all alone?

And what the earth brings forth is just
A little death between friends.

Standing each at two points of a triangle,
my lovers and my companions
And I in the east and facing west
How beautiful the light there dimming
in the sky, my fond lover
That light I have borne, and here we are
Living and dying in the middle of it all

We are all slain, and lying about
counting the fallen, the monsters carrying,
the birds then stealing, in the expense
and accounting of our many loves:
these costs are not to be paid,
nor are they for the little children
becoming like whom in our innocence
is the function of the return
from death's wild embrace
o night, o moon
o coming sun
o purple rule and green her gown
and red and black the flowers
all of these woven about me,
my blanket in the darkness
my peacock flame
my skin like the snake I have
come to live with in my dreams
recognising all the names
of all my gods, are written there
on the skin grown and shed and eaten
and grown again
such rainbow luminescence
o how I love that snake
my tongue
my love, my adoration
and the manner of my loving

The richest deaths are in the company
of animals, who being yet more innocent
than children, have no need of prayer
or fairytales, or lists of name and number
nor do they need to pay a cost of entry
this loving death is for us all, and no god
nor child of earth and blood, nor even
time itself will ever come to know her
till they too are sitting, here upon my
garland swing of bones, and looking down
there in the pool below beholding
their own reflection, and it being pleasing
and breathing in the vapours, they too will be
the recipient of all the gifts of death
which are just the little stories
falling from our lips like kisses
and landing on the surface of the pool
they rest a moment, disturbing
my reflection just long enough
for something new to be seen

And what joy, what precious jewel
what perfume and what play
in the yielding earth we find the crop
emerging then in the manner of this place
from deep below her ruptured flesh
according to our starry writ
and coming here betwixt
these sheets, your legs, this earthy bed
my hair and yours entangled
unmasked and unashamed
having seen the fruits of hell, these marks
upon our living flesh
and recognising the scent of the hot breath
with all the blood all on it
These deaths my darling were the richest

We are our own children
My love and I, and we are bearing ourselves
Towards another life, a million, a plenitude
of names and faces, eagerly
You, my love, your body and the things that live within it
Your gut and heart and all the bloody gore
and everything that will be taken from you
will be your riches not in the hereafter but here,
after, and in this earth
We are not the same, you and I,
but in the presence of the gods they see the gods who
we give our living flesh to, and given breath
and that then being our new birthright
they now come to us to play, and calling us by our name

My love, and all are welcome
in the earth we all are naked, and all are free of blame

Where would you lay your sadness
if in discarding it you came to know her loving

THIS CRUCIBLE

O my friends and lovers, gather
Here alone each in your forests
I have made the preparations for the feast
Bring your hearts and bring your bodies
For to taste the bloody bounty
And to be anointed each one as a priest

And so the bell rings: according to our number
A fire is lit, the perfumes are revealed
And all are cleansed in the purifying waters
In the east our great dark god reclining
About us our companions, to our left hand
those who bring us gifts of loving
To our right, those who make
their loving in the earth
And around us are four pillars
The sword and spear, the cup and stone
Our bones swinging above the pool
There are many sacraments here

Let us sing the old songs
and calling forth the names of our dead
and calling forth that fallen
wandering lover
and following the way back through their loves

Before these great old friends of ours
Let us undress ourselves of names and stories
And dress instead in new finery
First with songs of art
Those which intimate their movements
Then with songs of death
Moving closer to the flame
And finally with songs of silence:
watching as the falling petals
disturb our reflections upon the pool
eventually to go beneath

And then the wine because this feast is for life
Our ecstasies are for death, but not for now

And sitting, our bone swing stilling
observing the dimming of our lover's
western glimmer
let us make our adorations, moving in the silence
but let us do it in the consciousness of breath
and let us never yield until the wine has brought us overcome
and lying there, upon our bed
let us then die with waters
and so to come upon the place at last where all the love is made
and darling tonight you shall dream
such rich jewels my love
such finery
and all about shall be silent
the dog still sleeping at the crossroads
my lover let me hold you for a while
for I have such lovely things to tell you in your sleep

And what became there darling is for you
It is not my business, mine in truth
Is merely the predication
Of your trothal my beloved
But the night is yours for love my little deer
May you find yourself anew here in the dew

There is no contract but the flesh
And the vows my love come later.
Carving the record of your
lying there in silence
Starting with a circle, darling

Starting with my love

This stone is in your heart
and will be revealed to you in the breaking
open of your cup

There are many songs from this stone,
but those which are adored of the goddess:
are often sung in silence or in memory
and come before the words
this stone is in the crystal loves
no words are sung within it

Here begins our reconciliation
with this loving queen, that recognition
we bestow on her, in spite
of all the ways she suffers for us
for our follies, darlings,
leave her love
for our follies, darlings,
leave her love

This one is in fact the prior music
that song so hard to hear
being subtle and so often mocked
in science as in art, it is a silent song
And it is in the combination
of this one here with that
where all else shall be wrought
my darling tears my lover weep
and let it shake your body oh my little one
here you are, my children safe
there is no coming to the feast without undressing

in making love, by our deep pool,
by love's quiet indulgence
and letting what she brings appear
this stone gives its refulgence
let it break my darlings
for our follies:
leave her love
for our follies:
leave her love
let her come

This loving is for them, my loves
This howling is for you
Let them live their lives
And love them for it
This is not a jealous spring
Herein the waters whereby
We bring our enemies, as our follies
And killing them in love
As we offer ourselves to death
In these waters we are reconciled my darlings
Not in the hereafter,
But here, and after, all my loves

We must tend to our preparations as lovers
this flesh adored, and made beautiful
this willing loving spring
let your cups be broken darling
and let the loving be for them,
my love, this howling yet for you
For our follies, darlings
Leave her love
For our follies, darlings
Leave her love

STONE OF DEATH

This stone is in your body
and will be revealed to you by the stone
of love, but not in its absence

This stone sings in ululations and the gnashing teeth
and in the gentle pressing kisses
and in the place where all the purple comes
and these songs are ones for loving
and for moving in the darkness until we are overcome

My darlings do not dig this earth,
but make it soft by the stone of the water
lovers lie there, lovers take it in
my lovers now express
your adorations on the flesh,
the bank around the pool
will hold my darlings, have no fear

This mortality of ours, so full of terrors
and the monsters we make in our markings
is where we see her face, and feel her touch
adore her for her fruits, though bloody
for her willing flesh and in our grip upon it
adore her for the fullness of her forest
adore her for the richness of this blood she gives
adore her with the feasts and clinging perfumes
adore her in your wine and in your song
and most of all adore her, here
in this loving moment
in this dying movement
of our living dying loving howling song

And learning to fall in love
with abandon and without regard
for losses, being ourselves
this graven earth from which these bounties come

Let us haunt this flesh, with ash
and mud and daubing lines and circles there
upon your loving place,
but not for you my darlings for the others
and in our becoming through this earth
let us learn to speak then plainly
unadorned, and even with a dirty tongue
my beautiful dying lover, this capacity to love
my lines and wheels and monsters
all the little worms and beetles
of my precious kingdom overcome

This stone is of the transformations in death
The ruptured soil
Our comings and goings
Beloved of our queen,
Made loving in her accommodation
And coming before to make her way,
As with the others, this will
Never yield to her productions
The ecstasies they engender
Having liberty from those that brought them forth

This stone is in your hand
and will provide the methods of murder
and of deceit, by which we will reveal their loving

this song is sung in the moments after love
this stone is carved with diagrams
and with letters
and none of them being true but yet
leading us back from our homes into that loving centre, this stone is
what we share
with lovers who have not yet tasted flesh

Carve my darlings, scrape and cut
and yet do not perform your artistry
in the manner of the stonecutter
but around this stone make treasures
of the supple earth, my queen
adore it in your passions
and in your lovings, reveal her many faces
killing the soft stone with the hard
and calling her to life

Remember then the ways to cut
the first with distinction
the second to kill
the third in preparation
the fourth in feasting
and then forever in our babbling tongue

And having prepared this statement,
send it forth, it being then already dead
and what life comes of it
no longer being your concern

This stone is sharp my love
and though it is a sword it is an arrow
and though it is a line it is a star
and though it is a lie it's told in love, my love
becoming then, a letter to the heart

This song then too is writ in silence
but will be then sung back to us
with pretty lines we draw from mark to mark
this loving yielding agony
is entirely for them, my loves

This is the stone of predication
the stone which dropping into the pool
carries the furthest reverberations
consequently it is the biggest stone
this being it's grandest deception
crumbling as it does between the fingers
or as it is destroyed in the fire
or otherwise obscured
by tears or by the waters of the pool
or wine or foolish blunder
hold it lightly oh my lovely ones

Remember that your knife is dipped in poison
handle it with care my loves
this weapon is the tool that disturbs the crown most easily
but dip it often in her black waters love
and let it lead you in her loving

This art is hardest to perform
in the place where it tells its stories
and so we must approach it from below,
in the presence of our cup and in the earth
failing as it does in its attempts at cleverness
wherein intentions are obscured
in spite of her loving

This stone is in all things
and will be expressed in our now profound
transformations within the crucible
and in our expressions without
and in our fine apparel
and certainly in the revelation of our perfumes
and it is from this stone that our circle is composed

this stone sings in all our adorations
it is the singing voice
it is the way the river moves
and the steady motion of the plough
the lust of death and love of murder
it lives in all directions, and does not shy
away and will not leave us o my lovers

This is the agony my beautiful one
Screaming as the bones are stripped
And the fire which takes
And what it gives is not the same
This is the serpent of the flame,
and it is everywhere my love

This is the peacock tongue
This is the song of all its lovely lies
And nothing ever happened how it's said
Go to sleep now little children
Said this serpent with the peacock tongue
And dream of all the little monsters little ones
Said this serpent when our love was done
Just lie there

Forever eating the skins of the fallen and bearing their marks
and all the colours are present here
This is the lamp and it is the elder staff
Kiss the top of the wand my love and call forth the fire
Whisper all the names of those you have loved,
and let it have them here my darling
And breathing in the vapour oh my pretty loving child
Let it set your tongue alight

Prayers are for the little ones, brought forth
by priests in their nightly thievings, lying there
of what was freely given in the adoration of our queen
make your pretty nests my darlings
let your flowers grow
and should you find they are consumed
in the fire of this great stone
be grateful then, for this fire
though warm for lovers
is the snake which killed our queen
in love forever

This then is the only stone that will remain,
being the ecstasy in which these others then were forged
This diamond here among it all

My love for you my darlings

This rest then is for you:

**enjoy the silence, and let her loving fruits
give forth from your yielding adorations
my darlings, it is in the markings that we make
wherein the beauty of the body is revealed**

**Have no fear my loves, what comes next
will be borne of a terrible ecstasy
but we lovers will sustain, by our stone pillars
having died so many times before
by so many hands, and still
and when it ends my pretty ones
then we shall make our beds
and lie there then with our lovers and our friends
and listening to the rain
and accounting for our dead,
and all the little flowers
it is then that a new record will begin
and what we learned there about love
and what is destroyed and what remains
there is this:**

I have drawn a circle.

O

