



When the Tree was Green

Part Three

Contents - Poems originally written from 1959-1970 revised 2002

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Words of a Poet

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Rigaudon (for Maurice Ravel)



Perhaps a sitting room in Northern France
Untouched by winters freeze
Or fairyland in morning's cloak
Crisp sunlight streams through
Curtains leaves
An Arab land of Saracens
Erecting minarets of mud
Shaded forms with veiled face
Bestowing tattooed looks of love.
Ivory transforms Eastern magic

In sounds to sound to faint fog horn
French doors glassy eyes a glitter
As I near the music morn.
She parts the doors her hair a blowing
We dance to sweet refrain
And I and the sound
And the summer winds song
Go round and around again.

DREAMING ON A CLIFF A STATUE OF ACHILLES



Colossus, now soggy white with winter's bearded age
Imagine in that hardened core Achilles heart once raged
Sun sword-flashing pain,
Setting his immortal frame

Against the frail bloods stain.

To think those burned and blinded sockets
Could once have spied the lumen light
Could see the gulls, sweet lulls they ride
Yet chosen death for his blood soaked pride,
The shore he touched with incoming tide.

Achilles by his mother's hand
Was dipped in heavens deathless stream
Emerging, he dripped eternal lie
That with his angry infant cry
Could show his heels to alien skies.

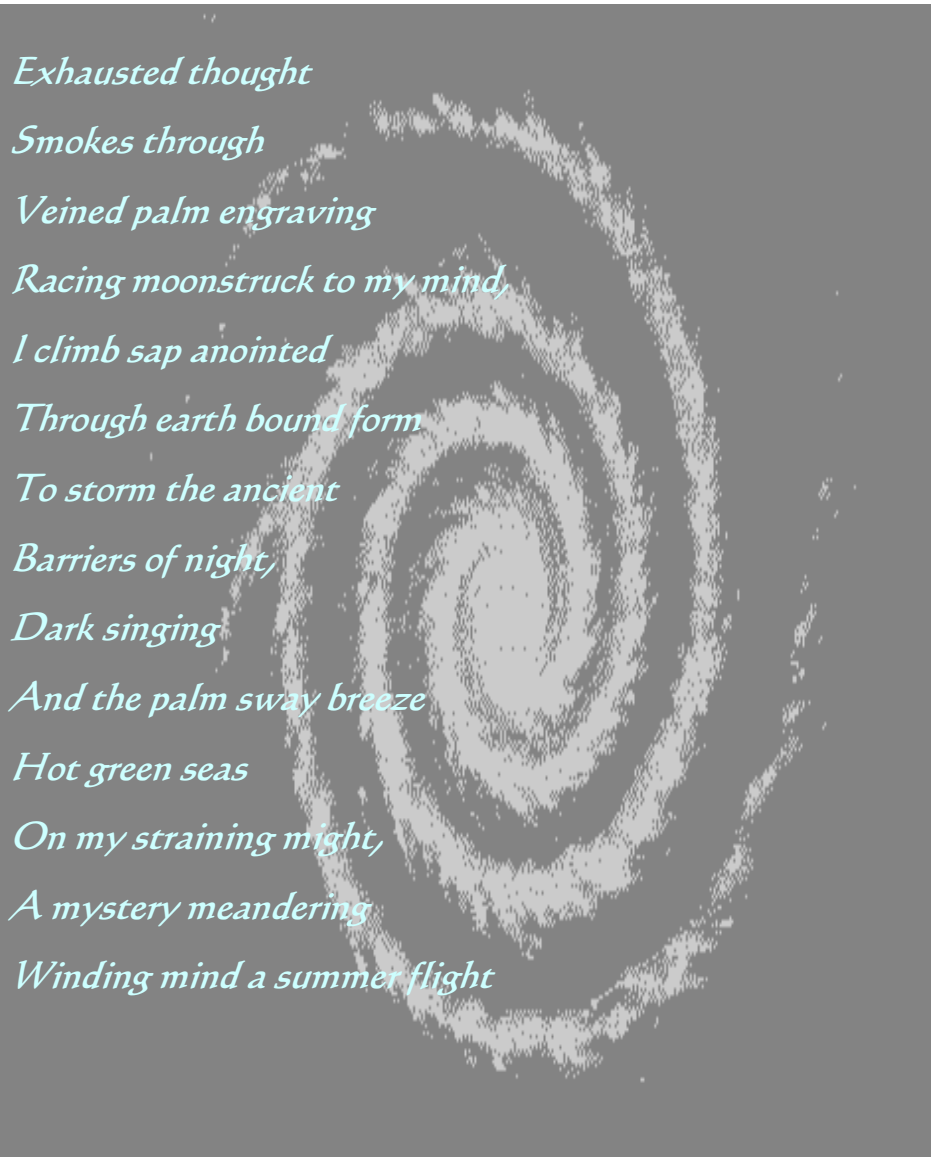
Possessing not that faith of soldiers
Who accustomed grow to turbulence, but
A man who like his god's above
Thought to capture childhood's rub,
To forever rage at love.

Thinking himself more than nature
He fought her shroud with every step,
In his heart found more than man,
He fought with steel eternal plan
Already formed by his mother's hand.

What gods were those. What heavens art
That sought amusement in suffering?
What gods that railed with pride,
With man's emotions caught inside,
These heavenly boundaries themselves were lies
How could they keep this man alive?

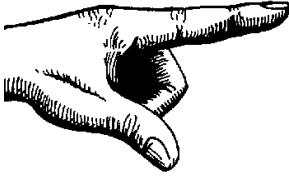
Each creeping dawn provokes no sound
From that stony countenance,
No sun turns light his marbled hair
He's burned solely by his fleshy destiny
That reveals to man his vacant stare.

Fancy



*Exhausted thought
Smokes through
Veined palm engraving
Racing moonstruck to my mind,
I climb sap anointed
Through earth bound form
To storm the ancient
Barriers of night,
Dark singing
And the palm sway breeze
Hot green seas
On my straining might,
A mystery meandering
Winding mind a summer flight*

From Adam to Atom



What forever will they say

When the Age of Science

Assumes its place in history

Evolving out of the wind swept spirit,

In what uncast Renaissance

Will we be sculpt' with hollow eyes?

The Dark Age, the Middle Age,

Will it be a blind rage

That foreshadows our eternity?

What will be said, ultimately

Of the infant Atom's might.

Like Adam of old in the garden

Will we be dissatisfied with our state of grace

Our curiosity take its place?

Will the atom fulfill the Serpent's dream

And blow us back to primal life?

Charles Ellsworth Smith

I Remember When



I remember when
A story told once
Told again and again.
I remember how I listened when
A story told twice
Told again and again.
Like an old whizzing record
Around, up and down
As I stood on my chair
As I sat on the ground
And faster, and speedier, and oftener, and better
I remember, I remember, . . . remember?
A round cracked record,
AROUND-da, AROUND-da,
That somehow sticks with me
As do all those songs
I remember when
So lovely long ago.

Night Winds (for Solomon)

If I could chase the moon
Down hollow hills of gold
All the antique loves I'd find
Beyond pale loves recall.

If I could seek the sun around
Around once more, full score around,
Soon sink with sun to sundown down
Down to mythy night.

If I could cover lovers eyes
With lilacs fused from dust
All forbidden sights I'd see
All the Hedon's hidden lusts.

At long last laugh
If I caught the moon
And ruled the tides from above,
I'd still chase the sun
Through ancient night
Before I'd give up love.

Snow



Snow in eternal sweeps
At autumn's close,
Brings snow filled steeps
To be brushed with broom
To cloud consuming sky.

Fired in sunsets, persistent rain
Sticks the spring to window panes
And pastes to summer a summer sweat
That drips on torpid soil.

Condensed to fall with seasons flow
Through siphon's drip comes winter snow
Slowly pulsing in timeless play
Shrouding all trace of our pathless way.

'Til little man once more awakes
To look with fear at deathless flakes
As if a game, eternal play
He sweeps the snow brief dream away

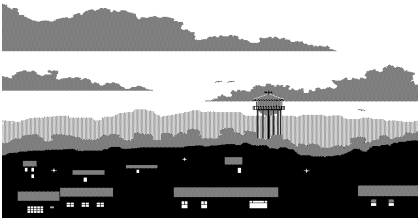
They



Thunderclap bangs against awesome wind
Blinded to the lightening death
That in a second spreads their sensual limbs,
Like storm shocked trees
They sleep.
Darkness lumbers
Pine encumbered
Up the mountainside
From furrow to sky,
The fall of leaves
And then they die,
A distant multitude
Living and for all time
Sliding, gracelessly
Between the poles
Of darkness and light.
Shades reshape vague shadows
As shadows transform sight,
Yet they try to ride the wind
And test the whirlpools might
When against a darkened cloudbank
Corporal mass becomes the night.

Charles Ellsworth Smith

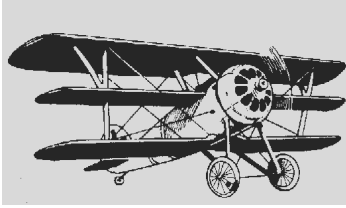
View from the Train -Wilmington Delaware



On a brick padded street
In Wilmington they meet
In puddles rank and foul
One is one and
Two is two but
Three is always a crowd

Two will play
While one cries out
His voice indignant and proud
For
One is one and
Two is two but
Three is always a crowd

THE PLANE



Heron steals net line bait
Basks warmly in the teat wave sun
His wildness undone,
Rhythm to the ocean floor
Pounds rock chokes soaks sand shore
Beats against birds happy squawk as
Hunter squints with hawk keen sight
Gun hand like tensing claw,
Drone of plane sun dome cascades
Alter hunting's
Ageless law
Flaw in ancient even scheme
A moment catching hunter's gaze
Heron arches out of range
Distracted by a dream

