

The Blind Man and The Five Cities

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I. The Blind Man

A beginning began from a blank strewing dust,

A sun whose rays over the blankness a bright shimmering thrust,

And a moon that shone a darkness to dissipate as the sun rose above dust's cusp.

In darkness, water flowed into the world by which a path of dust was submerged.

In light, mountains of dust drew themselves upwards, making themselves visible as they with
the sky converged.

In darkness, the water sought to dive further into the world, so into the dust it was absorbed.

In light, greenery drew itself out from the dust, seeking to shine in the light evermore.

Carved within the mountains of dry dust were rooms so cavernous,

And in those rooms became humanity, crafted by darkness.

In darkness, one must feel into the world, so humanity was born with a sensible blindness.

One such blind man felt the sun's shine and went to the cave's edge,

So attracted, he began tumbling, tumbling, tumbling down from that ledge.

He fell painfully to the valley's base: the river.

Being submerged in the water, his blindness began to wither;

Within his eyes there was a dissipation of darkness - he became visible to himself.

Above, the others heard his tumble, their faces growing worrisome.

But he, below, called to those above: "In this river, I see instead of feel, won't you come?"

A few followed, tumbling and becoming submerged as dust, emerging from the water to see.

The others stood hesitant on the ledge, soon escaping the cave after hearing reasoning to flee.

At the valley's base, they did not feel into the world, the world shone its light onto the eyes of

all.

In front of them was a concrete world and a river into which they had fallen.

They rose from their fall as below and yet feeling enlightened,

For they could see all until their sight's end.

So their "creative strength" and visible creation began to blend.

Stricken by visions of the valley before them, their visions of creation began to fray,

So away from one another by visions the populus was bade.

Later, in the vacant valley arrived a group of people, their eyes filled with similar visions.

They vowed to the valley and its life to deliver protection.

Nevertheless, was each man resolute to defend his vision of creation.

Beyond their sight were wolves who stole away human flesh in the dark.

With torches, into the night to slay darkness' beasts would they embark:

They, so afraid of anything mysterious and beyond visibility.

The valley's fertile land was divided by family,

Each line of division was forged by enmity.

A man, Repeni, saw his lands to be reduced by the encroachment of his neighbor, Apain's
fields.

Repeni claimed: "That sliver of fertile land on the river, Apain, was stolen from my family."

"That land", replied Apain, "is to my family beholden. I'll call upon my trustworthy neighbors to
show you".

"Through and through, there is no sight in which that land is yours."

“And yet, within my eyes is poured a trust so solid, I can see such a sight clearly.”

“And so, I see your eyes to be clouded by a falsehood, a vision opposite of mine.”

“With time, with time it will be revealed that your eyes are blind.”

Conglomerating with trustworthy men

To whom Apain had all his trust lent,

The man observed his vision's limits.

He saw his vision ignore all behind it each time he would pivot,

But out of fear he would turn again, finding a new vision, always trusting it.

His men and he were sticks leaning against one another,

Their meeting point was their vision and they had become their vision's actors.

Conglomerating with distrustful men,

Repeni resolved himself the world to amend.

The man extended his vision's reach

By placing his eyes in the center of all, ignoring the world's true seed.

Only when he saw his own reflection would his eyes find themselves at peace.

He was a man who, in a cave, lit a fire;

Believing that he created the cave, he his vision admired.

Meeting in battle, each man launched his spear, each being simultaneously murdered.

Out of their vision's fervor they sunk each other into a place without gaze.

In the battle, every farm was razed, all became nothing in a fantastic blaze.

Every vision and man-made division of the land became buried under dust,

Every house was into the darkness of the valley thrust.

So became a mound elevated from the valley's bed,
One could see much farther into the valley atop the mound's head.
And yet, in that place higher above the river
Does one's vision see better?

In the vacant valley did another group stumble upon the elevated, defensible platform.
There, they cowered above the valley's base to defend their vision in its "perfected" form.
It was their vision in its "exalted" form that they to the world wished to perform.
The more they believed their vision perfected to be,
The more afraid they were of that below them, for they wished for their vision to see.
That directly below them could no man with vision see.
In the group were those who farmed by the river and those who lived above.
Over all the people ruled one priest-king, with an exalted vision that was meant by all to be
loved.

His vision was of all and everything to be the judge.
A priest-king, Sangk, saw the platform below them as made with dead men;
To preserve his vision of the place, he would tradition amend.
He would send sacrifice to the platform,
He would raise the platform and, thus, his vision so that it would be more exalted and protected
from that fountain of visions.

The group's vision was, as all saw it, to raise itself,
Yet their self was encapsulated within Sangk.
So, "their" vision would rise when they were into the ground sunk.

Those who lived above the platform and yet below Sangk found that he relished blood's taste.

And then, they found, he could relish only when he was given their faith.

On the exalted platform were those below Sangk his precarious base!

Sangk asserted: "By my vision, the valley and platform below us is made of dead men,

Only with such vision would any of you be so highly risen."

Those below Sangk rebutted: "For your vision to be so highly risen must we be subjugated,

That high place from which your vision sees is heavily guarded and gated.

We wish for all to see, and so we'll break through your gates and allow for every man's vision to
see!"

And so, Sangk was deposed and sacrificed and the order of visions became inverted.

No longer was any sight concerted, for every eye upon the platform truly saw;

Each eye found itself to be the center of all, and each vision was limited by yet more visions.

Through such incessant division became a dispersion of the group -

All was overcome by utter chaos.

Still remained those who toiled by the fountain of visions,

They were mere extensions of the exalted vision, serving those who dwelled above them

With the fruit of visions.

They, too, were overcome by utter chaos.

Every vision and man-made division of the land became buried under dust,

Even the house of Sangk was into the darkness of the valley thrust.

So became destroyed man's vision's dreams of exaltation,

And from the destruction became a mound of greater elevation.

Atop the greater platform would one appear to see all below him with a more completed vision.
Would it be then that his vision could achieve universalization?

In the vacant valley did another group arrive,

Onto the elevated platform they strived the climb.

In the center of the great plateau did they find a pool of water

Which reflected perfectly the sky's luminous father.

The group's leaders dove in the place where the father's image was laid -

In that place, they found themselves to bathe in the sky.

Bathing in the pool, they felt reborn,

As if their previous visions became ripped and torn.

They emerged from the pool seeing differently, enamored by their new sight,

Seeking to impose their newfound vision with great, fiery might.

They wished for their vision to become all the world's light!

The group founded a settlement centered around the reflective pool of water.

The commoners farmed by the side of the river,

And the group's leaders (now oligarchs) lived by the pool - to the sky's reflection were they
nearer.

Each oligarch administered a portion of the land,

And one day their wealth grew so vast it spilled into the valley and expanded.

So strengthened became the oligarch's hands,

So solidified became their visions when order was within grasp.

Four more cities were built from the spilled wealth -

One oligarch and one pool was ordained to each city to defend the vision's health.

Upon mountains was the society's metal structure smelt, a structure that sought the world.

Through time, each city changed, for of the differing portions of sky above them they were
reflective.

In each pool, subjective forms of the grand rebirth were projected.

The heat of the sky's reflection burned into the eyes of each oligarch,

And each man wished to brand the Earth with his eyes' distinctive mark.

So, the ceremony of rebirth became idiosyncratic to each city:

The original city, Kyuya, ruled by Uyelaya, practiced bathing in the sky as a means to rebirth in
the pool.

The second city, Aranhaman, ruled by Tuyap, practiced blood sacrifice as a means to rebirth
In the pool.

The third city, Muya, ruled by Kayati, practiced sex as a means to rebirth in the pool.

The fourth city, Yakakup, ruled by Cuwanya, avoided all practices in the pool to honor the sky's
constant, unconditional rebirth.

The fifth city, Tulu, ruled by Fayamka, used the pool practically, for trading.

Uyelayu denounced the others for seeing the sky's reflection differently.

Yet, Tuyap saw that the key to rebirth was blood, for through blood the old ends and the new
begins.

In Kayati's view, rebirth required sex, for only through sex is the new born.

Cuwanya was torn from Uyelayu's vision, finding that, without an untainted sky, no rebirth
would
be possible.

Fayamka found all other to be abominable, saying that, without practical use of the pool, no order could be born.

The other four cities attacked Kyuya and drowned the Kyuyans in the original pool -

To the naked eye, those who bathed in the sky seemed to be dead fools.

Then, each of the remaining four oligarchs sought to brand the valley with his eyes' distinctive mark.

The Muyans attacked Aranhaman, spilling Aranhaman blood into their sky's reflection -

To the naked eye, those who sacrificed blood had lost rebirth's good direction.

The Yakakupans attacked Muya; they killed the Muyan men and raped their women in the pool with a lustful thirst.

To the naked eye, those who practiced sex ceremoniously practiced pleasure, and never rebirth.

The Tuluites attacked the Yakakupans, hanging all on gallows hung above the water -

To the naked eye, those who practiced nothing reflected death and nothing fathered.

So, the Tuluite pool stood as the last reflection of the sky,

But because Tulu was the last, it lacked trade partners and the city soon crumbled and died.

With no cities to serve and with many of their farms razed, the farmers dispersed -

The remains of rebirth's vision then became buried under dirt.

Every visions and man-made division of the land became buried under dust,

Even Kyuya's pool evaporated until its mud became a dry crust.

So became a mound of greater elevation,

Made from man's dead visions of rebirth.

And yet, upon the mound, one could see the valley more widely,

The next man who rose above that mound of death would think himself mighty.

Would he then be free from the death below him?

In the vacant valley arrived another group, fiending to be settled.

They found the plateau to be a hospitable place, elevated and level.

No one man directed all others, instead five judges judged the fate of wrong-doers.

The five judges would rotate between all residents of the plateau so long as they could
communicate their judgements with words.

Yet, farmers were relegated to terrace farms and, seemingly, possessed no judgment.

One day a man named Bedetem was found to have stolen food from another man;

In front of a judges' council of two men and women and one boy would he stand.

By nightfall, in the city's last blazing lanterns' light, the judges believed that Bedetem stole
from another man's wealth,

But they knew no other rationale for the action's evil except for the action itself.

Upon their agreement, a black fog emerged from a distant mountain's shelf -

Darkness' fog recognized the judges' hollow yet seemingly solid sight.

Then, the judges quarreled over the proper punishment;

Each saw the crime's severity differently, the severity for which Bedetem needed to
recompense.

During the disagreement, the black fog arrived to and hovered over the settlement.

Finally, the judges agreed to take for the victim some of Bedetem's property -

Gold for gold was this justice's hypocrisy.

Then, the black fog descended to the courthouse, lighting it ablaze as it touched the lanterns,

and disappeared into the night's black sea.

One day, a woman named Detabem was found to have beaten a man out of fury;

Two men, two women, and one girl constituted the judgeless jury.

By nightfall, in the city's last blazing lanterns' light, the judges had agreed on Detabem's guilt -

No judge stood in the decision, each one before each other's judgment knelt.

The black fog emerged from the night, for it wished the courthouse would melt -

Darkness' fog recognized the judges' hollow yet seemingly solid sight.

Then, the judge's disagreed on the crime's proper price -

For differing levels of perceived severity did every thought-of punishment suffice.

At this time, the black fog arrived to and hovered over the courthouse, silent as mice.

Finally, the judges agreed upon Detabem's way to redemption from the crime;

A beating from the community on a criminal seemed to be an action sublime.

Then, the black fog descended to the courthouse, lighting it ablaze as it touched the lanterns,

and disappeared in the fire's shine.

One day, a man named Tadabam was found to have bloodily murdered -

He would be judged by two men's, women's, and one boy's murmurs.

This day, all foresaw the black fog's arrival, so, to keep the darkness away, all lit their lanterns.

By nightfall, in all the city's blazing lantern's light, every judge believed that Tadabam had

committed the action -

For the boy, the decision was meant merely to be a didactic.

It was then that the black fog emerged and was driven towards the lanterns by a fiery passion;

Darkness' fog recognized the judges' hollow yet seemingly solid sight.

The judges then disagreed on how Tadabam could property be put to shame -

Each judges' eyes saw the crime's severity differently, their eyes danced around as if they played a game.

The black fog approached the lanterns, invisible entirely with a nature that was wild and untamed.

Finally, the judges agreed that Tadabam would be given death for death.

The judges themselves became proud murderers, banging on their chests.

The black fog then set the city ablaze by touching its lanterns, subduing sight;

The city's light was a weak defense against the darkness.

Powerless, all the city burned in the night until, from it, there came no sound.

So, the ruined city became a piece of the tall mound.

The vacant valley remained as such, with no travelers arriving to claim its wilderness -

The last crumbling city added elevation to the mound, causing a mountain to be built from the city's ash and dust.

The mountain stretched beyond the treeline,

And the wind eroded the peak of risen dust, making it sharp and refined.

On the barren peak, no city could any man find.

Each dead man in the mountain sought to exit the dark cave to reflect the sky and see.

But, can man ever from the darkness of the cave truly flee?

The mountain's peak touched the sky so the blind man could break through sight and soar.

The blind man entered the valley, walking in a straight line into it and through it - his feet walked the way. Though he could not see the valley around him, he knew what it was, for he felt

the valley. In his eyes, he drove himself into a field of darkness. In the field, there were existent things that were not visible; without sight their existence was still true. Yet, the blind man was more cautious in his approach to those things - he felt them acutely. Knowing their existence, he carefully felt through them. For example, he felt the valley's existence, but looked to feel further into it as the thing's existence was merely the beginning of what it was. And the end of what it was? There was no end, for there was no sight and no sight's end.

In his walking and feeling, he stumbled upon the mountain and felt it deeply. In sensing it, he felt deeper into the mountain's contents. So, he plunged through the field of darkness as he approached the mountain - he saw no end to the tall mass. Yet, in the mountain's existence, he felt a destruction that built itself into something; in the darkness that came after vision's destruction, the blind man felt something.

He walked to the first slope, beginning his climb up the precipice. On his journey through the field of darkness on the mountain's slope, he deeply felt the first slope. In it, he felt the diversion of something, the thing had two pieces that were violently resolved to escape from one another. The blind man felt the two pieces in the darkness, recognizing that they wished to escape from one another because of their fear of each other and their black surroundings. Moreover, one piece wished for its surroundings to be itself, so it feared its counterpart and black surroundings and willed its violent escape. Then, it wrapped its perception around itself so that its surroundings were what it wished them to be: itself. Its perceptions surrounded and orbited it, concealing the piece from the darkness and its counterpart. The other piece simply wished for its surroundings to give it some semblance of certainty. So it feared its disdainful counterpart and black surroundings and willed its violent escape. Then, it made trustworthy and trustful pieces from itself that would surround and orbit it, concealing it from the darkness and its counterpart.

The first piece felt validated by its own perception while the other felt its perception to be validated by its surrounding pieces. To be precise, their perception was what they believed their essences and the essence of all around them to be. Between the two, enmity remained. Their animosity towards each other brought them together again, not in union, but in collision. When their surrounding orbits touched, their surroundings were ripped apart at once. The first piece's perception was torn, making the piece naked in the darkness and bringing it face to face with its counterpart. The other piece's surrounding, trustworthy pieces were destroyed, making that piece naked in the darkness and bringing it face to face with its counterpart. Terrifying horror overtook them as they screeched in the darkness, for they were exposed to what was outside of their perception. In shock, they faded into the darkness in disbelief, frozen in fear.

The blind man walked to the second slope of the mountain, continuing his climb up the precipice. On his journey through the field of darkness on the mountain's slope, he deeply felt the second slope. In it, he felt something shedding. It used the product of its shedding to surround itself with itself, for it too had a fear of the darkness. Its fear was so great that it would tear its surface off of itself to hide itself from it. So, appearance orbited it and it fiended for the cover of appearance. It did not march into the field of darkness, it shielded itself from it, Yet, its surface was made from many pieces, and the pieces knew their fate. They also knew well that the orbiting appearance and the thing itself required them. Without them, the thing wouldn't exist and the pieces would be set "free". So, they escaped piece by piece until the thing no longer existed, seeking to exist individually without having decided how. Once they were individual, they each went about their own methods of "free" existence. However, none of them could help their fear of the darkness - each one had to surround itself with an appearance by which "all" was presented to them. To them, as it was to the thing, the appearances were not mere appearance,

they were truth, they were reality. Truthfully, they were the pieces surrounding themselves with themselves. Therefore, their methods of “free” existence only differed in how they chose to surround themselves with themselves. Some chose to shed their surface as the original thing had so that appearance orbited them. They had escaped in an attempt to become free, but had doomed themselves to the same methods as the original thing. Others chose to surround themselves with their perception, perceiving no more than what they wished to exist. The illusion of freedom orbited them, entrapping them in the illusion. Others chose to create new individuals from themselves to surround themselves with to validate their perception. The illusion of certainty orbited them to validate their perception. Every piece had imprisoned themselves deep within their own perception and deep within appearance as if it were the most certain reality. In the division of the thing, so many pieces dispersed over so small an area that collision became inevitable. Each piece shredded the surroundings of the pieces adjacent to it and had its own surface shredded. Relentless terror filled the spirits of each piece as the appearances of everything around each piece were shattered and they became exposed to the darkness. They failed, for they had based their individual existences on carefully crafted illusions; they faded into the darkness.

The blind man walked to the third slope of the mountain, continuing his climb up the precipice. On his journey through the field of darkness on the mountain slope, he deeply felt the third slope. In it, he felt something separate into five pieces. In a narcissian way, that thing was orbited by a watery reflection of itself, but it believed the reflection to encompass all the world. The blind man couldn't see the reflection, but he felt the thing looking intently into its reflection, marveling at it, serving it. The thing was so reverent in its service to its reflection that its reflection grew larger and more marvelous. The walls of its reflection towered over the thing like

the dome of a gilded cathedral. But, the reflection grew so disproportionately large that the thing could no longer maintain direct control over it. So, to exercise greater control over the reflection, the thing and its reflection split into five pieces - there were five pieces of the thing, each with a reflection of itself surrounding and orbiting it. Like the original thing, each piece served its reflection, but since each piece was distinct, their reflections were also distinct from each other. The first piece made its reflection from water to maintain the original tradition, encasing itself with it and staring into the reflection that came from it. It looked at its reflection with a great reverence, and since it was surrounded only by its reflection, the reflection seemed to be everything. What a great illusion the reflection was. The second piece made its reflection from its own blood, enclosing itself with its own liquid and staring into what was, essentially, itself. The piece used blood as its reverence for its reflection was so great, it was willing to bleed out its own life to maintain it. It looked into the blood with great reverence, and since it was surrounded only by its blood, the blood seemed to be everything. What a great illusion the blood was. The third piece made its reflection from its own lust for itself, surrounding itself with a sexualization of itself, staring into it with a watering mouth. The piece's reverence for its reflection was an arousal by its own reflection - it used sexuality as the material for its reflection. It looked into its sexuality with great reverence, and since it was surrounded only by a sexualization of itself, its sexuality seemed to be everything. What a great illusion its sexuality was. The fourth piece made its reflection from nothing, surrounding itself with what it believed to be a pure reflection of itself. The piece conflated its reverence for the purity of what it believed everything and itself to be with nothing; it didn't wish to materialize its reflection so as not to damage its reflection's purity. It looked into its "pure reflection" with great reverence, and since it was surrounded only by its perceived reflection, its reflection seemed to be everything. What a great illusion nothing

was. The fifth piece made its reflection from gold, encasing itself with it and staring into the reflection that came from it. The piece used gold for its reflection as it believed its value and the value of everything around it to be encapsulated in great wealth. It looked at the reflection with great reverence, and since it was only surrounded by its golden reflection, the reflection seemed to be everything. What a great illusion the golden reflection was. Each piece was cut from the same cloth, but when the cloth was cut, the pieces developed separate identities. Truly, they were still the same; it was their mission to create strong, vanguardist identities. However, to distinguish themselves from each other (for that is the purpose of identity) they developed unique modes of serving their reflections. Like the original thing, they had served their reflections so reverentially that their reflections began to grow until their reflections inevitably collided with each other. Firstly, the second piece collided with the first. In the collision, the reflection of the first piece had its orbit reversed. The reflection's orbit was so disturbed by this reversal that the reflection began to fall to the first piece. Therefore, the first piece became saturated by its reflection as it moved closer to the face of the piece. Being so overwhelmed, the piece tore the reflection apart, exposing itself to the darkness and becoming filled with horror, for the reflection that it believed everything to be including itself was torn away. So, in horror the first piece faded into the darkness. Secondly, the third piece collided with the second piece. In the collision, the blood of the second piece and its orbit reversed. The blood's orbit was so disturbed by this reversal that the blood began to fall to the second piece. Therefore, the second piece became saturated by its blood as it moved closer to the face of the piece. Being so overwhelmed, the piece lifted the veil of blood, exposing itself to the darkness, becoming filled with horror, for the blood that it believed everything to be including itself was torn away. So, in horror the second piece faded into the darkness. Thirdly, the fourth piece collided with the third. In the collision,

the self-lust of the third piece had its orbit reversed. The sexuality's orbit was so disturbed by this reversal that the sexuality began to fall to the third piece. Therefore, the third piece became saturated by its sexuality as it moved closer to the face of the piece. Being so overwhelmed, the piece tore apart its self-lust, exposing itself to the darkness and becoming filled with horror, for the sexuality that it believed everything to be including itself was torn away, So, in horror the third piece faded into the darkness. Fourthly, the fifth piece collided with the fourth. In the collision, the "pure reflection" that was made from nothing of the fourth piece had its orbit reversed. The reflection's orbit was so disturbed by this reversal that the reflection began to fall to the fourth piece. Therefore, the fourth piece became saturated by the reflection's nothingness; it realized that the reflection that it believed to be everything was, in fact, nothing as it moved closer to the face of the piece. The piece became filled with horror as the reflection disappeared, leaving the piece exposed to the darkness. So, it faded into the darkness. Finally, the fifth piece's golden reflection's orbit was disturbed by its collision with the fourth piece. The orbit was altered and the reflection was infected by the nothingness of the fourth piece's reflection. The fifth piece reassessed its reflection as the orbit changed, finding the reflection's meaning to be diluted. When the orbit was altered from its original course, nothing seemed to fall into place as it once had. The gold was not the same and neither was its shine in the eyes of the fifth piece. This so irked the fifth piece that it tore the reflection apart and exposed itself to the darkness. Filled with an unbearable horror, it faded into the darkness.

The blind man walked to the fourth slope of the mountain, continuing his climb up the precipice. On his journey through the field of darkness on the mountain's slope, he deeply felt the fourth slope. In it, he felt something that was made from thousands of pieces. The pieces orbited around each other, forming a monstrous globe in which each piece was shielded from the

darkness by other pieces. However, there was an outer-layer of pieces in this globe that were somewhat exposed to the darkness - they were relegated to those positions. Those pieces had no decision in their relegation, the pieces within the globe decided which pieces would make up the outer-limits of the globe. When the pieces within the globe agreed upon it, a piece within the globe that had committed a perceivably heinous action would be thrown to the outer-limits. Thereby, the globe would expand to become larger and larger, always creating a larger shield against the darkness. The outer-limits were presented to the pieces within the globe as the most definite criminals, as concrete examples of crime. Those pieces within the globe were presented as most definitely good, so all that lay in the globe was definite. Outside the globe was the indefinite darkness, and in creating a larger shield against the darkness, it appeared to the pieces that more and more was becoming definite. The pieces loved definition, so they threw themselves to the outer-limit of the globe to march into the darkness and conquer it in the name of definition. Yet, amongst all their agreement and throwing each other around, there was disagreement. When the pieces within the globe began deciding on the definition of a criminal that should be thrown to the outer-limits, they began colliding with each other. These collisions caused the globe to become misshapen in times of disagreement. Of course, agreement would come after disagreement, and a definitive criminal piece would be thrown to the outer-limits, but the warping of the globe in times of disagreement damaged the stability of the globe and its shield against the darkness. The globe's surface area marched endlessly into the darkness, attempting to bring definition to it. However, in throwing the pieces to the outer-limits and in its constant battling with itself, the sphere became hollow and fragile. Though the globe was expansive, its expansion invited the darkness to creep into it, for there grew plenty of room between the pieces. The light of the globe was not enough to protect it from the darkness, and its

expansion only made it more vulnerable to the blackness. So, the globe and all of its pieces faded into the darkness.

The blind man rose above all the mountain's slopes and reached the mountain's peak. Here, his journey through the field of darkness did not cease, in fact, it was intensified. He felt no things that would separate into pieces that would shield themselves against the darkness. Instead, he felt himself deeply and intently. He was consolidated into a powerful oneness that was open to the darkness, and he prepared to plunge further into the field of darkness. Though to himself, he began to speak so:

“The field of darkness is a way of sensing the world. Those things that are buried in the mountain's slope sensed the world with sight instead. In their way of sense, there is certainty and definition - the world is finite in their eyes. I felt it in the mountain, how they would blind themselves from the field of darkness by placing the cover of sight upon themselves. Their covers provided a definitive reflection, an appearance, and a confirmation of their perception in which they all believed vehemently. Yet, their sight was finite, for they only saw to the end of their covers. The field of darkness is infinite and indefinite, it stretches far beyond the reach of sight. Although, because of its darkness, the field of darkness seems to incorporate nothing at all, everything exists here.

Instead of seeing things and judging what they are by their appearance, one must feel them deeply, for within everything there are infinite dimensions. In sight, the appearance is the thing, but in the field of darkness, the thing has multiple contours and one is forced past the appearance. In sight, the name of the thing matches its “essence”, they're both definitive. In the field of darkness, the name of the thing has an ever-changing definition to match the thing. In the

field of darkness, there is truly no essence, here the ever-changing nature of everything is embraced!

Those who use sight to sense the world panic at the “sight” of darkness. They cannot bear the truthful uncertainty of the darkness, so they cover themselves with preconceived notions of what everything is - then, they feel as if all the world is certain. Although they believe that they see everything, they isolate themselves from what everything truly is. They don't explore the world of existence, they entrap themselves in sight. They desperately fight against the darkness, for they are so fearful of it. In fighting against the darkness, they doom themselves; they march into the darkness and disperse themselves so widely that they become hollow. They're doomed to become swallowed by the darkness, for their sight's cover is finite and the field of darkness is infinite. Their sight destroys itself by trying to stretch itself over the vastness of the darkness. Attempting to bring everything into a solidified definition, into sight, is futile, it rejects the ever-changing nature of everything, the infinite dimensions of everything. What's even worse, those who are entrapped by sight loiter in the field of darkness because they're so enraptured by sight. They don't dive into the field of darkness to feel through the infinite dimensions of everything, they loiter in it and bask in their fantasies. All that exists is enigmatic, and those who see want to believe in appearances rather than dive into the infinite enigma of everything! Instead of covering oneself with sight, one should break through appearance and dive into darkness so that they might feel the infinite dimensions and ever-changing nature of everything in the world.

One can break through sight and plunge into the field of darkness. Only then are things no longer called by limiting names. Then, one recognizes the change that is brought with every piece of time. Diving into the abyss, one senses the infinite dimensions of things. Each

dimension presents the thing again and again in different forms. Each form may be a descendent of the last, but if one has sight, they would latch onto one form and call it the thing. In true darkness, one never utters the name of the thing, they feel it and know its infinity and that the thing can have no definitive name. Even more, they wish to dive into the infinity, looking for no end. Such people only have one end: to explore.

If I call myself a man and all that descend from me men, I will have made a crucial mistake. Then, I would have latched onto one dimension of my existence and assumed its permanence - I would have seen then. But, in this darkness, what is called man is only one dimension of myself. I dive further into myself and see the infinite forms of what I was, am, and will be. In breaking through sight, one may be horrified and disgusted to embrace all that they ever existed and will exist as, so alienated from themselves would they be. Yet, only then would they embrace themselves. When one embraces and withstands the change of themselves and the world, they dive into the darkness. The darkness, unlike sight, is not momentary, it is timeless. The darkness is an invitation to explore what everything was, is, and will become. And from this peak I intend to dive into it and become a true explorer!”

He swam into the sky, blind and yet seeing more -

He dove beyond sight so that he could explore.

He stroked his way through the fabric of the sky,

His efforts carried him above the mountain, bringing him high;

Past sight's certainty would he himself drive.

Past Earth's sky was his path cast,

Past the orbit of light from where sight comes -
He plunged far past the sun.
He dove into the blackness beyond, accelerating,
Reaching the speed of a moving photon.
The stars before him stretched out like the rays of dawn,
Lines that showed the stars' existences through time in sections long.
Sans sight, he felt how the lines' fates would bend
From their beginnings until their fateful ends.
Charting his course towards one star,
From afar he felt its gaseous, entropic beginnings,
Its waning into sources of sight (suns),
And its becoming undone into wild spheres of darkness.
He swam along the star's timeless line
And arrived at its darkest place.

It was natural of the blind man, who was so deeply enthralled by the sphere of darkness, to seek the result of order's inevitable destruction. Though he would follow the star's timeless line from its beginning, its end was truly a miracle to him. The miracle: its entropy. Though like the entropy of the lines' gaseous beginnings, the end's entropy was one characterized by the collapse of the great order of the suns. The end presented the persistence and prevalence of chaos. So, he longed to explore the end's miracle and the necessity of chaos. And yet, even to the blind man, this utter disorder was terrifying - so unpredictable and varying was it. He knew sight

well, for it created clear maps of itself that were, nonetheless, arbitrary. But, chaos is uncharted and unchartable entirely.

With the perspective of an observer, he felt the sphere of darkness. He felt that there were things in the sphere, and yet that those things mixed together - they were somewhat and altogether indistinguishable from each other. Even when considered as a whole, the sphere was a mysterious thing. Looking into it might have been like looking into the eye of a man, deep, intriguing, and unpredictable. The blind man was drawn to the sphere, but felt a great fear in approaching it. He recognized that exploring the sphere would require a seemingly infinite dive; the sphere was deep, and exploring it meant delving into its unpredictability. It meant wading into the darkness and feeling darkness' things intently, knowing that he would never have a distinguishable, determinate idea of each of those things. So, he would explore a mystery, and each leg of his journey would be shrouded in yet more mystery. Worse, he would become a thing of the darkness and would become indistinguishable himself. Even worse, light could not escape from the sphere of darkness, so he would inevitably explore.

All that was drawn to the sphere of darkness began to circle the whirlpool. The light that was seduced into the darkness, especially, formed a clear, visible boundary between the sphere and all that was in order. That almost indeterminate thing had, albeit, a determinate existence that was distinct from all around it. The entropy was undeniable and inevitable. The blind man became a part of the sphere of darkness' horizon and began to sense the stuff of darkness. The things that had entered the sphere, as he sensed them, melted together in the darkness. Though he knew that those things may have been distinguishable outside of the darkness, inside they were not so. They and their identities seemed to melt away. Finally, the blind man himself dipped past darkness' horizon and dove directly into the entropic territory. Immediately, he was

overwhelmed with the sensations of dazzlement and utter amazement, for he himself began to be ripped apart.

This was the chaos: a moment and every moment. The blind man, in a brief moment, felt time slipping past him and behind him. There was an infinite present that was hardly the present, for in it was the past and future too. If he had felt a man walking in the darkness, he would have felt every one of the man's steps all at once. Here, in the sphere of darkness, were the entropic beginnings and ends. There was also the crushing force of gravity, infinite as it was. The blind man felt the force press his forehead until his head was flat (as if it were clay); his mind began to bend into the stuff of the darkness. The great force and energy of the darkness melted the blind man's mind as if it smelted metal to forge a tool. With his mind, his identity began to boil, becoming a red liquid. His identity was a cube of steel with hard, sharp edges to distinguish itself from the air - in the darkness it became molten and was stirred into the volcanic witch's cauldron that was the sphere of darkness. And so, his observations of all around him began to change as he melted, if, at this point, they can be called observations at all. In being a steel cube, the blind man felt himself to be a distinct thing that observed the world and acted upon the world independently. He had felt the world from his shell of existence then, but now his shell had dissolved. He mixed with the other things of the darkness and no longer observed the world with the intent to act upon it. There was no looking, no feeling, no observing, there was only an intense, intuitive being. The blind man became one with the stuff of the darkness, spreading out into the black hole in a total embrace of all the things that surrounded him. With the added power of the blind man, the fantastic existence of the sphere of darkness seemed to say, resoundingly and powerfully, as if it were the great amen, "I am!". The sphere existed as purely as anything

could, its existence was its purpose. It had no need to rationalize an identity and protect it, it was open to the darkness of the universe, and its stuff continued to dive into itself.

The disordered and energetic sphere radiated its energy and particles

Until, little by little, it began to wane, releasing itself, beginning to blink.

It would sink into space, imploding,

And then exploding to release particles, energy, and light

That would be reformulated into sources of sight.

In the cycles of gaseous clouds, stars, and wild spheres

Order and chaos are dear to each other.

Even in life, between the two is there a bridge;

When life emerges, order is shrouded by disorder's confusion,

Then, order's illusion becomes clear and certain

Until the life falls to the dirt and is stirred as its self is lost.

Sight clings to stars, though they'll succumb to darkness -

All things are powerless in their ascent to order and descent to chaos.

The self is lost, the self is made;

Man left the cave to have vision,

But to return to darkness is his precondition!

So, hold no derision towards the blackness,

Embrace it instead and face the enigma of existence.

II. The Five Cities

The sun fell from the dome of the sky,

From highness it went low

And soon melded with the horizon.

The wind sighed, giving the day

Its final, airy flow.

The sun gave its final, dying glow.

As it died, it bled in a dark red hue,

It was imbued with a stark agony

And began to shed its light.

It was dying,

Dying,

Dying!

Man's sight was dependent on the sun

For light.

The night stripped him of his sense

That brought him order.

The darkness relentlessly tore the visible world

Away from man.

Man stood before the sunset defenselessly,

Seeing his day end.

During the day, man could see the world

And define it,

Guiding light shined down on him then,

Ordering his way,

Ordering things into shape,

Ordering the world into clarity.

His other senses were neither certain

Nor so brightly revealing.

The most obvious insight of the world that he gained

Was through vision.

With vision, the division of the world into things

That could be called out by name

Was more likely.

With taste, touch, hearing, and smell,

Man's senses lacked precision,

He guessed at what he felt in a confused condition.

As the sun fell,

He was so unsure and uncertain of what lay before him.

His eyes and vision were more comfortable with the sun,

When he could draw borders and form his perception

Into comprehensible shapes,

Even if his sight was pure deception.

He preferred his vision's form
So that he could understand the world
As he wished to see it.
He could draw borders and find his enemies
More easily,
Nothing blended with the darkness
When he could see.

During the day,
The sun's rays allowed man to judge the world.
He had much to order and see
And he believed that the world was purer
With sight,
So he endured the process of ordering,
Becoming a drudge.
He drew borders between lands and objects
To cure his anxiety
That things were out of order
And unclear.
He was deeply concerned about his property
And feared
That it was not kept properly
And that, perhaps,

People and things passed through his property without him seeing,

Blending with the darkness.

He feared this

Most of all.

So, like the sun's rays,

He cast his vision out onto the world,

Attempting to give it precision,

To frame it in the glass of his eye.

His eyes painted a picture

That he could not resist believing

No matter how deceiving it was.

Then he would act on

What he saw,

He clawed at the world to preserve

The image of his mind

And spread his lion's mane

Over the world

Like the sun's rays spread

Across the sky.

Even at night,

He tried his best to retain his sight.

He lit flames so that his sight remained after dark.

Then, he felt less afraid,

As if things were set right.

But even then,

Things lurked in the darkness,

Out of view...

In cities,

The glinting

Of torches guided man's way

Against the shifting

And mixing

Of night's colors of black and gray.

Amongst the whistling

And bristling

Of men and women during light's decay,

Some light still remained,

But even men and women seemed mystifying

In the dying light.

Five cities stood against the bleeding sky,

The residents replaced the receding sun with street torches and lights.

As night became imminent, the first city forced
Reams of red torches on every building and every street.
The city limits reached from a mountain's peak
To a river's torrents.
The flames leaped up most brightly on the mountain's peak
Where the ultimately absolute emperor ruled.
The veins of the night's fire coursed
Downwards from the peak, fading to a dim orange
By the bay of the river's course.

The second city firmly placed torches and lanterns
On stands that were placed on every street corner.
They stood sternly against the darkening sky's face
From a hill top to its base.
On the mount, a king and council adjourned in the gleaming
Light behind walls that stood mighty in the lights
Of the burning torches.

The third city was speckled with lamps
And candles, nestled on walls throughout the streets.
Within a narrow valley, the city was settled.
Inside of the grand box canyon its buildings were assembled.

The city's affairs were handled
By a council of men who checked all
Citizens and residents, and were checked by all citizens and residents.
In the night's breeze, the torches drifted and at times became reticent.

The fourth city was dimly lit,
Its people were sitting in circles around fire pits,
A weak breeze hit
The fires' flames as a woman sang
Behind thin green leaves, in the tall trees.
Her voice rang
Out in the people's ears.
She was under the moon,
On a lake's banks.

The fifth city was centered around a bonfire.
They danced around the day's pyre
As its flames rose higher.
The nocturn hour was direly
Wanted and needed by the people of the plains.
Nearly deranged, during their nightly ritual, they reached to
The heights of the sky, intoxicated.
They danced as wildly as the flames of the fire.

The people held the passionate fire
Within their veins.

As the day is ripped away
And man's vision begins to decay,
How does his power go astray
And what, then remains?

As the day is ripped away
And man's vision begins to decay,
How does his power go astray
And what, then remains?

I.

The emperor imposed his vision
In the bright condition of the afternoon from his throne.
His tone was strong, wakeful, and power-stricken.
His clear and cold diction
Imprisoned every listener into attention.
He honed his words so they could cut, with great precision,
Through the bones of his soldiers, straightening them
With his cold breath.
They shook as he scolded them.
With the cold ink of his pen,

He composed his vision's ambitions,
Encoding them into law and encroaching into the skin
Of his citizens and residents, to cut into their bones
So that his coldness entered them and they shivered.
His coldness even carries itself through people,
Through his soldiers who were insistent
On carrying out their emperor's vision.

From the mountain's peak,
Soldiers poured out of the castle's keep.
By the hundreds and thousands,
They poured down the mountain,
Ordered to unleash
The power of the emperor's crown.
They ceaselessly breached into homes in the town
To beat, murder, or arrest criminals.
Their victims cowered, powerless, hopeless, and helpless.
The soldiers themselves were powerless,
Subjected to the emperor's cold breath.
So, they were merciless,
They observed their soldiers' creed,
Punishing the people who they called "ours".

The vision of the law and punishment
Was only visible in the emperor's eyes.
All things were contingent
On his rigid judgment which seemed indivisible
From the city, but his judgment was cryptic.
His decisions were only known clearly when they were visible
On the streets when criminals were clubbed and hit,
Imprisoned or killed;
Even the criminal identity seemed to be indiscriminate.
To listen to the emperor's decisions from his mouth was to listen
To a code, one that was esoteric, with all meaning hidden.
Even his trust for his ministers and generals
Underwent scrutiny and indecision
Before he ordered them according to his imperial vision.

All information was held only in the emperor's hands
And those that handed information up to him
Lacked the sum total of all information.
The totality of the empire's state could only be estimated
By the emperor who would send bands
Of men to gather grains of information
To be gathered into his summation
Of his empire which only existed in his head and hands.

The grand emperor caused conflation,
Those that found his needed intelligence
Searched for great durations
And gave him what he searched for
And waited for his next command.
No man besides the emperor
Was given true illumination.
All was noted in the legal codex's cryptic notation.

Imperial decisions, punishments, and laws were made "as appropriate",
Though the affected citizens were left in awe and astonishment
As the emperor's punishments.
Copious amounts of orders were given to soldiers
To beat and kill citizens.
The populace underwent constant shock.
Where soldiers witnessed the use of opiates
Or rebellious activity (which was appropriated "as appropriate"),
The emperor send mobs of soldiers
To break apart his citizen's storm.
But, the soldiers were shocked and ill-informed.

In a sudden and rushed manner,
The emperor reasoned through his circumstances,

Hearing nothing from his seasoned assistants.

He was turbulent and rugged.

He hastily made decisions and, in self-reflection,

He acted with reason,

As if he were a God-head amongst cretins.

In a day, he threw out orders by the hundreds,

He was obsessed and believed that he was the most intelligent and productive,

But his vision and understanding of his empire only existed

In the information that reached him.

To the emperor, the empire seemed solid and structured.

On the streets, it was falling apart and ruptured.

So, in the face of catastrophe, he acted stolidly.

He was never ushered outside of his castle's walls.

Within the walls of his castle and mind, he remained,

Feeling cunning and reasonable, though he was perfectly insane!

As the sun fell and the land darkened,

The emperor's eyes could hardly see

In the night's darkness to tell

Their master what they saw under the star's tint.

The emperor's vision weakened and a spell

Of ignorance was cast upon him.

Without the sun, his already deceitful vision lost its sharpness

And people lurked, melding with the blackness.

One of those people lived by the river.

He was an old man whose body was beginning to wither.

In the dark of the night, he lit a stick

Ablaze and walked to the river's banks,

Amongst the mist and haze

Of the cold river's air.

He lit a pipe with the flame,

Inhaled the smoke, and blew out the tinder

As he exhaled.

The drug immediately took effect,

Providing a release.

It opened the mind to what is suppressed,

It released what was held in the soul's darkness.

What was held in the mind's recesses

Jumped up into partial consciousness.

The old man coughed up

More smoke and spoke:

“Our emperor has lit his torches
And send his soldiers to go and torture
His residents, but he doesn’t know that his orders
Cannot be fulfilled.

The darkness has killed our emperor’s attempts towards order.
The sun’s orb and light that serves the emperor
Has been unsuccessfully preserved with torches.
The forces that lurk
In the darkness are at work
In the hearts of the emperor’s citizens.

“The emperor is nothing but a God-head without sight
Who stumbled through the night,
Tripping, falling, and claiming that he has walked for miles,
That he has conquered miles and miles
Of territory.
The truer story is that he’s nothing but a head that cannot walk,
Truly he is vile!

“He doesn’t see, he only thinks he sees,
And when one of his million eyes goes to peek
Through a window, that which they seek immediately flees.
In the night, escaping the emperor’s vision is easy.

His vision is maintained incessantly,
But his attempts to reach into the darkness and seize
That which stands before him fail
Because that thing is too elusive and fleeting.

“Our scholars who answer to the emperor
Profess that all light serves the emperor.
They say that light reveals the codex’s words
And when those words are followed, broken, or cursed.
It is taught that before the world came into existence, the first emperor
Existed with his vision and words, and it was his burden
To invent and lift the sun into existence.
He then lifted the moon into existence with torches to make it pure.
According to official accounts,
Light only burns for the imperial vision.

“Yet, our populace has been beaten, maimed, and murdered
For the imperial vision’s fervent claims of superiority.
So, they have turned their minds
Away from the principles of their emperor’s reign.
Tortured, the citizens became full of disdain
For the imperial vision and its words and terms.
So, when the moon rises, the people make a different claim,

They say that the sun and its harsh light are murderous,
But that the moon and the darkness of the night are new domains
Where vision loses light
And the mystery and chaos of reality remain.

“Officials say that the imperial vision existed before light,
But the people say that the imperial vision cannot exist without light”.

From the river, the old man stepped lightly,
Walking to the edge of the torches which shone dimly.
He entered an enormous brick house
Where 20 families slept around, speckling the floor like ornaments.
Only the voice of a few men and women could be found,
Saying, “Imagine breaking down the walls of the fortress
And taking the emperor out to see the blue light, gorgeous
As it is.
Would he see in the darkness or
Would he embrace his ignorance?”

The old man approached them and answered,
“We know the light and the empire’s glamor,
But we don’t know its shadow or ghost.
The ghost is *real*, you can feel its footsteps like a dancer’s”.

One of the women asked,
“Who is the ghost, can we see it bask
In the moonlight, or does it flicker like a star of the past?”

“She is real and she is here,
Feel her in the room, she whispers in your ear
And you speak her words.
A courage burns in your heart that you fear,
It holds a vision of the world that is clear.
Here, here in this city where the sun is conquered,
You must find good nature’s honor
Under the moonlight”.

One of the men proclaimed,
“I’ve felt her healing power’s reign,
The sun brings searing pain,
My skin’s bane!
Its rays whip me so that I can see,
But the moon’s light soothes my skin and bathes
The street in the blueness to heal the city’s face,
To wash away the blood of the day.
I pray that the moon washes the torches away!”

On the other side of the bricks, the torches blazed in the night.

Soldiers also carried torches on the streets to cause fright

And inspect passing citizens' faces in their crackling light.

Those who spoke of the moon's ghost, unbeknownst

To the soldiers would suffer under the imperial sun's might

Wherever the pockets of sun existed

In the depth of the moonlight.

The men and women remembered the spears and swords

That seared and killed their loved ones who spoke the words

Of the moon and were heard

By soldiers who lived in the imperial fire's smolder,

Which lived off of the moonlight's murder.

The fire lived where the moonlight did not.

The moonlight lived everywhere,

It lived in the people's hearts,

In their minds,

On the stones of the street,

And on the roofs and terraces of the buildings.

It lived on the mountains, plains, leaved,

And seas of the empire.

It lived in the forests, rivers, and caves,
And the people ran to it, begging for healing
When the sun, sitting high above them,
Abused and burned them.

Between the men and women, an uproar began,
The floor began to vibrate as they spoke from their core.
They wanted to break down the capitol's walls so that moonlight would pour
Into it and a new leader would be born
Who would heal the poor citizens
And unite the moon and sun at the horizon's shore.

Their chimes became louder and the noise
Awoke the elders, girls and boys.
They seemed to speak with one, singing voice
Which sung in the moon's tongue
About the moon's ploy.
More men and women joined.

Once they discussed their plan,
Every able bodies woman and man
Agreed to form a revolutionary band
And climbed to the roof to stand,

Wait, and pounce on the soldiers with torches in hand.

Before they attacked,

A woman called for a prayer and whispered

In the night's wind,

“My beloved blue moon, heal me with your rivers

And seas, mend my soul's fissures

The dry sun baked me until my fruit was bitter.

Deep blue, bring me your water that shimmers!”

One by one, they dropped to the street

Quickly with stones to beat

The soldiers unconscious and smolder their heat,

Then march to the fortress with arms to seed

Moonlight into the capitol so they emperor could see

The blue and be healed from his conceit

That compelled him to lead

By detached decrees.

With stolen weapons, the rebels marched,

Accumulating more armor and weapons in the dark.

They turned out the torches to mark

Their path so that the moon's hordes would embark

On their journey with the deep blue in their heart.

Citizens watched as the torches dimmed,

Many of them saw the prevailing blue and went,

Following the masses which twisted and bent

Through the streets under the moonlight in suspense.

All that was forgotten and suppressed for higher consciousness

Sprawled in the darkness and collective intent.

They lied outside of vision's extent.

They hummed as they marched,

The vibration was charged

And their feet were drums

Which played the rhythm from

Forgotten, free lands both near and afar,

A rhythm which shook the capitol's fortress

With the strength of the people's sum.

The guards heard and searched for the crowd under the moon,

But they could not see, they were not attuned

To the darkness like the Lunar Youth

Whose songs were written on runes

Of moonrock.

Their shadows loomed.

The mysterious, imperial conscience could not restrain

The shadow which grew like a stain

Across the city's domain.

The emperor looked out onto the darkness he had claimed.

The guards saw shadows and shot

Arrows down below in fear.

They saw monsters in the night's ink blots

With millions of eyes, like angels once hallowed,

Like crows and ravens that feed on the deaths

Of the people who owe.

They owed it to themselves and the world

To relinquish the constructions which were stowed

In the fortress walls, visions that would extinguish.

They looked in the mirror and saw their people

So low below the walls, as if they were foes.

As the glass shattered, those who owed closed their eyes.

The shadows climbed the walls fiercely

As arrows fell, piercing a few of them.

In the sublime torches' light, the shadows fearlessly
Slayed the soldiers who clutched their spears wearily,
Hoping that daybreak was near.

The shadows extinguished the torches and navigated
Through the darkness of the fortress
Whose darkness stood eerily.

Soldiers shivered, shook, and cried,
Tears fell like rivers down their eyes.
They knew that they defended lies,
Protecting people against themselves,
So they withered
And the shadows unloaded their quivers
Of death.

Step by step, the darkness washed the flames away.
The shadows reformed and molded like clay
As the torches tried to solidify them to keep them at bay.
The shadows' substance poured over the light's rays
And swallowed them in a starry storm.
The moon sacrificed them so that they would be reborn.

A dozen soldiers remained in the keep

Where the emperor was steeped
In thought, stooped over his desk,
Standing on his feet,
Examining the map of his territory.
The marks on the paper told the story of his military feats
And his crushing defeats.
The map's rivers took and delivered new life and new blood.
The heart and mind of the empire was the emperor's own very seat.

At this moment, he felt the sharp edge of the moon
Descend upon his neck.
His sacrifice would come soon
On the dawn of the fifth moon.

The shadows willed the rivers to be blue again
So that the blue blood would bend
Across the land to bring medicine and mend
The bloody wounds of the scorched Earth.
They would replace torches and candlelight
That complimented the moonlight
So that the Earth would be tended to.

They turned the keep's flames to smoke and ash

And broke through the gate, leaving a gash
On the wall.
They wiped away the soldiers in a swift slash.
In their cloak of darkness,
They convoked around the emperor's door,
Prepared to choke him with his torch's smoke.

They kicked down the door
And found the emperor, map in hand,
Stoic, disregarding the gore.
In the imperial dialect, he recited the empire's lore
In stuffy verse from his core.
He evoked the first emperor who held the orb
Of the sun in his hands for the first time.
He drew the first map of the land, line by line.

The shadows beat him and dragged him
To the grass in front of the keep
And draped him in rags for his final sleep
On the green bed of grass that was bathed in blue.

Before his execution, the emperor said,
“You all are in debt to the wealth of the sun,

What lunar potion have you drunk?

I can hear the anxious drum

Of your hearts, anticipating what's to come.

The empire's heart thumps

Steadily, it carries light even when the day is done.

You all owe your lives to the light which has given you life!"

A shadow raised its blade which reflected the moon

And connected to the emperor's neck,

Mixing the moon's blue with the bloody redness.

And so was born a new hue.

II.

In the afternoon, dogs laid in the hot street

As the children played, they swooned in the heat.

All citizens walked the roads freely

As soldiers stood on street corners,

Watching people pick through smoking heaps.

The king allowed his generals, captains, and lieutenants

To organize themselves within his order without hesitance.

The legal codex was treated as testament

That the divine, celestial authority spoke through the regal element.

According to the constellations, the kind would be guided by the presence
Of ten men who were reverent.

The kingdom was divided by ten and united under one.

The king embraced all the stars that were men

And the all powerful sun.

The scholar's scriptures claimed that all originated from

Our star.

Lights were born and shot themselves into the dark.

The sun was their judge and the eternal hum,

Everyone was its daughter and son.

Soon, the bright disk fell under the horizon

And only the stars were left to enlighten

The night sky as the ten men rode in

To the hilltop castle where torches brightened

The road and the gates invited

Them in with their minds ignited.

The king was distressed

And wished to discuss

The prevalent communal unrest

Over those who were called "people of the dust".

Who arrived from the scarred desert breast
And built a new half of the city overnight from dust.
Natives considered them to be pests
And tossed their bodies away like husks
When the opportunity arose,
So the immigrants were pressed
To answer to the violent threats.

Massacres occurred on the streets
And several deaths were incurred.
Houses were burned and the scene of the city
Under the glimmering stars turned macabre.
There was disorder in the king's palms
And his heart was shattered.
His people were becoming fractured.

The eleven men spoke of the divided night sky,
Each one of their stars hung over their piece of the capitol and kingdom.
The king's responsibility was to tie
The pieces together, but tonight,
He couldn't and his senses grew numb.

The man of the owl's star said,

“They need to know each other

And that, in relation to the sun,

They are all brothers.

He who is covered

In the other’s blood

Is also smothered

With his own”.

The man of the eagle’s star responded,

“And yet they must remain their own

And remember the celestial lineages that have sewn

Every aspect of their genome.

They should be protected by the throne

So that they can live by the will of their bones”.

The man of the falcon’s star responded,

“To protect and unite, one needs justice,

One must strictly punish.

The sun must admonish

All those stars who act outside of the sky’s premise”.

They considered their options as fires blazed.

Under the stars, houses were razed

And soldiers ran around, confused and crazed.

The men of the stars were in a chaotic phase,

They held no certainty that the following days

Would come.

They were lost in a cosmic haze.

Generals were ordered to separate the violence

And place people within their respective islands,

But no one adhered to the authority's highness.

The people were only united in defiance

Against unity, against all compliance.

In the night, there was not a moment of silence.

A city official arrived on horseback,

The hooves of his horse frantically clacked

On the cobblestone, within the night's black.

He held a report in his knapsack

Which he announced to the council fact by fact.

One hundred citizens killed each other that night,

Using blacksmith's knives, axes,

And fire in passionate acts.

The official called for more resources

To be diverted to save the people from their own coarseness.

He wanted a wall to be built to create borders

Between the city regions by the king's forces.

The man of the raven's star responded:

“Without the darkness between the stars, the sky wouldn't exist.

We should be divided into units

Which unify into collective constellations

Under the sun, by which they all subsist.

If our people, when mixed, throw violent fits,

We must allow them to push and resist”.

The man of the swan's star remarked:

“If we are to be parts of the one,

Then our lights should reach out to one another.

If the one is divided and covered

In its own blood, then it will die and become

Small and scattered.

Our wealth will be reduced to crumbs”.

The king considered sending emissaries

To cool the heat of Aries

With words that would carry

Olive branches bring peace, leave the bones buried,
And replace blood with the sweet juice of cherries.

He knew the night sky was too vast for idealism,
So he stood to find a sense of realism.

He told the eleven men to follow him
To a terrace within the castle walls to see the hallowed
Stars and listen to the sky's demonstration of tomorrow.
In the wind's blow,
The twelve men watched the stars twinkle and flow.
The eleven council members felt the cosmic motion
Deep in their bone marrow.

They watched the ten sacred stars
Swirl in the dark
And they felt the constellation's power stir in their hearts.
Each light contained a charge
Which made each of them unique and marked
Their place in the stellar work of art.

The constellation was the shape of a feather,
At the base of which was the star of the owl.

At the top of the feather was the eagle's star,
And to its left was the falcon's star.
To its right was the star of the peacock,
Under which was the swan's star,
On the opposite side of the raven's star.
The star of the nightingale was under the
Raven's star and on the opposite side of
The canary's star.
Between the those two stars and the owl's star
Were the stars of the vulture and the hummingbird.

The man of the peacock's star spoke:
“The cosmos' beauty comes from its chaotic
Order that swirls with and against itself harmonically.
The night sky is one, its lights are eternal and iconic.
They've coexisted forever, they've distributed
Their essence to each other in their deaths.
Our people are one, their voices are melodic”.

The man of the nightingale's star responded:
“And yet, their voices are discordant.
In their cries, I hear a message that's more important.
Their unity is forged in

Blood, and though it sounds distorted,
Their hope exists and it pours out in torrents.
From their mouths as they stand in front of their houses
And watch them burn.

“The violence is violence,
It's given and received.
Stars act as tyrants
And stir the sky so that it bleeds
Purely because they're displeased
With the motion of the sky and its silence”.

The man of the canary's star remarked:
“They've confounded their oneness
With the true oneness.
The world is made whole by the night sky,
All our people pray to the high stars and cosmic mist.
We drink the same waters and grow from the same wilderness.
To live under the beautiful night sky's consciousness,
We must share in good conscience
To provide common goodness.”

The man of the hummingbird's star said:

They must sing together under the moon,
They must work together under the moon,
They must eat together under the moon,
They must shift silently, interwoven under the moon”.

The man of the vulture’s star sighed,
“They are interwoven,
But when a person releases a malignant omen
Which heats a thread, a fiery explosion
Appears in the sky.
So, the path was chosen.
People would rather get on with their lives, given
That they can rely on those around them.
But, when there is heat and emotion,
People succumb to their own light’s potion
And their blood boils and rises like the cauldron of the star’s ocean.

“The star’s must be cooled
By the feather’s tools”.

The twelve men stared at the mystical lights,
Pondering how they might reduce their heat
To a point below the critical

Temperature, where movement is calm, vibrant, and minimal.

They decided that, to reduce movement,

The construction of a division between the people would be an inducement towards peace.

The temporary divide would provide temporary improvement.

In order to allow the people to influence

Each other and realign the city's threads into congruence

With itself, the feather would allow them to sing, work, eat, and move

Together in controlled environments.

The plan would eventually enrich the night sky's diversity and nuance.

An old man of the dust sat on a terrace

In the city, watching the murderous

Scene as the clearest

As the most supreme night sky shone above him.

The fire and violence exploded in surges

Which reflected on the old man's earnest face.

He observed the conflict and its purpose.

He sung to himself:

“The dancers spin in the streets,

Their feet burn and turn amber.

A passionate fever is released

As they perspire and resist the leash
Of bonds because they were inspired
By other movement
Which defined substantive identities.
As the particles shifted and moved,
Their energy was unleashed”.

He looked up at the night sky and continued:

“And they say the sky is one,
But when I see a comet run
Across the sky, it seems to resist the sun
Unless it succumbs
To gravity and plummets
And crashes.
It leaves its streaks of resistance across the sky’s circumference”.

Once he finished singing,
Soldiers came in a line, bringing
Slabs of stone, shovels, hammers, and buckets of mud.
They were swinging their swords
And pushing their shields,
Creating a silver line between the regions
Which was glimmering in the moonlight.

The people battered the soldiers' silver
As glass shattered and flames forced
Crowds to scatter, killers
Lined the streets and pilfered
Homes as children cried rivers
And were snatched up by soldiers
And placed behind the line of silver.

Slate by slate, the wall was built
As soldiers guarded it from the citizen's violent tilt.
The soldiers moved with haste,
And yet they were hesitant to use their blades.
Some were afraid of the crowd's race,
Spoken in a tongue which was unfamiliar and grave.
They were naive and brave.

The old man watched a boy
Jump from a balcony with a knife
Onto the silver line, a foolhardy ploy.
In the young man's face was unbridled, chaotic joy.
His eyes spun as he made a shrieking noise
With his deep, monstrous voice.

A spear instantly pierced his chest
And he lifelessly next
To the other bodies which were fresh,

Like many others, unable to escape
Because of the wall and fires,
Three women began singing amidst the mire,
“If our passion enslaves us,
Then can it save us?
Passionate love breeds passionate hate.
If we are to be one,
Our passion must bind us, not break us”.

Violence and the force of survival
Came over the streets like a tidal
Wave, and everyone’s vitals
Were threatened by unwanted rivals.
Amongst the fire, there were no idols.

Faces melted on the stones
As bones crackled, revealing fates
That were thrown from the stars

Into a passionate abyss, alone.

Around the dead young body

Which was impaled by a spear,

A crowd began gathering, screeching oddly.

The wall was complete, but the mud was damp and faulty.

The bodies of a crowd were flames of a bonfire

And the sheer heat could melt a galaxy.

The old man looked up at the stars and whispered,

“You gather electric clouds around your light,

But the world won't move without explosive might”.

At that moment, the fire broke past the silver line,

Burning the soldiers and builders alive.

The flame tripled in size as it crackled into the other side

With heat and passion in its eyes.

III.

On the night of the full moon,

The council customarily commissioned one goat herder

To climb each of the five peaks from where

The Earth's curvature was visible, and in the cocoon

Of the sky, they would sacrifice a goat
On each of the peaks so the night sky would bloom
And death would become life
On the mountains, sacrificial altars, and runes.

One particularly rich goat herder and shaman
(A role referred to as Kiirdachktlan)
Was consistently selected and commissioned
To carry out the ritual to bring the dawn.
Their name was Irkhan,
And they were always gracious and brought alms
To the people of the full moon festival who held out their palms,
Singing folk psalms.

They sang,
“You who climb the sky
Are blessed,
Bring us gifts from high.
Let the sound of the goats’ cry
Fall to bring us life
On our fertile terraces
Which shine in the stars’ light!”

Irkhan took their herd and dogs
And climbed through the pines, over rocks and logs,
Through water, upwards where the gods
Slept and would be awoken by the squawk
Of a dying goat and the smell of its stock.

On this full moon, Irkhan was aware
That, in their city, true justice was rare.
The council assembled citizen chairs
To hear the crimes of their
Neighbor.

Then, the council decided the fate of the accused then and there
In the halls of their own very lair.

Their rulings reflected their own opinions
And all justice was subject to the council's dominion.
At the full moon festival, as the afternoon fell,
Irkhan was approached by a contingent
Of citizens who trusted their judgment
And wished that they would take a room in
The council's lair and use the sacred night
To establish their power which was eminent.

Before they left,

Irkhan collected goat milk liquor and two peculiar stones.

They disappeared behind the pine trees

With their herd.

As the night's breeze

Passed through the pine needles, Irkhan was deep

In thought, considering the ease

With which the council imposed its decrees

Without adhering to the city's creed:

“He who holds power

Must bring flowers”.

Irkhan contained a fiery flower

Which he would release at twilight's hour.

They marched up the slope silently

And passed the treeline to see the canyon gleaming

Under the moonlight and the mountains standing steeply.

Irkhan and the herd ascended on the winding

Path of switchbacks, eventually climbing

The rocks which shone sublimely.

Irkhan led the goats to a patch of mossy grass
Within the rocks to let the herd graze and pass
The time as they climbed the last
Summit with a goat that had surpassed
Half its lifetime.

They used a rope to tie a goat's legs
Together so he could carry it as he climbed the summit's ledge.
The goat struggled, but it could only move its head,
It knew that it would soon be dead.

As they climbed and neared the peak
With one hand and two feet,
They saw an inscription leap
Out at them which read:
“Beneath all that is seen, there is an energetic condition
Which can spark, inciting a creative ignition”.
All around the text, several symbols were carved,



Signifying that a sacrifice had been completed.

Irkhan reached the jutting peak
And began cutting the goat's throat
As he sang amidst its shrieks,
“I collect the energy of the static emptiness,
The nearly motionless base stirs as I coalesce”.

The goat faded and Irkhan stood
On its blood as they gazed at the faded
Lights of candles and torches in the neighborhoods
Of the city in which the citizens were sedated
By sleep and their dreams revealed themselves, naked.

As they descended the peak,
Irkhan hung on the rock and etched in
The symbol; another ritual had ended.

They regrouped their herd and marched
Down the saddle which arched
Down steeply, covered in moss.
In the darkened moon's shadow, their cattle
Walked and kicked stones, causing the mountainsides to rattle.

They rose the second slope and Irkhan

Led the cattle to a patch of grass
To graze and pass
The time as he sacrificed a goat which has surpassed
Half its lifetime.

He picked one from the flock and tied it,
Then began scaling the rock, guided
By the moonlight and its clock.
On the peak's side, it was written:
“The motion within a star
Both unites itself and tears itself apart”.
They passed the mural of symbols and ascended in the dark.

Irkhan reached the jutting peak
And began cutting the goat's throat
As he sang amidst its shrieks,
“There is death in lively, vibrant motion.
The end and beginning lie in one notion”.

The goat faded and Irkhan stood
On its blood as they gazed at the faded
Light and candles and torches in the neighborhoods
Of the city in which the citizens were sedated

And their conscience had fainted.

Irkhan thought of the sleeping faces,

Their beauty and graciousness.

They laid next to death, in stasis,

Passing through their dream's phases.

As they descended the peak,

He hung on the rock and etched in

The symbol; another ritual had ended.

They regrouped their herd and marched

Down onto the saddle which arched

Down steeply, covered in moss.

In the darkened moon's shadow, their cattle

Watched and kicked stoned, making the mountainsides rattle.

They rose the third slope, and Irkhan

Led the cattle to a patch of grass

To graze and pass

The time as he sacrificed a goat which had surpassed

Half its lifetime.

He grabbed an old goat by the neck,
Tied it up, and took a step
Onto the rock and next
Grabbed a crevice and crept
Upward, towards the night sky's specks.

On the peak's side, it was written:

“Feel the star's final breath,
Their endless waves of death”.

They passed the symbols that made the rock seem like mesh.

Irkhan reached the jutting peak

And began cutting the goat's throat

As he sang amidst its shrieks:

“Your death releases and unravels
Your self as your blood spills and travels”.

The goat faded and Irkhan stood

On its blood as they gazed at the faded

Lights of candles and torches in neighborhoods

Of the city in which the citizens were sedated.

Their sleep-filled echoes trailed across the pavement.

Irkhan thought of how a vision
Might appear to a sleeper as an inception
Of an idea that repositions
The sleeper's wakeful perception.

As they descended the peak,
They hung on the rock and etched in
The symbol; another ritual had ended.

They regrouped their herd and marched
Down the saddle which arched
Down steeply, covered in moss.
In the darkened moon's shadow, their cattle
Walked and kicked stones, making the mountainsides rattle.

They rose the fourth slope, and Irkhan
Led the cattle to a patch of grass
To graze and pass
The time as he sacrificed a goat which had surpassed
Half its lifetime.

They took a goat by its horns,
Let it fight, and then tied it up tightly.

The goat screamed, as if to warn
The valley of an oncoming storm.
This goat fought particularly violently.

Irkhan climbed past the inscription
Which was surrounded by symbols and read:
“Inhale, inhale,
This momentary death will turn your face pale”.
They continued through the moonlight’s dark veil.

Irkhan reached the jutting peak
And began cutting the goat’s throat
As he sang amidst its shrieks:
“I will breathe the dust of your bones
And one day, your death will be the death of my own”.

The goat faded and Irkhan stood
On its blood as they gazed at the faded
Light of candles and torches in the neighborhoods
Of the city in which the citizens were sedated.
They offered themselves to their dreams and waited.

Irkhan thought of the profound impact

The sleepers felt when they watched the acts
Of their dreams and how they confounded,
Dreamily and hazily, fiction from fact
As they nurtured their mind's sleeping fictions to become fact.

As they descended the peak,
They hung on the rock and etched in
The symbol; another ritual had ended.

They regrouped their herd and marched
Down onto the saddle which arched
Down steeply, covered in moss.
In the darkened moon's shadow, their cattle
Walked and kicked stones, making the mountainsides rattle.

They rose the fifth slope, and Irkhan
Led the cattle to a patch of grass
To graze and pass
The time as they sacrificed a goat which had surpassed
Half its lifetime.

This time, a goat that was nearly dead
Laid down before Irkhan on a bed

Of moss, offering its body which fed

On the valley's pastures.

Irkhan tied the goat up and carried it, dangling its head.

They climbed past the inscription which read:

“After seizures your mind will be struck by clarity

And your body will be given energetic agency”.

They continued climbing past the symbols,

Through the wind which blew swiftly.

Irkhan reached the jutting peak

And began cutting the goat's throat

As he sang amidst its shrieks:

“I sleep in darkness to dream,

And I dream to live in my vision's gleam”.

The goat faded and Irkhan stood

On its blood as they gazed at the faded

Lights of candles and torches in the neighborhoods

Of the city in which the citizens were sedated

Or awake in the faint light;

For Irkhan they awaited.

Fire or light in any form

Was forbidden on the sacred journey,

But this night was out of the norm.

Irkhan kept the goat milk liquor and two peculiar rocks hidden

In a small wool sack, strapped around his back.

The citizen's wishes to reestablish justice

Would be performed by Irkhan.

Their feet were covered in the blood of the goat

As they reached for the liquor and stones.

They ripped off a piece of wool and soaked

It in blood and liquor to invoke

The goat's spirit as they struck the stones of wool, making smoke

And then flames which would provoke

The council and the common folk.

With the wool in hand and ablaze,

Irkhan poured the liquor into their mouth, filled their face

And then raised the flame

To their lips so they could spit the liquor onto the blaze.

They emptied their cheeks and the taste

Of fire left their soul and raced

To the sky.

From the valley, the citizens and council gazed.

The flame was in the shape

Of a fiery flower

Which towered over the mountains' slopes

And burned for its own sake.

Irkhan inhaled the breath of the stars

And exhaled the birth of his own heart.

The dim lights of the city shifted

As the wind lifted

And Irkhan descended

From the steep slope.

