

The reward

Who am I

That by the gravelly wall
Sits with frantic eyes,
Straining unhearing ears
To catch the voice—
The roar and the mystery
That is in the fall of water
Through unseen,
Compact barriers?

The breast is dry,
Or dripping, drips with
Curdled milk:
The dead flies lie
Buried in their booty,
That
Which was one time
Labelled for human kind.

Black shoe,
In whose shine
I see the thinness of my flesh
And the premature grey—
The creaking of your soles
Out-noise
The drum-like rumbling of my bowels
Ignorant of food.
Walk on, black shoe.

But,
Do not tread on the hard-hot road,
It will wear thee out.

Let not your lustre be dimmed
by the dust of the side-path.
Mightier than princelings
walking on sheepskin,
The lining of my belly
shall carpet your way.

Walk on, black shoe.
Now,
The triad-hearth has rolled down
The hill,
And the steel-pot too.
The last ashes
Are blown away by the wind
And that is why
I am cold.
Walk on, black shoe.

The awakening

We are the lookers between the curtains
We are the viewers behind the veil
We see tinsel and think it gold
We take mica
For silver.

They ladled for us a bowl of
"Mushroom soup, please?"
"Yes," we cried
But tasting, found
A toadstool stock.

We gulped of the "lucent syrop"
Crying, "ah, ah"
Intestinal gripes,
A retch
Pooh, pooh
Vinegar
Thickened with cauliflower.

They named us heirs,
Everlasting heirs of the marble city
On the hill of gold:
But the morning broke
The morning broke and revealed
A mud hamlet
Perched
Upon a Vesuvius of
Boiling brimstone.

And thus,
We stood on that
Lush-green-grass bank,
Watched the little fish
Slip, slip through "the silver stream"
Flash green and red, rainbow-hued.
Then the water was
Cool, upon our hands.

We cried to see the water turn
Mud—
Wasted tears.

A tadpole in a
Muddy pond.