

Dividings: A Personification

"Æstuans intrinsecus..."

Vagrant bird or rudderless dinghy, I am guided
by whim or gust, no compass bearings or chart provided—
as froth whipped up, all surface from myself divided—
just keeping in motion with landfall undecided.

Consistence may be virtue. Completion, not intent.
My aim is soon diverted. Ambition, quickly spent.
Where others are insistent I find only torment,
cannot applaud achievement and painfully resent.

Posture or true confession? evasion? ingrown spite?
No matter. It gives matter for voice, something to write
to utter. That's the pressure. Get rid of. Shed what might.
Relief, not constipation makes literature and shite.

No one expects the starving to have the slightest wish
not to grab and gobble or not lick clean their dish.
Table manners? easier: drowning men might relish
blowing bubbles or admire the different kinds of fish.

The victims scream, as ever and greed still drives the game,
that's how the system functions if nobody's to blame.
Or no one's any different? Do some not envy fame?
I scorn those who desire it. Pretend I'm not the same.

In the kingdom of the blind the one-eyed man is king
and so it was in theory but luck it didn't bring
and he who thinks the emperor's not wearing anything
may just need glasses: there's no comfort in diverging.

Skald, makar, poet, vates: no label is quite right
for we who shuffle words reshape, presume to fight
against the tides of silence hoping the patterns might
yet trap, however briefly some flicker of delight.

As for our new-found patron that universal cow
from whose selective nipples most patronage comes now:
good luck to those receiving! Some need I can allow
and I've swallowed my hand-out made my respectful bow.

No one need doubt we do not always sow all we reap
and sometimes it's better not to look before you leap
and then there's the poem like clogged well in an old keep
that because it's wondrous dark shall pass for wondrous deep.

But is depth where I forage or surface what I seek?
like girls whose bodies beckon all innocence, who reek
of bed, of lips, of couplings although their eyes are meek.
What's substance? What, appearance? Here my resolve is weak.

What sticks in throat or windpipe must be cleared out, as grit
or phlegm, we have the instinct to cough up or emit
what irritates or baffles. Not the ideal remit
or palette for composing. Suppuration? Spit?

No, I don't like this person this self depicted here
this me that I'm parading at which perhaps I jeer
this mask I won't be rid of this who that I appear
the flaws I seem to nurture the course I seem to steer.

Wish I were someone other? How foolish could that get?
Foolish enough, you answer (for me, and wisely) yet
refusing all suggestions begrudging any debt
I am the frantic hunter entrapped in his own net.

Maybe you find direction in any howf or bar.
There's politics and opium or driving a fast car,
religion, money, being born under the right star
or taking pills. All possible. Infallible, none are.

We're audience and actors punters, madonnas, whores
heroes at times and villains comedians and bores
so is there laughter, clapping hisses, boos, encores
at this long-running farce with "No Exit" on the doors?

Do I play the old buffoon? If not much chance of that:
the part needs substance to it some clout, a bit of fat.
I'm a walk-on, hopeful, more sniveller than cheeky brat
missing the joke, or who am I laughing with or at?

Simply make the best of it? Enjoy what's now and not
distract for what's beyond me? Celebrate what I've got?
Stick these lines together like fragments of broken pot?
Better ask volcanoes to belch cold instead of hot.

Maybe it is a toxic state even an addiction.
Do I need a different fix change from verse to fiction?
Study what is fashionable? Stay in contradiction?
Either way I vacillate: choosing's an affliction.

Could I find resources somewhere deep within?
even single foothold some foundation to begin
to rebuild my character reconstruct the ruin
dodge mistaken purposes games I cannot win?

All this fash of intention! I should just learn to be?
Accept the mould I'm stuck with relax in harmony?
Go with the flow of seasons? Be rooted as a tree?
Not chafe at limitation thrash out in mockery?

Label me "peripheral" and I'll not sneer or whine.
"Quirky", "peripatetic" "eclectic" suit me fine.
"Old stager" even "stoic" don't overstep the line
but "modest" goes too far and I modestly decline.