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Elegy For Ezra Pound

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Cover Page Footnote

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ELEGY FOR EZRA POUND

Who is there now for me to share a joke with?

UPON HEARING OF ELIOT'S DEATH

Youth has flickered from youthful words
 And self-sprung estuaries of rhythm
 Have womaned and wined and autumned a self
 So danced and dawned and forming (like Plato)
 And bleeding an act of oblivion.
 The time in thy throat
 The breath on thy hands
 The sad hours scarcely move.

Like Hecuba, an old woman who
 With knowing eyes
 Wept, wept for beauty lost
 And feared tomorrow's face

Silent as curtain and sunbeam
 Your flames have wedded the wind.
 But retina-poised in nighted skies
 One tear shall hear from listening eyes
 Shall hear and shall stare, shall flicker and stir
 Shall bid and shall buy, shall quicken and try
 The self-conceiving Ephpheta of ashes
 In the molting hearth of words.

My words are flames—you are a tolled old tail of a comet
 My words are waves—you are a rinsed old skull of a sound
 My words are coins—you are a crumpled old bill of a poet
 My words are tears—you are a frozen old Proteus of a god

The pages of your gaze
 Quicken camera cadence
 The fragments of your cantod ways
 Fuse pianoed fragrance
 Your memories suspended by dreamed yesterdays
 Pendulum bundled events
 Your partial visions pressed between crossed Gethsemanics
 Mosaic symbolized silence.



You are the lost Odyssey
 In your own litany
 You are the re-occurring weariness
 Of your own pain

Where children lotused over broken walls
 To wind themselves through labyrinths of pleasure
 You saw the bondage of action
 The heritage of pain, the corpse of time.
 Your community of years starched
 The ribboned voice of afternoon thought
 The legacy of weary-eyed love
 And starved the ghost by inches.

Your aging is a redemptive act:
 The minutes are splinters of pillars
 You are your own embers:
 The fired, spired Babylonian tongues

You had beautiful things to say
 From the halo of your sainted force—humble chapel words
 You had beautiful things to say
 From your mitered martyrdom of glances—stern rubric lines
 You had beautiful things to say
 You were the instant prophet in this chant of dust
 Your poems cathedrals, your words our relics
 Your staff the wand of our wonder.

Bishop of Tradition
 An evolving god
 You are the plastic Christ
 The Wording vision of your antique world

The flash of a Chinese lantern tongued the prism of music
 A violin bow across your nerves.
 The flutes of votive exile lit the lyric of your lutany
 Within your dialect of horns.
 The trumpet sounds scarlet no more.
 Along the notes, across the seconds, out of the West coasts
 The swan goddess: There for you to share a joke with.
 Summon home the swan to sing.

Through my fornication of metaphor, false labor pains of meter
 I tremble paint and stumble probe your sheer white song of mind
 And blind I find I know thee
 And I, too, participate in thy dying

they jeered at him when they saw him with his green
 apple
 they circled him and made animal noises
 he gazed into his apple
 they ran around him and drooled bitter apple juice
 they gnawed at their green apples
 he polished his apple
 they rushed to and from the old tree climbing it clumsily
 they tore down the unripe fruit with the young branches
 he held his apple to the sun
 they rolled around the tree masticating the virgin fruit
 they told vulgar stories about the apples and laughed
 he blossomed a smile as his apple turned red
 they staggered toward him vomiting apple cores and seeds
 they said that the seeds weren't their concern
 he looked into his red mirror and saw
 reflections of smashed green apples
 they stood around him jealously and wailed
 they couldn't wash away the apple stains
 he ate his red apple succulently

BY TIMOR

JIM HALL