

Poema- The Island of St.Vincent. To Derek Walcott

"Whether heaven or earth be your prologue...." 1

Its luck that strays along the daily path
All need a hope to lighten their days
You see, my dear, the dying ash trees now
We saw the elms abandoned to their fate
How much oneself, ones country and ones art
Are bound to these figures of the landscape,
The soul is eaten at its edges
And soon the impact of disfigurement
Defiles the spirit and one dies.

Luckily a retreat to the above
Though on my ipad rain predicted
It sucks after the effort and the cost
But sojourns are in part survival
Though when i looked around
As part of the common herd
Only a final meditation
For the souls delivery
Could justify it.

At one time-take Elgar's Dream
This was the high moment
"The distinguished thing" 2
But now its complicated
Yet still the lyric now unstably
Clings to a rhythm of the brain
Which meets the populace halfway
Obscure to start, a little time
Our enemy becomes our friend
And our weakness all forgiven.

Of course, Joseph B has said it all
Why bother- enjoy the sand and palms
As many as the stars of Palestine
Yet coming down a rung
May be better than Celan
For only the poet can judge.

Still tis a measure of the poem
Like paint or marble
It never leaves you lonely
And like music too
You only live in composition.

So where to now procrastinator
Neither prophet, magician or youth
Can certify your special claim
Yet where the poem leads
Mysteries are revealed.

Let the first leg be BA 2153
And the archduke to settle nerves
And without apology to Lycidias
And all my other friends to polite
To read the website- hangers- on!

I hope Walcott- its his demesne
Will lend some better muse
The poem kicks my stomach
So new birth is on the way.

Barbados hub a faulty towers
St Vincent languishes ahead
While the intercom wearies travellers
Practising its new german accents.

What is more beautiful than this blue sea
Dissolving the ego boundless
And instinct can run the words aslant
Symptoms obey release
Shunned as the mind demands peace.

Huge clouds threaten the hills
And then the coast sparkles clear
This is Buccament Bay but
Half- full of Essex O dear
My eyes close on a national joke.

Still the poema replaces any high jinx
And poor May with her deafness
Needs her chinese steel
Our lives have come full circle.

This is the Carribean and the first week
Is complaining about the hitches
The second is are we bored
The third we really enjoy
Before the muddle of blighty again.

Black boys pirouetting in the sand
Point to the setting sun
I stand up like Aschenbach
Seeing outstretched Tadzio's arm
But the coconut rum arrives
and I slump back safely
And let the sand run out.

Lovely morning in the blueness
ill -it wouldnt be a holiday without it
Reaching for the amoxil and the menthol
These afternoon siestas godlike sleep
Restore the nothingness to bless.

"Keep faith with what should be" 3
How simple are these meta-truths
The poem leads him there
Defying all current logic
That is the aim of poetry
Measureless.

Rain in all its tropical glory
An english gloomy sky
A view of hills with pipsqueak villas
Adorn the jungle vegetation,
I wait for wind in the fun-boat
Its all they have, I rest my case.

Mustique a fantasy of money
As the schooners swiftly pass
The humpy grenadines surround you
Widen the angle of our voyage-
And Simeon, messiah in his arms
Suddenly comes flooding in the mind
The temple doors open into blazing sun
Like him we pass into infinity.

Ahead of all time.....
Surely when the right voice comes
It will take possession
And we will be at last ourselves.

"Our love is greater than ourselves"⁴
These masters keep us afloat... "prodigal
that line of light that shines from the other shore"⁵
Even the land and sea is transparent
Exotic flowers of unknown names
Garland their quotations
Who guard the muse of reason
By its parent-poetic invention.

The days are numbered by mosquito bites
The jungle smoke of Africa is scented
Reminder of noble yesterdays
Of frequent death in the midst of saving
I drift penitentially there's no excuse
Full possession is now offered.

In the botanical gardens a jacaranda
Moth-eaten but the purple blossom
Invokes the lepers and dear Bradburne
Still mourning for him and Keats
He's in the Guinness book of records
O John..... Shalom

The volcanic hills so richly covered
Breadfruit and cinnamon
Bannana and eucalyptus
Ginger and black magic
Of all things busy lizzie
And endless hibiscus.
From here the grey blue church
Sings out across the bay
As only the ladies of Buccament can
On sundays give their all,
It is the very fibre of affection
For, dear me, this is true belief
I would not dare to challenge.

White sand has covered the black shore
So we can spend our money safely
God too uncovered by the poor
Reveals in cracks and crannies
His whereabouts, the hints and guesses
How sweet his name upon your lips
"Nightingale- god... and with you i'm at peace."⁶

Of course we have our imagined woes
And now the chance of full possession
Unlike Mandelstam though cursed

By genius and the cockroach lip
Avenge death by those verses
Kept in the base of saucepans
That now grow huge from Gulag soil
"Death flowers in my patience here" 7

So listen to that voice, its echo
Keeps pressing-prodigal
The inviolable speech of stars
Not pointless cosmic specks
But countless souls of light
Watching the play attentively.

Still we fly too close to the sun
There's no going back
But remember the valued past
Praising as one unity
The forms of truth art
Is forever altering,
If their beliefs are history
So ours will be.

The sun sets replying to our tasks
Which with Virgilian heroes we thank
All need a companion trusted and faithful
"Devoted and everlasting"8
For in a cloudless sky the blueness
Absorbs our being and the oriental
(Surely not duplicitous-forgive me)
Is the Being whose raised arm
Ineffably expressive
Points to the horizon of light beyond time
The gesture of infinity absolute.

"The source of love becomes the object of love"9
"Nothing here for tears....."10

1 Goethe, 2 H. James, 3,4 Brodsky, 5 Walcott,
6 Mandelstam, 7 Radnoti, 8 Ahmatova, 9 Brodsky,
10 Milton.

Coda "And the angel said there will be no more time"
Revelations.

Now to the memory of times past
Where nothing in the metre repeats
When the words fall like manna
Restful and restless, submitting
The tension of hearing into words
Resolute and without haste
Moving the ground of our being
And the sunbeams everywhere
Tumbling through the meadows
Where friends lay buried and waiting
Like the woods above them
And the smiling cascades of time
Reverse the impossible suffering
Into heavens prologue and your love making.