

REAL STORIES ARE FAIRY TALES AND HAVE CLEAR MEANINGS.

As "ONCE UPON A TIME" AFTER THE PRINCE HAD PLUCKED THE NEEDLES FROM HIS SHIELD  
HE PASSED THROUGH A FOREST OF THORNS AND ROSES.  
I WAS ONCE A PRINCE TOO! CRANKED THE FROG, AND IF YOU KISS ME CASTLES WILL FALL  
FROM THE SKY!

BUT THE PRINCESS TURNED AWAY WITH DISTRUST.

HOW COULD SHE EMBRACE A PRINCE IF SHE KNEW HE WAS ONCE A FROG?

OH LET ME LIVE AND POPULATE THE EARTH, PLEADS THE HERO TO THE CHAINED DAMSEL.  
HER NAKED FORM, GLOWING IN SUNLIGHT, ENWRAPPED BY SPLASHING WAVES AND EMERGING  
OUT OF HER BLOUSE, HER SKIRT, HER DESS, HER SWEATER, HER JEANS.

YES I WILL BE YOURS BUT FIRST FIND A DRAGON TO RESCUE ME FROM.

(NEVER TELLING HIM, SHE IS THE DRAGON HERSELF)

I AM IN LOVE, MAMA, I AM IN LOVE I MET A KNIGHT AND HE TOOK MY...  
SWIFT MY DAUGHTER!

IF YOU ARE HEARD, YOU WILL BE DISGRACED, UNLESS YOU LEFT BEHIND YOU A PATH  
OF PETALS FROM YOUR FLOWER FOR HIM TO FOLLOW.

BUT THE KNIGHT IS SATISFIED WITH A SINGLE BLOSSOM AND REMAINS FIXED IN HIS DREAM  
UNTILL HE IS BURIED BY TIME AND SAND.

WHO SHALL WE DINE UPON. ASKS ONE RAVEN TO ANOTHER.

OH TO BE HERE, NOW THAT APRIL'S COME!

TO BE BURIED BENEATH FIELDS OF WHITE AND RED POPPIES OF FORGETFULNESS.

TO TAKE STILL IN OLD AGE ONE LAST PILGRIMAGE.

TO HEAR ONE LAST TALE, THOUGH IT HAS BEEN TOLD OVER AND OVER AGAIN.

"THE HORNS UPON HIS ASH HEAD HAVE CRUMBLD INTO WHITE AND GREY DUST.  
WHO SHOULD BE THERE ON THE DAY OF HIS COMING?"

A DRAZZLE OF WET SOOT, HIS ASHES POURED.

SMALL BUDS AND A GHOST ORNAMENT HIS GRAVE.

WHILE THE ENDLESS SORROWS OF CHILDHOOD FINALLY SWALLOW FOREVER HIS BIRTH.

## **BEGINNINGS**

## LOVE

When I was, I must have been young  
I would run through such a bath  
Inexplicably happy  
I thanked the heavens for emptying the streets and parks  
My soul now no longer more desolate  
Than the setting it passed through  
The trees swayed in their sleep  
The rustle of their branches  
Seemed as heavy as golden dancers  
Clinging bells before a temple  
A young woman pressed against me  
Her skin soaked to mine  
The pleasure of her touch, her nudity ran in front  
I followed, like a ship before seagulls

\*

Have I, while she slept, been in her dreams  
Perhaps it was only for me her steps were taken  
Just as the wind passed seeking only my face

\*

A beautiful woman is looking at me with sad wishful eyes  
She has a half smile like a Madonna  
I would worship her, kiss her hands  
My life for her face  
Looking up to me  
Like memory in a darkroom  
With white sheets beneath her

\*

As a traveller crossing a frontier I entered her room  
A dark bird was painted upon her window  
White flowers (real) were mixed with violet paper ones  
Placed as accidents, fallen before her  
As she passed through an undisciplined garden  
Feathers and an empty golden frame rest in a corner  
Upon grey walls, a miniature gallery of postcards is pinned in rows  
Two or three thick books lay by her bed  
Her face: I watched like a thief stuffing gold into his pockets  
I escaped with her laughter  
The many moods of her mouth  
The shadows over her eyes  
The blush of her cheeks  
How much of this pretty marriage owed to a few locks of dark hair  
Cut seemingly to nest her ears

\*

Her beauty is not hers  
Nor is my dream of it mine  
No more than colours are roses  
Is the sight of flowers' eyes

\*

In the light of darkness  
Her hair appears blue-black, her skin veiled ash  
Enclosed she dissolves, as I sink into her softness  
Fondling her breasts is as touching roses

\*

Red stockings walk through a grey morning  
I can hardly give truth to hear loveliness  
Each quick step, still another blush

\*

I had not intended to remain  
Sitting here drawing small pictures  
Until my eyes grew wet.  
I hoped for a miracle  
Like lightning  
God's return  
Or a soft girl carrying voices.

\*

My notes have failed  
She thought them poetry  
Not love letters

\*



## NAPLES

As we ascended (twisting with the road like a coiled snake)  
The bay opened beneath us.  
A wide blue fan held by a jewelled city.  
A glass necklace encircling her  
Blinking, incoming fishing boats form bracelets  
Upon arms of light.  
Leaving in their wake  
Pools of moonrings.  
In the morning, I awoke in sun and song.  
A white blonde nymph laughed in my ears.  
Like a young gazelle  
She sprang and opened the curtained windows.  
A burst of sunlight and a choir of voices  
Came rushing from her.  
I had to close my eyes  
Feared to open them again  
Until with relief I felt her kisses.  
Before I awake  
Shall we go to Rome my love?  
On the way, we pass yellow, green valleys  
Lemon-white villages  
Dusty wide-eyed children  
Walking barefoot upon powdered stone.  
There will be brown walls  
Stained gold and silver fountains  
Spraying ink shadows onto grey marble.  
Under a green summer sky (illuminated by ancient monuments)  
We can share bread, cheese and crimson wine.  
Then I will take you to a pine-scented barge  
Resting upon pea soup and  
Lit with dangling Christmas bulbs.  
An accordion folds mournfully amidst dancing couples.

## MEMORIES

His voice rose out of his dissolving self  
He spoke from the dead with effort  
“All is a tragedy”  
In slow pain, I answered, “not all”  
Could he still have heard me or was it my echo?  
He repeated, “not all”  
Then a wave of death washed over him  
Submerging once again his soul

His body lapsed deeper into extinction  
I found myself alone with the labour of his breathing  
Spaced wider and wider  
Each stroke grew thinner  
As if the thread of his spirit was disbanding  
Our last words to each other had been spoken  
In the morning he would be gone  
When I returned, his abandoned body lay  
Not in peace  
But exhausted silence

\*

For a patch of light I pay a price  
I get up in the morning

\*

My clock is faceless  
The only time it tells me is  
Too late, too late

\*

## MEMORY

Did we notice  
While sitting in the shade of a small garden  
(Drinking coffee from china cups, scraps of a gone age)  
That the leaves falling about us were ourselves?  
How could I know  
I was leaving you dissolved into a faded photograph?  
Our lives are pulled from us like cotton candy  
A fine thread sticks here  
Another glues itself there  
No one remembers  
On the way to extinction where he has stepped  
Only innocence can continue without memory

\*



To the palace  
An exhibition of impressionist paintings  
As I returned through its gardens  
The light of day, changing with my steps  
Made it seem as if I were passing  
Within the works I had just seen  
I entered into a Monet  
The grass wet with blue  
Behind spreading flowers of pink and purple poppies  
Dabs of painful scarlet among them  
On the lake's edge  
The sun's reflection duplicated the day  
A Sisley deepening into a Pissarro  
Ocher plants rubbed with dark yellow  
And draped cloaks of red cadmium  
Across a pool colored as the sky, a path of violet spots  
A stroke of metallic green (Cezanne)  
Lays under a red bridge  
Unconnected to the grass at each side of it  
The trees pale  
A grey melancholy  
Rises from the lake  
And mixes with dying green  
As sad as a Corot

\*

SHE BLUSHES AND I (WITH HOPE) WONDER.  
HAVE I WHILE SHE SLEPT, FOUND A WAY INTO HER DREAMS?



I CAN HARDLY GIVE TRUTH TO HER LOVELINESS,  
THAT QUICK STEP WAS, STILL ANOTHER BLUSH.



A GIRL WITH RED STOCKING  
WALKING THROUGH A GREY MORNING



SHE SLEEPS UNDISTURBED, BY LOVE



HER BEAUTY IS NOT HERS  
NOR IS MY DREAM OF IT MINE.  
NO MORE THAN COLORS OF ROSES ARE FLOWERS  
IS THE SIGHT OF THEM EYES.



SHE DROPS<sup>s</sup> HER IMAGE, CARELESSLY,  
UNWARE I ~~WOULD~~ <sup>COULD</sup> PICK IT UP, AND NEW  
PLACE IT AMONG SOUVENIRS.  
CARRY IT

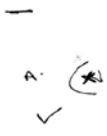


SHE SENSIBLE TO MY ~~HOPE~~ <sup>WISH</sup> SHE WALKS  
LOVELY IN ~~HER~~ <sup>HER</sup> SHAME



~~AS SHE PASSES FROM HER DRESS~~  
~~LOVE~~

MY HEART WONDERS,  
PERHAPS IT WAS <sup>IT</sup> ~~WHY~~ FOR ME  
SUCH STEPS WERE TAKEN?  
JUST AS THE MIND <sup>HAS</sup> PASSED  
SEEKING ~~ONLY~~ <sup>ONLY</sup> MY FACE.



A BLUSH, ARISING <sup>ES</sup> FROM HER CHEEKS  
QUICKENS UPON HER LIPS  
AND FADES ~~DOWN HER NECK~~  
IN ~~HER~~ <sup>HER</sup> ~~HEART~~

HER BEAUTY SHE HAS NO TEARS  
IT'S ONLY ENEMY IS TIME

—

I fall in love, as most men insist on living to avoid dying.

\*

It is not whom she loves, but who she thinks herself to be in love with which counts.

\*

She is angry. It cannot be because of something I have done. It must be something I have not done? Only when she demanded my surrender did I realize we had been at war.

\*

Surprise! Just when I had given up all hope and thought she had left me, she returns to tell me she is leaving me.

\*

To avoid suffering by not feeling is to avoid suffocation by not breathing.

\*

Angel of frozen clouds. What centuries of cruelty and madness have passed to leave petrified a pale sky upon your face?  
How I envy those spirits, which so easily take you from me, leaving your lips as cut flowers, and your eyes: who sings under their soft veil?

\*

I loved her or rather I loved the part she pretended to play. Since her role was my own invention, I did not notice what a bad actress she was.

\*

It is not the woman but the love one has, which is so painful to lose. A lesson for life. For it is not life, but the love we have of it, which is so dreadful to bury.

\*

You pay little attention to pain while in love. Only when you heal do you suffer.

\*

She wrote that she had committed “A kind of suicide” – a part of her was now dead. You cannot kill a part of yourself, you only bury it. I sent her a letter to throw sand into her grave.

\*

The freedom to have pleasure also requires the ability. Otherwise it becomes a tyrannical demand, which drains away the happiness one really has.

\*

What must I do? How am I to face clean bed sheets alone?  
To sleep must I go to bed dirty?

\*

As I reached for my last words, the surrounding seats were empty. All of the sneers, cheers and clapping were my own. Goodbye. I wave and bow to myself.

\*

Time is a pocket in my soul from which it pours out. I die not from living but from bleeding.

\*

Following his pain, the old man did not lift his eyes. Instead he looked down into an empty sky.

\*

I am a person, who remembers in all directions: the future, present and the past. A future that will never be, a past that never was, and a present which simply cannot be.

\*

The future never returns. A sad fact you learn with age.

\*

I began tomorrow? Or maybe it was yesterday?

\*

A man in a sinking ship will, in whatever containers he can improvise, toss messages into the enclosing sea.

\*

I sit in an empty theatre. If I had a ticket (which I don't) it would be for a past performance.

\*

If there was a stop (and there is no indication that it is, except I wait) then the last bus has already departed.

\*

After the train has departed there seems little point in waiting. Even if it were to return (and it will not) I could no longer board it. Then what? Tomorrow will be later than today. I can only remain fixed and imagine myself traveling.

\*

Pack your luggage after you return. Now rush to the station. There will be enough time there to fill your memories.

\*

My little snapshots or souvenirs never serve memory, they replace it.

\*

Memories are flowers in a garden no longer visited.

\*

To wish to return is to try to remember what you have yet to forget.

\*

You need not take the train to feel the melancholy of its departure.

\*

My eyes have seen more than I remember. For kindness blurred their images from my memory. But the scars they left behind remain.

\*

What does not repeat becomes extinct.

\*

Time hurries, as if to keep an appointment, but arrives too early and too late.

\*

I only walk backwards. I die slowly.

\*

Until I have forgotten myself. When I am extinct then I will remember.

\*

When the wave reaches the shore and breaks, does it cease? (Or does it retreat and form itself again?)

\*

Remembrance is also a form of expectation.

\*

With old age melancholy becomes wisdom.

\*

Today we leave crumbs behind to mark our footsteps. It would be lamentable enough if only the birds ate them, but we do not wait. We swallow them ourselves!

\*

With each step, we erase the one before. No one can follow, least of all, ourselves.

\*

Running with the red queen so fast as to imperil her hair.  
Alice (at the end of the race) was surprised to find she has not  
moved an inch. "You want to be somewhere?" Asked the red  
queen. "Then you must go much quicker than that! You need  
to leave your shadow and yourself behind! That is what the  
modern man does!"

\*

A child does not notice death. They do not divide it from life.

\*

For a child, there is no death, only separation.

\*

