

FLANDERS / ITHACA / ARAN

*That day – Lappersfort Wood
Friendship rooting deep as the beech
With the glittering wet leaves*

Inscape/landscape, place of the heart – this is the mind's beginning

The mind might dream of other origins and destinations but can dream no finer one than this

Triplicity that lures the heart to the singing core

Flanders/Ithaca/Aran as the heart and mind has known them

Flanders/Ithaca/Aran as the mind had wandered in that inscape

Inscape/landscape – origin and destination

I have not moved from here nor will I move but forever move in this landscape

As if the soul was weaned there

As if in the stone fields lay the origins of all things

Who would not sing this at Easter and solstice given that this is the solstice of the world in
this the winnowing time?

Dream, dream again, all things begin here

Yield and am taken

Sing and am sung even as under the lurid lights of the world the song-lines and the fault-lines
run in parallel

And the heart in parallel to the soul/the mind

All things in parallel to beauty and origins but as to the destinations –well, not everything can
be said with surety

Abate, abate, the dream abates but memory remains

Memory and longing and the needs of the mind that are never so filled that there is no room
for more when the heart sings out *More! Give me more! Give me the strength to bear all
things!* And bearing all sings of origins and destinations

Of what else should I sing at dawn-time?

Of what else is fidelity composed if not of this triplicity?

Oh all things are thus composed and thus composed satisfy the mind/the heart and the soul
draws nourishment there

I might sing some other tune but that would be nothing

That would not sing the mind nor the heart nor would the soul find comforts in those clefs

No, only in the stone fields can the mind reside and only there can it seek the welcome
harbour of its desire

Desire, desire, longing and longing –am citizen and exile ever wandering there

Wander but do not move

Travel in the spaces of these verbs and letters

Flanders/Ithaca/Aran –heart’s home, mind’s home, place that lures me on and on into the
singing core

And the heart has sung

Has sung at solstice and solstice

Have made my adorations to the name

Have cleansed the mind with many waters

What then but this baptism can hold me to the foolish nature of the world when nothing else
can?

And nothing else can bless with gifts of stone and earth and foaming wave the sand-dunes of
the mind

There where the water laps

There where it ever seeks the land

There where it rises in celebration and breaks with sexual intent upon the receptive sand

Dream that in the mind’s core before you dream anything else

Make Flanders/Ithaca/Aran your origin and destination

Pray at that shrine

Make the pilgrimage to its core

Sing out delight at this and all things and make your singing strong

Oh yes, for this and all things and nothing less than all things

Sing the winsome songs of morning in this aftermath of stars

Sing the latitudes at which it can be found and the longitudes that must be crossed for all must
be crossed

All must be crossed and all must be known and only in fire can the water appease the hunger
of the soul

Only there, only there

There where the stone-lands begin and there where the stone-lands find conclusion

Conclusion?

There is no conclusion

The way up and the way down, the round-about you twirl on for a moment and the necessary
gestures of salvation

Yes, this is what there is

There is no conclusion for the echoes go on and on and must be followed and there is no final
ringing of the bells

No more than there was for those dancers in the field that Greek morning

No more than there was when on Aran we rose to bell-song and wonder

And in Flanders what is the bell that will cease and ceasing cease all things into some full and
final silence?

There is no such bell and there never has been

Not been nor will there be for all things are ringing as the heart sings out *In this place! In this
place!* And singing breaks the limits of its time

To sing so as to shatter the bonds!

Who would not sing such a song?

And in this given place the heart/the mind sings that all may be broken and amended

For your sake and mine, for your sake and mine, all things moving towards that acropolis of
light which is the island's origin

Twilight, twilight, gleam on a berry, this is the healing time

The cherry tree 'flutters' in an evening breeze

Seven linden trees hold the wind in courtship the way the mind holds certain harbours as
bulwark against the wanton destruction of the world

Even so, even so, this is the healing time the mind longs for and longing reaches the safe
harbour of its destination

Destination?

There is no final destination

There is the finding and the loosing
The arrival and then the necessary departure and the harbour that was once a home becomes a
destination sailed towards
Who does not need this healing?
The cherry tree sings a twilight song in this the evening of the world
I also sing and singing sing us both towards wholesome destinations
Bells ring in Flanders
A mile away the church bells ring and all in caught in that sudden music
This is also part of the greater music
Music of twilight, music of morning, the heart longing for the music of departure and arrival
Depart, depart
Move at twilight over the waters of the world
Sail towards given destinations but arrive and you must depart once more as if you never
found it
This is Ithaca in all its beauty
This is Aran as it glitters on water
Glitters like language
Like a handful of necessary verbs
Glittering like that landscape into which all is wooed and named
As this is named
Named and blessed in this landscape
Flanders – the mind searching out the common core of inscape/landscape/soulcape
Singing school and winnowing ground
Ground zero of the heart and mind
Ground zero of the soul

Glitter, glitter, gleam again, the berries are bright in the morning
Morning
Morning and solstice
Solstice of summer
Mid point of the heart's odyssey
The furrowed ground is open and ripe
All things attest their growing

And I?

I sing this song at morning so as to sing the soul in its mid-summer

And what is Ithaca but the soul at mid-summer?

And where is it mid-summer if not in Flanders and Aran?

Oh sing that all may be given a strong voice so as that voice can aid us in our sailing

Sailing

To islands and harbours

To islands that reside first and foremost in the soul's deep niche

Sailing

Into the confluence of the mind with all things

Sailing towards Ithaca and Aran but never leaving Flanders

Moving in landscapes that name us

Name us and sing our true identities and longings

Sailing

Sailing and singing as if the mast was rooted firmly into the mind and we bellowed the great sails with the breaths of our longing

For we have longed for this

Ten years upon the sea and still it is not enough

Ten years and it could be twenty before any homecoming yet what will we come home to but further departures, further setting out, further exploration of the familiar ground?

Sailing

Over the placid and dangerous waters

Past siren islands of false hope and disappointment

Past every counterfeit harbour that calls out to us

Past the dangerous channels between whirlpool and land

Past the barren islands of the heart's despair

Sing then as you pull the oars and the boat pulls you ever onwards for you are sailor and pilot piloting by what you have brought with you

The maps within and the featureless ocean without

Maps that are as old as the desire of the world

Others have travelled there before you and others will follow but for the moment you must travel there alone

Alone

Only the guidance of longing drawing you forward

Memory your only companion

The craft you sail in of small dimensions but they are as wide as the ocean

And a strange syntax of language bubbling on your tongue

Here words have meanings they do not have on land

The language is water and the dictate is water

Yet all waters lead to that one harbour

The one you aim for

The one that offers comfort and comprehension

The one that guides your craft as much as you guide it by your longing

Oh the mind was always this sailor

It was always destined to be on this sea

It was a birth-right that could not be denied

A life that could not be rejected

Sailor Oh sailor we call to you

Come guide me now in these the turbulent waters of the world

Shatter the mast we have brought with me and be the mast to which we bind ourselves!

Walk now

Walk now the landscape of desire and longing and travel towards a harbour

It is also a sea we have travelled over and find we are travelling yet to destinations we thought already reached

Reached?

What is reached?

The heart is citizen of this exile and knows no other homeland

So, of what was the mind favoured if not this disowning and acknowledgement?

Of what was it privy if not this homeland?

It walks the measured acres of this land and know that here is its beginning

Move

Move again

Make your mark upon the land and make your mark upon the water

Design the mind to travel there

Move where the maps are useless but bring one with you in the heart

It is for this that all sailors sail and it is for this that all craft aims

Fury of storm and then the long afternoon of the doldrums

Lost and no map

Rudderless in the open sea between here and Ithaca

Oh the mind has names for this

Names and states that, safe on land, have no meaning nor influence

Yes, only the sea abides

All destinations are shifting but the sea abides

Yet if the sea abides then so does beauty

And if beauty abides then so do the statues

So move, move again

Pitch your mind against the vagaries of the ocean

Remain faithful to destinations even when destinations elude you

Remember the moments and maps that have led to this and set the prow of your boat into the setting sun and then sail on by moonlight

Moonlight

Moonlight in Flanders

The heart comforted and assured though little seems assured now that we have entered the evening of the world

Yet beauty abides

Beauty and all singing verbs and the heart is never free of that desire

Oh I might wander unwholesome ground but the heart remembers its calling

It seeks and it finds

It finds and it sings

And singing bring the maps of healing harbours nearer the mind

Moonlight

Moonlight in Flanders and beyond that on Aran

Where the echo resides
Where the bell rings
Where wonder moves softly over the harbour and the ferries wait for first light
Oh I have waited for the light
In darkness and hesitation I have waited for the light
Darkness of the long nights of disappointment
Darkness of the surging sea for which there are no maps
No
No maps but those of necessity and circumstance
Yet all things endure the night
Harbour and sailor
Pilot-light by which the heart guides itself towards the healing harbours
Oh call this Ithaca or call this Aran and it does not matter and yet it does
The sea is endless but the destinations are real
The sea opens itself to our desires and closes on our hopes
Ten years, ten years, and still it may be twenty
Moving by night-songs over the song-lines of the world
Moving by need
Move by desire –and desire is need
Moving as one might move towards a harbour that offers shelter and calm
Moving as one moves in a beloved landscape so as to make your adorations

These are the narratives and intricacies of this inscape
This is the journey constantly undertaken
Origins –though they are one- and destination
Origin and destination intermingling
Narratives
Intricacies
Stories and history
Divinity co-mingling with the earth and the earth oh the earth is more than pleased as we are
pleased to go where the mind leads
Leading and led

Knowing and unknowing
Memory active and absorbing every fact
Memory growing and the mind must remember so much
So much
Image and ethos and fact – the sure trinity of the mind, the sure trinity of the soul, the sure
trinity of the heart
Narratives
Beginnings that have a beginning but ends that have no ends
No, nothing ends
Continuance marks the passage from harbour to harbour and it board a small boat to take it to
the islands
Islands and beginnings
Ends that are far from here and which prove to be another beginning
Memory absorbing every wave and lull
Memory moving the great sail forward
I remember and remember
Ithaca in sunlight and Aran in twilight
Sunrise and solstice and then the winter's turning
Ice on the mast and the harsh winds blowing as they are now blowing over the shambles of
the world
Yes, memory holds it all
Holds and draws a nourishment there for it remembers the oldest things of earth
Remember, remember
The wave and the swell and the long shadows at evening
The gleam on the berry that was beautiful to look at
The boat in the bay and the waiting statues – yes, the heart remembers all these and more and
remembering draws a strength from the land
Ieper in sunlight when we walked the battlements
Brugge by the canals in approaching twilight
This and much more
This and so much more so as to defy all naming
Like a stone in the hand
Like a stone in the mind that yields up a warmth

Like a shadow that weaves a simple script of remembrance and says *Remember me Remember me*

Like all the given apples of the orchard

Oh yes, this much and more and nothing so familiar that it grows dull

The heart remembers and feeds the mind to feed the soul in Flanders/Ithaca/Aran

Remembered and feeds the hunger for more that is every rising from these places into the cave of making

And I, who might have been king, am pauper of water and land

This is the right born into and the rite practiced

I was always destined for this

Even when the mind/the heart set out for other stations this is the life I was bound for

Nothing omitted and nothing denied

No poverty eschewed that drove me once more to the sea

Sailor and pilot unto myself

Was all the names of history

Was the lost one

Was the found one

Was three brothers in a single boat

And here on land it has been no different

Finding the parallels

Finding comparable stations

Facing into the field of vision the way I faced those seven dancers in a Greek field that morning in Crete

How they made real the soul's delight!

How they gave form to the inclinations of the day!

I watch and watched

I was all fire for the steps of the dance though those years upon the sea were not forgotten nor could they be

All was preparation for that moment

All was preparation for the dance

Oh yes, Greece or Ireland or here, it is to the dance that we turn and we are forever
welcoming the sun at sunrise

This is the song that the mind would sing

These are the trophies the mind delights in

These are the wayside stations of that map the heart writes out with its blood

Have written that map and am writing it yet

In Flanders or Ithaca or Aran

On there in the mind where all three met in a fine confluence and finding this the mind dances
and dances

Have danced for this and will dance again

Will sing the same song over and over

Will be the winsome lad walking to a harbour for no matter where I am I am always walking
towards that harbour

And here is the proof of it

Proof in the mind's fire at sunrise and sunset

In the steps of the dance

In the stone picked from Dun Angus and carried about with me yet

Oh all this and more attest the heart's fidelity

It includes all and omits nothing

No, not even of the turbulent past or perhaps an unsteady present

It rises and sings

It rises to the dance

It rises and sings so that all may be sung and that song may be love

Oh take all things into the making hand

Fashion a boat to take you to the ocean

Or a compass to guide you on land

Fashion a direction and set the first steps in that specific direction

Remembering this the mind remember so much more

Evenings in the crepuscular valleys

Sun slanting on the frescos of Ithaca

Sun shattering the Atlantic calm off Aran

And here in Flanders, where the light breeze moves through the seven linden trees I greet the
one sunset of the world
Oh sing for this and sing for all things
Sings for all things and offer the redemption of song
And voices join
Night-choir of the world
Swallow and owl
And the distant music from somewhere beyond these trees
In darkness moving
Moving – oh moving towards what but what is moved towards in daylight
For this and no less
For this and nothing else
The night music a guide and accompaniment to the longings of the heart
Who can forget such longings?
Who can ignore the claims of the night-choir of the world as over the song-lines of the world
their voices rise and rise?
Oh we have walked among these trees in daylight – but now?
Now all is dark and the heart shudders a little and prays for the guidance of light
Then pray with need and with delight and sing the given song
Sing what the heart holds dear in this time of dark and dark and dark

Pauper and king

King of nothing and everything
Remembering every motion and gesture of salvation
Weaned in the secret places
Dressed for no art other than this though much, much more was offered
Was challenged yet assumed my rights
And you should see me now
Singing these songs to a disbelieving world
Singing and saying the same sacred verb as blessed me on that morning
Still pauper
Still king

Still king of nothing but that does not matter
There is the privilege of verse
And the mind felt blessed merely to walk in those landscapes
It yields, it knelt, it sang in gratitude and no song was sufficient to my heart yet still it sang
and sang
Oh see me still at this one art as this tales is woven for your liking
Moving in landscapes that name us both and draw us to that harbor
Galway –that morning and that afternoon
Moving there among the paths of memory and affiliation
Moving and confirming a past that was mine to embrace and share with you
Sharing in this fashion
Using the privilege of verse to these wholesome ends
Saying to you what I say to myself
Speaking in both our names
Galway and Knossos
Moving there in the marble landscapes and seeking the core of each
Oh I have sought for that core and seek it in these lines for your sake and for mine

Night-song, night-song, this is the song of the world
All bends towards the light of morning and yes, even the stars await their dispersal
I place my lips on the conch of the world
I blow the notes of greeting
I call on those who have walked there to walk with me now
Companions
Few but strong-hearted
Few from the many but the necessary few
The conch blows my song to the world and the world –Oh the world listens and responds
I see the gleam of starlight on the berries
I see the leaf's sheen in moonlight and offer a night-song to the song-lines of the world
Song moves from lip to lip
All sing the night-song of the mind though there are also the night-dirge and wailing
And yet

And yet
To sing the changeless song of light at dawn-time and in the night season
To sing what moves the heart to song
To sing what pleases the mind and all things please the mind
I am pauper and king and king of everything in this moonlight and have no need of anything
else
Oh who would need other than this when this is his for the taking?
Singing and singing
Flanders – Ithaca – Aran, and wherever the heart has found a home
Singing through twilight on the berries gleam
Singing while delving in the tungsten mind of a favorite poet
Singing with Dante
Singing with Blake
Singing with all who shape the world of the mind into the words of the mouth so what matter
then what syntax bubbles to my lips?
The mind knows all the dialects and sing all the songs
The mind knows all the verses of praise and add its own to this
Praise for the starlight
Praise for all things
Praise for every voice that rises in praise of this the night
And still there is no end to it
No end nor will there be
All thing ringing the bells of night and all bells ringing in the night
Pauper and king –oh we have been many things
Have been and am and yet will be this solstice and the next
Here where the stars in their plenty shine upon this favored acre

What I have been I have been faithful to
There was never any choice and there never was refusal
Obeying the stone's density
Following Flanders/Ithaca/Aran to the final possibility
The mind listened for that music

Brail for the creeping dialects
And I spoke them all
The known and unknown
The utterable and the unutterable
Giving voice to what had no voice
Blessing the small and sacred facts of the earth
Oh for this the mind was made a pauper of princely things but king of every pauper in the
ditch
Singing the hidden songs of affirmation
Singing at midnight and after, solstice and Easter and did not wait for December
Oh no, I was not the waiting one
Three harbours called and the mind replied and it am still replying in this fashion
This means, these words, this song that enters the silence of your mind and asks for response
Yes
Here and now
Solstice and shambles
The earth is beautiful but the world is soiled and so I sing this song for its salvation
Sing with me
Become the pauper that I am and sing with me in these turbulent times
Observe the night-songs of the world
Observe the rites of spring
Observe in the mind the splendid verbs as they pronounce to you the rites of ordination
Be pauper and king
Move in the splendid inscapes of the mind
Move and sing and name all things according to the alphabets of desire

Come, let us essay the contours of beauty
It will be familiar
It will be foreknown
It will be what has guided you to this recognition
You will find yourself but find yourself new-found and clean as if all the waters of the world
washed away the old defilement

Sing that to the disbelieving world and what will your answer be
It will be that you are king of the ditch in which the pauper sleeps

Inscape/landscape place of the heart – this is the mind's beginning
All begins in water and stone and in the soul's desire and ends in the word's expression
Desire, desire
Longing, longing
Counting the stars and catching the moon and in this am both prince and pauper
It was always going to come to this
There was never any choice
I was marked for this office from the start
And you should see me now – counting the stars and catching the moon as if I could do both
with ease

Inscape/landscape place of the heart – this is the mind's beginning
The mind begins in stone landscapers and ends in a stone's wonder
The contours of beauty, the shape of a song, it is for this that I have sung and called them
Ithaca
Ithaca, Flanders or Aran – only there is the heart at its rest and the mind in its calm
As into the core of the stone-lands' heart all shadows meet and merge